



SECURITY

The International Code of Conduct
for Private Security Service
Providers' Association (ICoCA)

STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2023



ICoCA STRATEGIC PLAN

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1

THE INTERNATIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT ASSOCIATION

The International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers' Association (ICoCA) is a multi-stakeholder initiative formed in 2013 to ensure that providers of private security services respect human rights and humanitarian law. It serves as the governance and oversight mechanism of the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers (the "Code").

Reflecting the multi-stakeholder nature of the Association, ICoCA Members are governments, civil society organisations (CSOs) and private security companies ^[1]. The purpose of ICoCA is to promote, govern and oversee the implementation of the Code, and to promote the responsible provision of security services and respect for human rights and national and international law in accordance with the Code. The Code sets out principles for private security companies based on international human rights and humanitarian law, including the prohibition of torture, human trafficking, and rules on use of force.

The operations of the Association and its principal functions are carried out by its Secretariat, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, under the direction of ICoCA's Executive Director. The Executive Director reports to ICoCA's Board of Directors, who are elected by the membership and are ultimately responsible to the General Assembly, which is the full membership of ICoCA.

Established in 2013, ICoCA is a relatively young organisation. ICoCA is the only international multi-stakeholder organisation working towards raising standards within the private security industry globally, with a particular focus on complex environments. The purpose and activities of ICoCA are distinct yet complement those of national and international security associations, trade associations, and other initiatives with security components to their work. It brings organisations concerned with human rights and humanitarian affairs to the same table as industry and governments.

¹ The list of current Members is available at: <https://icoca.ch/en/membership>

The first five years of ICoCA's activities were largely dedicated to setting up a Secretariat in Geneva, developing procedures and structures to activate its core functions, carrying out field-based reviews to test its systems, and strengthening its operational awareness and footprint. During this period, over 130 Members across the three pillars joined the Association, thereby demonstrating their commitment to the effective implementation of the Code of Conduct ^[2].

The multi-stakeholder nature of ICoCA represents one of its greatest strengths in that it coalesces the perspectives and interests of governments, civil society organisations, private security companies and observers, that together help drive the purpose of the Association. However, overcoming compliance challenges within a dynamic industry which is continuously evolving and being shaped by local and national interests requires concerted efforts by a multitude of other external stakeholders. Together, with the industry, there is a shared responsibility to prevent human

rights abuses and humanitarian law violations from occurring in the context of private security operations.

With the adoption of the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan, ICoCA enters into a new and important phase of its operations. With a strong foundation in place and tested functions, the Association, subject to available resources, can continue to deliver on its purpose, further meet expectations and needs of Members and affected communities, thereby raising security standards and addressing shortcomings. Moreover, ICoCA offers its Members and other interested stakeholders the opportunity to contribute not only to the fulfilment of the purpose of the Association but also to the broader realisation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This Strategic Plan 2019-2023 guides and prioritises the activities of ICoCA in order to support achievement of its Vision.

ICoCA VISION

To be the leading organisation providing governance and accountability mechanisms that ensure respect for human rights and international humanitarian law in the provision of private security services and be recognised as such.

To be an effective public facing multi-stakeholder organisation with an extensive globally diverse membership and a credible worldwide brand.

² 'Pillar' refers to a membership category. Membership in the Association is divided into three membership categories: the private security company (PSC) pillar, the civil society organisation (CSO) pillar, and the government pillar.

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MISSION STATEMENT

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ICoCA's mission is to raise private security industry standards and practices that respect human rights and international humanitarian law and to engage with key stakeholders to achieve widespread adherence to its Code globally.

The mission of the Association reflects the multi-stakeholder nature of the initiative and its twofold purpose of ensuring compliance with the Code whilst raising private security industry standards globally.

In order to do so, the Association aims to foster engagement among all the relevant actors and to raise awareness of their shared responsibility with a priority focus on complex operating environments.

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THE EVOLVING SECURITY LANDSCAPE

The private security landscape in complex environments has evolved since the conception of the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers, its adoption in 2010 and the establishment of the Association in 2013. This evolution has been marked by a significant growth in the size of the private security industry, an increasing market share for local security companies, and an expanding range of services being provided by private security companies.

Clients of private security companies are diverse. They include corporate entities across many sectors, governments, international and non-governmental organisations, humanitarian agencies, organisers of major events and private individuals. Private security companies operate in a highly competitive market space where client focus often tends to be primarily on cost. Commercial cost-benefit prioritisation has been seen to undermine efforts to ensure that security companies take the necessary measures to fully incorporate the International Code of Conduct and other international standards into their procedures and operations.

There have been developments to strengthen national regulatory frameworks of private security companies. Implementation levels have been uneven and in numerous regions there remain many

unregulated private security companies. Moreover, in many contexts, there is a lack of transparency in and oversight of the activities, responsibilities and corporate structures of private security companies and their subcontractors. The lack of regulation and the absence of a tradition among companies to recognise the importance of external and independent oversight to ensure the responsible provision of private security services can result in a reduction of accountability and dilution of a sense of responsibility. This, in turn, can lead to an increased risk of abuses occurring and to reputational damage to the industry as a whole.

