

Be Careful!

Scope and application of the Security Guide

This Security Guide is a basic tool for volunteers, elected representatives, employees, delegates, trainees, students and others on assignment for the Swedish Red Cross (SRC) in Sweden and/or abroad. It promotes a culture of security awareness and offers a “security first” approach before, during and after an activity.

The security guide is also a prevention tool, which aims to enhance the security and wellbeing of volunteers and staff as well as those receiving our support.

A security routine is designed to help prevent security incidents before, during and after an activity.

The guide should be distributed and explained to both active and new volunteers and staff as part of their introduction.

Why do we need a security guide?

Red Cross volunteers and staff work in many different environments. It is important to understand the local security situation in order to minimise risks they face, reduce their own vulnerability and increasing their capacities to deliver humanitarian services. Local adaption of the security guide should take into account three security levels:

Level I – Low risk during normal situations. How to ensure the security and wellbeing of volunteers/staff while carrying out the work? Particularly during activities in public places, isolated places, in the event of traffic accidents or activities in areas with socioeconomic problems.

Level II – Intermediate risk emergency aid efforts (operations during and after a major accident). How is security ensured during a crisis, emergency or disaster situation?

Level III – High risk efforts (situations during demonstrations, conflicts or riots). How is security ensured during demonstrations, protests, riots or open conflicts that entail a greater risk in a critical situation?

This guide covers the first two levels only. Those working in conflict or high risk environments (Level III) should be specially trained and have a higher level of security training.

The seven pillars of security

The Red Cross’s security in the field, international as well as national, institutional as well as individual, is based on seven key principles known as the seven pillars of security. The first two are particularly important for Red Cross members and staff during missions as they explain the importance of being accepted and seen as a representative of the Red Cross. The subsequent principles are relevant for all organisations, institutions and companies that value the security of their staff.

1. Acceptance

It is important to be accepted as a neutral, impartial and humanitarian actor by those around you.

Acceptance at an individual level is also necessary. Red Cross personnel must accept behaving in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross, the Swedish Red Cross security routines, the volunteer policy and the code of conduct, and they should have read the security guide.

Volunteers and staff should keep themselves informed about the mission, branch actions, the Red Cross in general, the chain of events and what it could lead to. They must actively communicate with the local community and be prepared to adjust activities as needed to ensure acceptance in the area that they are working.

Red Cross personnel continually monitor the local situation to understand the issues that could have a negative impact on acceptance by those around them.

2. Identification

The Red Cross must always be identifiable and uses the emblem to achieve this.

Equipment, uniforms, vests, badges, hats and banners being used should be clearly marked with the SRC emblem.

Red Cross personnel should carry some form of photo identification or wear a badge, vest or hat. These emblems, hats, vests and similar should only be used when on duty and should be taken off at the end of the activity.

Do not use equipment, symbols or clothing that could be mistaken for any military, law enforcement or another organisation with a political/religious affiliation. This is for your own safety and to prevent misunderstanding.

3. Information

All information must be up to date and there must be an effective method for rapid dissemination, particularly if the information relates to security.

Red Cross personnel should strive to gather and share as much security-related information as possible. All security incidents must be reported, mapped and analysed promptly.

This to prevent similar events from reoccurring.

The branch or supervisor within the Red Cross should provide a roster containing contact details for everyone who is actively involved in the activity.

Changes in the security situation should be reported to the relevant official immediately.

Maintaining good relations with the media is important. On RedNet there are hints and advice for this: <http://rednet.redcross.se/Kontakt/Sociala-medier/>

4. Regulations

The Swedish Red Cross security regulations and routines are mandatory for all Red Cross personnel. These can be found on RedNet:

<http://rednet.redcross.se/var-forening/Kretsen---en-ideell-forening/Hot-och-sakerhet/>

In the event of special activities, specific regulations should be drawn up in order to minimise risks and ensure a secure working environment. These might be regionally or locally specific and are subject to the preparedness plans that have been drawn up based on a risk assessment.

