

Weapons Training

For the purposes of the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Providers (ICoC or “the Code”), ‘**weapons training**’ is defined as the provision and sustaining of the necessary information and technical skills for a member of a private security company to safely carry and, if necessary, employ a designated weapon system as part of their professional duties. The training can range from initial familiarisation and skills development, to recurrent updating and assessment of knowledge and skill-at-arms proficiency. Such training should be completed prior to being authorised to carry and employ a particular weapon type and model, and every 12 months thereafter - or more frequently depending on legal, contractual, operational and personal circumstances.

The indicators provided below are based on authoritative publications and established good practice on weapons training within the private security industry and wider (e.g. ISO 18788 and ANSI/ASIS PSC1). They address:

- Induction training (i.e. when a staff member is newly assigned a role requiring a weapon to be carried and, if necessary, employed as part of their professional duties **or** when a new weapon *type and model* is allocated to such a person).
- Recurrent training (i.e. when a staff member has been carrying and, possibly, employing a designated weapon as part of their professional duties, and would benefit from a period of skills and knowledge confirmation, updating and reassessment).
- Key enablers for both induction and recurrent training.

The full list of indicators provides **a pathway for PSCs wishing to enhance the safe and appropriate conduct of weapons training within their companies**. They also provide the framework for reaching affiliate, transitional membership and certified membership status in ICoCA. Although comprehensive in nature and specifically attuned to private security companies, these Indicators **do not** represent all available technical guidance on weapons training. Where needed, particularly on *how* to implement certain Indicators, further detail is available and should be heeded in authoritative documents such as those listed at Annex A. Ultimately it is the responsibility of **the user** to seek out the necessary information and to evaluate whether the recommendations in this document are feasible, useful and appropriate for the company and operating environment, to ensure the safe, legal and efficient conduct of weapons training. It should also be noted that this document does not enter into any great detail on Rules for the Use of Force. That matter is addressed in separate resource material provided by ICoCA.

Reflecting the approach adopted for the Code’s other Indicators, this document speaks to the full spectrum of PSCs:

- **Level 0** is intended for non-members of ICoCA who are interested in implementing safe and basic good practice in weapons training. They might also be considering taking the first step towards ICoCA affiliation.

- **Level 1** comprises of Affiliates (i.e. those companies with affiliate status in ICoCA, having met certain criteria laid down by ICoCA). PSCs at Level 1 might also be in the process of fulfilling the criteria to progress to transitional membership status (i.e. Level 2).
- **Level 2** comprises those companies that have reached transitional membership status on the path to full certification.
- **Level 3** comprises those companies that have been granted certified membership status of ICoCA by attaining and maintaining relevant industry standards and certification (e.g. ISO 18788; ANSI PSC.1), along with ICoCA certification. An emphasis on continual improvement by Level 3, certified members is important.

The terms ‘Plan’, ‘Develop’, ‘Implement’, ‘Improve’ mentioned below are used to **depict the extent to which PSCs at each Level should engage with a particular indicator – as a bare minimum.**

Indicators Tables

Induction Training		<i>Level 0</i>	<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Level 3</i>
<i>Applicability</i>					
Requirement:	- All personnel should undergo a period of formal induction training prior to being authorised to carry and, if necessary, employ a weapon/new weapon type and model as part of their professional duties.	<i>implement</i>			<i>Improve</i>
Assessment:	- Prior to induction training, and as part of the recruit selection process, all potential employees who are required as part of their professional duties to carry and, if necessary, employ a weapon should be assessed on their physical, mental and behavioural suitability. This should include checks of identity, human rights violations, dishonourable discharge, criminal history, and any prohibitions related to acquiring, owning, possessing and/or using a weapon. - Such checks should be conducted by individuals with the relevant competencies.	<i>Implement</i>			<i>Improve</i>
<i>Syllabus - Weapon Use</i>					
Familiarisation:	- Briefing on weapon components and functions. - Explanation of the firing sequence.	<i>Plan</i>	<i>Develop</i>	<i>Implement</i>	<i>Improve</i>