SWISS ORDINANCE ON PRIVATE SECURITY SERVICES PROVIDED ABROAD

Art. 2 Accession to the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers.

Companies are deemed to have acceded to the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers (the Code of Conduct) in its version of 9 November 2010 if they are members of the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers Association (ICoCA).

Acceptance of the importance for private security companies to be operating and certified to internationally recognised standards has been gaining traction. Certification to relevant standards, including the International Code of Conduct, is increasingly being sought by clients in the exercise of due diligence as part of procurement processes. Given the relatively recent development of these certification standards, namely ANSI/ASIS PSC.1 (2012) ^[3], ISO 18788 (2015) ^[4], and ISO 28007 (2015) ^[5], greater efforts are still required by the industry to enable local private security companies, as opposed to international security companies, to achieve third party certification and operate to internationally recognised standards.

Key stakeholders, including donors, investors, banks and insurance companies, are becoming progressively aware of the need for private security companies to operate to internationally recognised industry standards. However, a clear understanding on the part of clients, including governments, donors, investors, banks and insurance companies of the risks associated with allowing security companies to operate without regard to these standards has yet to be achieved. This can weaken efforts to prevent human rights abuses and potentially increase risks and liability.

Given the evolution of the private security industry and its impact in many fragile, conflict and post conflict environments, ICoCA has been shown to be an important platform to enable the practical implementation of the UNGPs, on improving access

to remedy and ensuring accountability. It has also assisted States in meeting relevant international obligations, including those reflected in the 2008 Montreux Document on pertinent international legal obligations and good practices for States related to operations of private military and security companies during armed conflict (Montreux Document), fulfilling their Business and Human Rights Action Plans and achieving the United Nations SDGs.

US WORLDWIDE PROTECTIVE SERVICES 2 (WPS-2) PROGRAM

B. Offeror shall demonstrate that it is a member in good standing with the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers' Association (ICoCA) and confirm compliance with the requirements set forth in the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standard entitled PSC.1-2012. If the Offeror is a Contractor joint venture formed to act as the prime contractor (see FAR 9.601), the team members must also be members of the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers' Association in good standing. If the Offeror uses subcontractors to provide any security services, they too must be members of the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers' Association in good standing.

³ ANSI/ASIS PSC.1-2012: Management System for Quality of Private Security Company Operations [PSC.1].

⁴ ISO 18788:2015 - Management system for private security operations -- Requirements with guidance for use.

⁵ ISO 28007-1: 2015 - Ships and marine technology -- Guidelines for Private Maritime Security Companies (PMSC) providing privately contracted armed security personnel (PCASP) on board ships (and pro forma contract).

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THE 2019-2023 STRATEGIC GOALS

Building on its experiences from 2013-2018, and in line with its Vision and Mission Statement, the International Code of Conduct Association will:

GOAL 1:

Build the capacity of private security companies to implement the Code of Conduct and become certified Members of ICoCA.

GOAL 2:

Build upon and continue to develop effective systems for evaluating compliance with the Code of Conduct and addressing non-compliance.

GOAL 3:

Diversify and expand ICoCA's Membership among companies, governments, civil society and ICoCA's engagement with other relevant stakeholders.

GOAL 4:

Develop and protect a distinct and credible worldwide brand reflecting ICoCA's leadership role.

GOAL 1:

Build the capacity of private security companies to implement the Code of Conduct and become certified Members of ICoCA.

OBJECTIVE 1.A

Develop training, guidance and development tools for ICoCA Member Companies to integrate provisions of the International Code of Conduct in their policies and practices

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Produce guidance and training materials on between one and three specific Code provisions annually.
2. Make available training resources to Member Companies on issues specifically related to the content of and compliance with the Code.
3. Design and establish mechanisms and platforms to enable the exchange of best practices and cooperation between private security companies that are Members of ICoCA.

OBJECTIVE 1.B

Ensure all Member Companies achieve or work towards achieving ICoCA Certification

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Clearly communicate the process and benefits of ICoCA Certification.
2. Cooperate with accredited Certification Bodies to reinforce complementarity between ICoCA and external certification processes.
3. Utilise the Company Self-Assessment and Indicators to measure the progress of Members towards certification.
4. Provide tailored feedback and recommendations to Members, where appropriate, to support their progression towards ICoCA Certification.

OBJECTIVE 1.C

Establish mechanisms for ICoCA to expand its influence and oversight over the provision of private security services globally

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Develop a formal participatory structure that expands the number of private security companies adhering to the International Code of Conduct, taking into account the characteristics of the local private security landscape.
2. Engage with all stakeholders to explore and receive feedback in relation to the evolution of the formal participatory structure.

GOAL 2:

Build upon and continue to develop effective systems for evaluating compliance with the Code of Conduct and addressing non-compliance.