5. Behaviour/ Conduct

All Red Cross volunteers, members and staff on duty are representatives of the Red Cross and their behaviour/ conduct affect the entire organisation's image and reputation. The Behaviour also affects the personal security.

Red Crossers should be well-informed about the local security situation. They should behave appropriately and be aware of and react to changes.

Red Cross personnel must understand the security aspects of the ongoing activity.

Red Cross personnel may never provoke a situation with offensive or aggressive behaviour. Respect diversity, cultural, political, social and religious ideas.

Red Crossers should look after their own physical and mental health and ask for support when needed.

6. Communication

Having a reliable and independent communication system is extremely important for the security of Red Cross personnel in a crisis situation.

Good communication ensures effective coordination and is crucial in a crisis situation when emergency assistance is requested.

Radio, mobile phone, the internet and other equipment as such will not necessarily increase an individual's security, but the correct usage of it will.

7. Protection

Measures should be taken to ensure the protection of Red Cross personnel. Regular servicing and correct usage of equipment, vehicles and other property should also be ensured.

The personal protection includes accident insurance, first aid training, priority access to special protection areas (SPAs)/premises/storages and protected parking, particularly during evening and weekend activities.

Incidents and situations

Red Cross personnel shall report all security regulation violations, including breaches of the code of conduct, and should be familiar with reporting procedures in the event of an accident or security incident.

Use the email address: incident@redcross.se

Factors that could contribute to incidents

1. Poor understanding of and/or misjudging the security situation and lack of basic security awareness.
2. Misjudgement/misunderstanding of the purpose of the activity.
3. Lack of coordination and information exchange within the organisation and with other key partners.
4. Ineffective security management: lack of guidance, training, coaching and advice.
5. Personal problems: provocation and disrespectful behaviour, lack of effective stress management, health problems, inappropriate relationships etc.
6. Excessive workload (working hours and/or duties) on the individual.

Creating a security culture

The Swedish Red Cross (SRC) creates a routine for security briefings and updates. These briefings explain the current security situation in the country and in specific locations as well as which preventative measures have been taken. The briefings are based on security analyses, risk and threat assessments and the degree of vulnerability.

What is important when it comes to your personal security?

- To know that the organisation has fixed plans and routines on security matters. To know about the risks/threats/dangers involved and understand the strategies and routines established to mitigate them.

- be aware that the organisation cares about the individual and offers all necessary support. This includes psychosocial support, customized equipment, guidance, insurance, training, transportation, accommodation and meals when necessary.
- feel comfortable, respected, accepted and part of the organisation.
- be aware of the routine for situation assessments.
- receive regular information about the security guide.
- have a good working environment throughout the activity.

How does a Red Cross volunteer/employee gain safe access to the target group?

By:

- Ensuring there is an understanding of the fundamental principles of the Red Cross among Red Cross personnel.
- Discussing the risks that the mission/activity entails.
- Stressing the importance of correct usage of the SRC emblem.
- Ensuring visibility of Red Cross personnel, i.e. wearing vests, caps or t-shirts with the SRC emblem on them.
- Being flexible and adaptable to the prevailing circumstances.
- If possible, having practiced the security routines.

The personal approach

- Understanding the fundamental principles and concept of the Red Cross.
- Knowing how the organisation's emblem may be used.
- Personal conduct and behaviour.
- Competence, skill and knowledge.
- Basic security awareness/risk assessment of the local situation.
- Understanding the reporting channels for security management.

The organisation's approach

- Organisational environment (security culture)
- The security plan is understood and adapted.
- All employees should complete the Federation's Stay Safe E-learning course.
- It is recommended that Volunteers complete the Federation's Stay Safe E-learning course.
- The code of conduct is up to date, explained and signed by everyone.
- Available information about external security contacts/providers.
- Offer the Psychological First Aid (PFA) course.
- Accident insurance is in place.