Induction Training		<i>Level 0</i>	<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Level 3</i>
- Coverage of applicable ammunition systems and characteristics (including magazines).					
Handling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstration and practice of how to hold and carry a weapon. - Demonstration and practice of the positions for firing a weapon (i.e. prone, standing, sitting, kneeling). - Demonstration on how and when to use the weapon's safety catch (i.e. to be applied at all times unless about to discharge the weapon). - Briefing on hazardous handling actions such as: indiscriminate pointing of weapons; concealing of weapons beneath clothing; tampering with ammunition and weapons; interchanging of parts; firing weapons in the automatic/semi-automatic positions. - Practice load, unload, 'make-safe', 'make ready' and 'show weapons clear' drills. - Rehearse the immediate action drills for weapon stoppages (e.g. jammed round). - Practice the charging/discharging of ammunition magazines. - Explanation of the locations to load and unload weapons at company sites (e.g. loading/unloading stations (with suitable bullet catches) at the entrance/exit place). - Familiarisation with weapon iron sights, scopes and night vision devices (where issued). - Practice in fitting and utilising a weapon sling (where issued). 		<i>implement</i>			<i>Improve</i>
Skill-at-Arms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Briefing and rehearsal of the skill-at-arms principles (i.e. steady position, aiming and sight picture, breath control, trigger squeeze). - Description of the effects of wind and weather on weapon accuracy. - Explanation of the purpose and method of weapon zeroing. - Practice the fall-of-shot grouping. 		<i>Implement</i>			<i>Improve</i>
Use of Force: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Detailed briefing on the rules of engagement and how they apply to various operational scenarios. - <u>Note</u>: see paragraphs 29-32 of the Code and the associated resources for specific guidance on this matter (e.g. restricting the use of firearms to: self-defence; to defending others against an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury; preventing the perpetration of a particularly serious crime involving grave threat to life). 		<i>Implement</i>			<i>Improve</i>
Health and Safety:		<i>Plan</i>	<i>Develop</i>	<i>Implement</i>	<i>Improve</i>

Induction Training		<i>Level 0</i>	<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Level 3</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explanation of the company's procedures for dealing with unsafe/unserviceable weapons and munitions. - Briefing on the need to inspect weapons and ammunition for serviceability prior to being used. - Information and practice on the immediate first aid drills for weapons-related injuries. - Briefing on the potentially lethal consequences of being under the influence of alcohol or mood/response/perception altering medications and substances, when in the possession of a weapon. And briefing on the company's preventative policies (including disciplinary action for offenders). - Training on how to spot signs of PTSD (and similar) amongst colleagues, and guidance on reporting procedures. 					
<i>Syllabus - Security and Storage</i>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explanation of the company's system for keeping account of all weapons and ammunition (e.g. butt/serial numbers; ledgers; signatures; regular checks of: quantities, types and models, precise holdings). - Briefing on the need to retain possession of the allocated weapon at all times and under all situations. No sharing of weapons should be permitted. - Briefing on the need to retain possession of ammunition at all times when signed out, unless in the case of very large quantities which should be placed in a temporary secure area with restricted access and under systematic observation. - Provide information on the drills for handing-in surplus ammunition and the penalties for holding onto unaccounted for items. 	<i>Plan</i>	<i>Develop</i>	<i>Implement</i>	<i>Improve</i>	
<i>Syllabus - Maintenance and Serviceability</i>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Briefing on the best materials for cleaning and maintaining weapons and ammunition (such as types of weapon oil and cloth). - Demonstration and practice of weapon cleaning, including the stripping, oiling and assembly of all working parts, and the pulling-through of barrels. This should include the selection of a suitable location for weapons cleaning, and the need to avoid contact with sand and water. - Demonstration of the dismantling of magazines, their cleaning and reassembly. 		<i>Implement</i>		<i>Improve</i>	

Induction Training		<i>Level 0</i>	<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Level 3</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Briefing on the frequency for cleaning and oiling of weapons (i.e. daily pull-through and oiling of barrels; strip, clean and oil working parts as soon as possible after firing or at least every week; clean and oil all unboxed weapons as the climatic conditions dictate but at least every three months). - Description of the procedure for recording and reporting of all malfunctions, damage and unserviceability. - Demonstration and practice on how to use all items in the personal ancillary tool kits. - Instructions on how and where to maintain a personal record of weapon and ammunition cleaning. 					
Assessment					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prior to being authorised to carry and, if necessary, employ a weapon/new weapon type and model as part of their professional duties, individuals should be tested on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assimilation of the theoretical aspects of the induction training. - skill-at-arms proficiency, notably weapon handling drills and live-fire accuracy. - Any person failing to pass this assessment should only be authorised to carry and, if necessary, use a weapon once they have successfully passed a re-assessment. 				<i>Implement</i>	<i>Improve</i>