OBJECTIVE 2.A

Build an evidence-based system that supports routine monitoring and evaluation of Code compliance for all ICoCA Member Companies and a system to identify and address non-compliance issues

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Continue to strengthen the Association's oversight and accountability functions through in-person and remote dialogue with Member Companies; company self-assessments; field-based reviews and exchanges with other relevant stakeholders.
2. Continue to develop and enhance company self-assessments to reflect the evolving security environment and any revisions in the Association's implementation guidance.
3. Conduct field-based reviews and other periodic in-country evaluation missions of Member Companies' operations.
4. Solicit information from civil society organisations, open source media, security experts and others pertaining to the particular characteristics of each operating environment, and potential factors that could increase the risk of abuses.

OBJECTIVE 2.B

Identify and build the capacity of civil society organisations that can highlight human rights issues resulting from the operations of private security companies

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Strengthen cooperation with other organisations linked to the private security industry and involving a civil society organisations component, such as the Voluntary Principles Initiative and the Private Security Governance Observatory.
2. Explore, through CSO Members and their respective networks, the opportunity of conducting capacity-building exercises at the national and regional levels.
3. Facilitate the exchange of good practices and lessons learned from civil society organisations and their experiences of highlighting human rights issues resulting from the operations of private security companies.



OBJECTIVE 2.C

Ensure that the ICoCA's Complaints mechanism is robust and accessible

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Support private security companies in implementing their company grievance mechanisms in compliance with the Code through training and guidance.
2. Work with ICoCA Members to ensure accessibility of the Association's complaints function.
3. Strengthen ICoCA's capacity and capability to address serious complaints.
4. Raise awareness and improve understanding of the Association's complaints function.

GOAL 3:

Diversify and expand ICoCA's Membership among companies, governments and civil society, and ICoCA's engagement with other relevant stakeholders.

OBJECTIVE 3.A

Increase awareness and buy-in of ICoCA by governments in different regions and by intergovernmental organisations

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Participate in meetings of the Montreux Document Forum and engage with relevant UN Working Groups and other international and regional bodies to increase awareness of ICoCA as a key actor to raise standards in the private security industry.
2. Broaden outreach to non-member governments and intergovernmental organisations to improve their understanding of the role and purpose of ICoCA and encourage participation in the activities of the Association, where appropriate.
3. Encourage the development and implementation of regulations or policies by governments and intergovernmental organisations related to the private security industry, including procurement regulations, which refer to ICoCA.
4. Encourage governments to integrate ICoCA into National Action Plans on business and human rights.

OBJECTIVE 3.B

Increase the number of private security company clients encouraging or requiring ICoCA membership in contracting for security services

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Engage with clients to increase their awareness of ICoCA and encourage them to reference it in relevant procurement language and policies.
2. Provide advice on clients' procurement policies and generate model clauses in relation to private security standards and compliance with the Code of Conduct.
3. Engage with other entities that have a vested interest in the mitigation of risks by clients, e.g. investors, insurers, banks and trade associations.



OBJECTIVE 3.C

Continue building a civil society pillar that advances the objectives of ICoCA

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Further elaborate the roles and responsibilities of ICoCA CSO Members in supporting the functions of the Association globally, regionally and locally.
2. Design and conduct outreach that encourages participation from civil society organisations in support of ICoCA's functions.
3. Engage proactively with CSO networks and organisations working on human rights and humanitarian law.
4. Sensitise the CSO community to its roles and responsibilities in contracting private security companies.

GOAL 4:

Develop and protect a distinct and credible worldwide brand reflecting ICoCA's leadership role.

OBJECTIVE 4.A

Promote the activities and visibility of the Association by establishing new and strengthening existing relationships with international and national organisations through strategic cooperation and partnerships

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Consistently use recognised branding and identity in all outreach efforts communicated in the relevant languages.
2. Ensure regular representation at international and regional fora and events such as the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights, the Montreux Document Forum and other relevant meetings in order to achieve broad acceptance of ICoCA.
3. Strengthen engagement with international and multilateral organisations, such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Organization of American States (OAS).
4. Use state and non-state clients as “ambassadors” of the Association.

OBJECTIVE 4.B

Promote the activities and added value of the Association within the business community across relevant industry sectors.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Develop relationships with key trade and industry organisations to increase awareness of the importance of ICoCA in raising private security standards.
2. Raise the visibility of ICoCA Members' good practices and activities that advance respect for the International Code of Conduct and the UNGPs.



OBJECTIVE 4.C

Strengthen the role of Observers in contributing to the realisation of ICoCA's mission

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Continue to develop partnerships with Observers and potential Observers in order to increase awareness of the importance of ICoCA in raising private security standards and to address their needs and expectations.
2. Increase the opportunities for the Observer Advisory Group to provide advice and guidance to the Association in the implementation of its strategic directions and the accomplishment of its mission.

6

REVIEW

The Strategic Plan 2019-2023 is an evergreen document that will guide the long-term direction and the annual activities of ICoCA. Based on internal indicators and metrics, the level of implementation of the respective objectives will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Association, and reported on at the Annual General Assembly.

The Association will adopt a proactive position, re-assessing certain priorities as needed, based on the anticipated evolution of the private security landscape and security trends. Flexibility and rigour,

and support from Members and stakeholders, will be essential going forward to continue raising private security industry standards respectful of human rights and international humanitarian law.