Risk assessment of the security situation on location

Red Cross volunteers are part of their local community in which they are operating and are better equipped to understand and assess the local environment that could affect their security and wellbeing, such as:

1. Security risks and incidents in schools, residential areas, shops, shopping centres, parks, restaurants, bars, kiosks, ATMs, youth clubs, cinemas, theatres, sports facilities, stations and bus stops, places of religious significance, high risk crime areas.
2. Major roads: traffic problems, dangerous locations, sites with high accident rates.
3. Violence/threats: against people and property.
4. Places with drug problems or prostitution.
5. Ethnic, cultural, social, religious and/or political minority groups.
6. Discrimination and xenophobia.
7. Socioeconomic problems, lack of opportunities, employment market-related problems, working conditions, gang related crime, threats.
8. Health risks due to stress.
9. Relationships with law enforcement, government authorities, guards and other security actors (formal and informal).

The Red Cross branch is responsible for informing its volunteers about how they should deal with these issues at a local level: What is the security situation locally or in the wider area? Is the branch sufficiently prepared/ equipped to deal with a critical situation?

Planning includes being prepared for the possibility that the situation can change rapidly and how it can affect security.

Being security conscious means knowing whether there are potential threats that could directly or indirectly harm the individual, group and/or equipment/property.

Volunteer coordination

Elected representatives manage, volunteer leaders lead and volunteers implement.

- The branch management leads, administers and develops the branch and its activities. It should follow decisions made by the General Assembly, the Swedish Red Cross Central Board of Directors and the Branch Annual Meeting.
- The branch management is responsible for coaching and organising leaders, volunteers, people referred from various authorities, trainees and employees.
- The branch management appoints leaders and can delegate duties to them. They are also responsible for ensuring leaders receive support, further training and the opportunity for personal development.

Important contact information:

info@redcross.se +46 (0)771 19 95 06
tib@redcross.se +46 (0)8 452 46 50
incident@redcross.se

“The frog in the pot”

There is an old fable that says if you put a frog into a pot of boiling water, it will leap out right away to escape the danger. But if you put a frog in a pot filled with water that is cool and pleasant, and then you gradually heat the water until it starts boiling, the frog will not become aware of the threat until it is too late.



A frog’s survival instincts are geared towards detecting sudden changes

This story is used to illustrate how people may get themselves into trouble. It is often used as a warning that humans must be careful to watch for slowly changing trends in the environment – not just sudden changes. It is a warning to us to keep paying attention not just to obvious threats, but also to more slowly developing ones.

Self assessment form

Name:

Date:

This is a self assessment (checklist) for Red Cross personnel before starting a shift:

No.	Knowledge and understanding of the situation/individual preparedness	No	Some	Yes
1	Do I understand the fundamental principles of the Red Cross?			
2	Do I know who I report to?			
3	Do I know who I will be serving with?			
4	Do I know who I will be collaborating with? (external personnel)			
5	Do I fully understand my task today?			
6	Do I know what kind of reputation the Red Cross has on location?			
7	Am I wearing something that visibly and clearly identifies me as representative of the Red Cross?			
8	Have I received a security briefing?			
9	Am I familiar with the current security situation where I will be located?			
10	Have I checked to see if I am wearing anything that could provoke a reaction?			
11	Do I have all the equipment I need?			
12	Do I have a fully charged telephone?			
13	Do I have the phone number for: the person I report to, the Infoservice, the RC Duty Officer (TiB) and the Police?			
14	Do I know how I should act if someone is violent?			
15	Do I know where to go in an unsafe situation?			
16	Do I feel fully prepared for today's duty?			
17	Do I feel calm?			

Recommendations with regard to the above answers.

If you answered "No" or "Some" to any of the above points, then you should seek advice/discuss/update yourself on this/these point(s) with your colleagues or the person you report to before you begin.

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