Recurrent Training		<i>Level 0</i>	<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Level 3</i>
Applicability					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All individuals who carry and, if necessary, employ a weapon as part of their professional duties should undergo at a minimum <i>annual</i> recurrent training and assessment. - Physical, mental and behavioural re-assessment should form part of this annual process. - Reassessment can be more often depending on legal, contractual, operational and personal circumstances. 				<i>Implement</i>	<i>Improve</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Those staff members who have completed induction training on a particular weapon type and model but have not handled that specific equipment for 3 months or more (e.g. due to extended Leave), should also undergo this refresher training and assessment. 		
Syllabus			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Briefing on any <i>changes</i> to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - applicable national and international laws; - manufacturers' safety/operating instructions; - guidance from international bodies (such as ICoCA); - Use of Force directives; - company policies and WAM Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). - Briefing on any items recently added/adjusted to the syllabus for the Induction Course. - Skill-at-arms refresher training. 	<i>Implement</i>	<i>Improve</i>
Assessment			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prior to being authorised to <i>continue</i> to carry and, if necessary, use a weapon as part of their professional duties, individuals should be reassessed on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - skill-at-arms proficiency, notably weapon handling drills and live-fire accuracy. - awareness of significant changes (if any) to laws, policies, practices and processes. - Any person failing to pass the reassessment (including the physical, mental and behavioural aspects) should have their weapons permit withdrawn. It should not be reissued until the successful passing of a reassessment. 	<i>Implement</i>	<i>Improve</i>

Enablers	<i>Level 0</i>	<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Level 3</i>
Staff				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Within the company there should be staff that are suitably qualified to design and conduct induction and recurrent training. - This role could be double-hatted, where necessary, with other functional responsibilities. - Regular ‘fit-for-purpose’ refresher training for the instructors should be part of the overall approach. - Responsibility should be assigned to certain directors/managers to oversee the company’s training efforts. 	<i>Implement</i>		<i>Improve</i>	
Facilities				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where feasible, regulated outdoor ranges should be used for live-fire training. - Where this is not possible, realistic alternatives should be sought such as using an indoor range with sub-calibre devices or utilizing alternative technological solutions. (<u>Note</u>: simulators can help to reinforce live-fire training but should not be regarded as a complete substitute). 	<i>Implement</i>		<i>Improve</i>	
Records				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A record should be kept of all induction and recurrent training undertaken by a staff member who is required to carry and, if necessary, employ a weapon as part of their professional duties. This should include the dates and results of all assessments. - All such information should be retained in a company register, held and maintained by a designated member of staff such as one of the trainers. - A ‘weapons permit’ should be produced to show that a staff member has authorisation to carry and, if necessary, employ a weapon. This document should be signed by a company director/manager. The original should be held by the company and a copy handed to the staff member for proof of authorisation. - Weapons permits should be renewed annually (or more frequently where necessary), subject to passing recurrent training and suitability re-assessments. 	<i>Implement</i>		<i>Improve</i>	

<i>Inspections and Incident Reporting</i>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annually (at least), the company's training records and weapons permits should be inspected to ensure accuracy and to deter mal-practice. - Those conducting the inspections should not be involved in the day-to-day delivery of weapons training and for managing weapons documentation. - Create and widely publicise a procedure for the rapid reporting of weapons training incidents (including the provision of confidential communication channels for when required). 	<i>Plan</i>	<i>Develop</i>	<i>Implement</i>	<i>Improve</i>

Partners, Suppliers, Sub-contractors	<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Level 3</i>	<i>Level 4</i>
Conduct human rights due diligence checks of all partners, suppliers and sub/prime-contractors prior to working with them.	<i>Plan</i>	<i>Develop</i>	<i>Implement</i>	<i>Improve</i>
Conduct due diligence checks of all partners, suppliers and sub/prime-contractors on their record of weapons training prior to working with them.	<i>Plan</i>	<i>Develop</i>	<i>Implement</i>	<i>Improve</i>
Agree with partners, suppliers and sub/prime-contractors that they will conform, where applicable, to the indicators for weapons training given in this document.	<i>Plan</i>	<i>Develop</i>	<i>Implement</i>	<i>Improve</i>
Establish in-house monitoring of the performance and behaviour of partners, suppliers and sub/prime-contractors to ensure compliance	<i>Plan</i>	<i>Develop</i>	<i>Implement</i>	<i>Improve</i>

Feedback

This is intended to be a '**living document**' that may be updated and further adapted as the realities of PSCs evolve and additional best practices are identified in the industry. ICoCA welcomes feedback from Members, Affiliates and other stakeholders.

Annex A

Further Reading

General

- [*The Code - ICoCA - International Code of Conduct Association 09 November 2010*](#): ICoCA requirements on management of weapons, weapons training, management of material of war and incident reporting.
- [*ANSI/ ASIS PSC1 Management System for Quality of PSC Operations*](#): information on selection, background screening and vetting of personnel and sub-contractors; competence, training and awareness; Use of Force training; performance; incident management, monitoring, reporting and investigation; procurement and management of weapons, hazardous materials and munitions.
- [*IOS 18788 Management System for Private Security Operations*](#): information on weapons authorisations; procurement and management of weapons, hazardous materials and munitions; Incident monitoring, reporting and investigations.
- [*The Arms Trade Treaty \(ATT\)*](#): information on arms export and export assessment, import, transit or transshipment, brokering, diversion and record keeping.
- [*ITI \(International Instrument to enable States to Identify and Trace, in a timely and reliable manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons\)*](#): information on the marking, recording and tracing of weapons.
- [*Fire Arms Protocol \(Protocol against the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, supplementing the United Nations convention against transnational organized crime\)*](#): information on criminalisation; confiscation, seizure and disposal; record-keeping; marking of firearms; deactivation of firearms; requirements for export, import and transit licensing or authorisation systems; security and preventative measures; brokers and brokering.
- [*Staying Safe: Effective Weapons and Ammunition Management \(WAM\) during the COVID-19 Crisis | by Small Arms Survey | Medium*](#): 6-minute Small Arms Survey blog.
- [*A Guide to the UN Small Arms Process: 2016 Update | Small Arms Survey*](#): concise manual to assist and inform policymakers new to small arms on the international agenda. Covers definitions and terminology, a brief history of the small arms process, summaries of key issues, instruments and measures; and an overview of the roles of various institutions.

- [*The Montreux Document and the International Code of Conduct – Understanding the relationship between international initiatives to regulate the global private security industry .pdf*](#): DCAF 2016 paper providing a detailed comparison between good practices contained in the Montreux Document and the ICoC principles, examining to what extent states may build on the ICoC and its Association in order to regulate the provision of private security services effectively and thereby implement good practices identified in the Montreux Document.
- [*DCAF Toolkit Use of Force.pdf*](#): 2019 DCAF publication providing a guidance tool for States on the basic principles and requirements for state regulatory frameworks on the use of force by private security providers.
- [*Private Security Governance and National Action Plans \(NAPs\) on Business and Human Rights | DCAF – Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance*](#): DCAF and the Danish Institute for Human Rights this toolkit publication to provide insight and guidance on the analysis of existing legal frameworks and policy responses for the development of new laws, policies, and practices that respond specifically to the human rights risks related to the private security industry. It is a tool for States and other human rights stakeholders, such as national human rights institutions (NHRIs) and civil society organisations (CSOs) as well as private security providers (PSPs) themselves, to evaluate the human rights risks and impacts of ongoing and potential private security operations and services.

Munitions Management and Safety

- [*IATGs \(International Ammunition Technical Guidelines\)*](#): covering ammunition management principles, risk management, accounting, storage facilities, infrastructure, equipment and operations, surveillance, transport, security, destruction, accident reporting and investigations.
- [*UN Transport of Dangerous Goods, Model Regulations*](#): provisions for dangerous goods classification and transport of explosives and ammunition.
- [*A Practical Guide to Life-cycle Management of Ammunition | Small Arms Survey*](#): introduction to the Small Arms Survey's LCMA model and describes the role of national ownership in creating an enabling environment in which states can establish and maintain an LCMA system.
- [*Munitions Safety Information Analysis Center | MSIAC \(nato.int\)*](#): NATO free online resource with help to reduce, and eliminate, the risk to personnel and materiel from explosive incidents associated with own munitions.
- [*Small Arms Survey Podcast #23: The Dangers of Excess Munitions Stockpiles: the UEMS Handbook | Small Arms Survey*](#): 7 ½ minute podcast on the Small Arms Survey Handbook 'Unplanned Explosions at Munitions Sites (UEMS): Excess Stockpiles as Liabilities rather than Assets', published in June 2014.

Weapons Management and Safety

- <https://www.unidir.org/publication/reference-methodology-national-weapons-and-ammunition-management-baseline-assessments>: a reference methodology for national weapons and ammunition management baseline assessments.
- [MOSAIC \(Modular Small Arms Implementation Compendium\)](#): information on SALW international transfer, end-use and end-user controls; civilian access to SALW (MOSAIC 03.30:2015 Section 13 – regulating PSC); stockpile management: weapons; marking and recording; destruction.
- [UK Firearms Security Manual 2020](#): information on cabinets, safes, gun rooms and armoury buildings.
- [An Introductory Guide to the Identification of Small Arms, Light Weapons, and Associated Ammunition | Small Arms Survey](#): Provides the reader with a basic understanding of how to identify and analyse SALW as an aid to tracking proliferation.

Gender Perspectives

- [Taking stock of action on the illicit small arms trade: Gender-responsive small arms control | Small Arms Survey](#): This blog post provides a short overview of four of the topics covered by the seventh panel of the Small Arms Survey 2020 online forum ‘Taking stock of action on the illicit small arms trade’ which explored how the principles intended to incorporate gender into arms control architecture, instruments, policies and programmes can be operationalized to create the impact they were intended to have.
- [Gender-responsive Small Arms Control: A Practical Guide | Small Arms Survey](#): concrete suggestions for how to develop and support gender responsive programming to address the gendered phenomenon of armed violence providing a roadmap for mainstreaming gender into the small arms project cycle.
- [Small Arms Survey Podcast #48: Gender in Small Arms Control | Small Arms Survey](#): podcast on Gender in small arms control, as part of the Gender Lens for Arms Control Support and Sustainability (GLASS) project.
- [GBV ATT-brief.pdf \(reachingcriticalwill.org\)](#): Gender based violence and the Arms Trade Treaty.
- [Gender and Security Toolkit | DCAF – Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance](#): a series of practical tools and policy guides to promote Gender equality and integrate a Gender perspective in the security and justice sector.
- [Gender and Private Security Regulation Policy Brief.pdf \(dcaf.ch\)](#): DCAF Policy Brief – Gender and Private Security Regulation.

Counter Diversion

- [Diversion - Certificate \(smallarmssurvey.org\)](https://smallarmssurvey.org): Infographic series on possible measures to prevent and address diversion: supporting effective implementation of the ATT.

Training Resources

- [Instructional Designer's Handbook – Simple Book Publishing \(unizin.org\)](https://unizin.org): compilation of presentations, readings, research and best practices to assist in designing a course of instruction.
- [UNODC Systematic Approach to Training.qxd](#): nine-page overview from UNODC on the systematic approach to training model.
- [ISO - ISO 10015:2019 - Quality management — Guidelines for competence management and people development](#): guidelines for an organization to establish, implement, maintain and improve systems for competence management and people development to positively affect outcomes related to the conformity of products and services and the needs and expectations of relevant interested parties.
- [UNITAR Online Facilitation Guide: Methodological Tips \(flipsnack.com\)](https://flipsnack.com): Entitled 'How to Turn Face-to-Face into Online Events' this UN Institute for Training and Research online booklet intends to provide tips to support effective delivery of training content on-line.
- [UNITAR Online Facilitation Guide: Designing Learning Events \(flipsnack.com\)](https://flipsnack.com): Entitled 'Guiding Questions for Designing Learning Events (Face-to Face and Online)' this UN Institute for Training and Research online booklet provides a list of key questions along nine key stages with a course design process.