



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EUROPEAN CIVIL PROTECTION AND HUMANITARIAN AID
OPERATIONS (ECHO)

Emergency Management and rescEU
Capacities and Operational Support

GUIDELINES

“CERTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION”

OF RESPONSE CAPACITIES IN THE EUROPEAN CIVIL PROTECTION POOL (ECPP)

October 2019

Table of Contents

PREFACE	3
ABBREVIATIONS.....	4
BACKGROUND.....	5
Background and Legal Basis	5
Certification process: Objectives and description.....	6
Scope and purpose of these guidelines	7
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.....	8
INTRODUCTION TO THE CERTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION PROCESS.....	10
Process overview	10
How to prepare	11
Estimated timeframe.....	12
PHASE I. POLITICAL COMMITMENT & APPLICATION	13
Submission of the application.....	13
Verification and re-iteration, as needed	13
Acceptance of the application.....	13
Timeline.....	14
PHASE II. CERTIFICATION	14
Introduction	14
Step 1 - Consultative visit.....	16
Step 2 – Table top exercise.....	17
Step 3 – Field exercise.....	18
Final certification report	19
PHASE III. REGISTRATION	19
CONCLUSIONS.....	20
ANNEX 1. DEFINITIONS.....	21
ANNEX 2: PLANNING OF THE MODEX EXERCISES.....	23
ANNEX 3: LIST OF DOCUMENTS ASSESSED DURING THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS.....	25

PREFACE

These guidelines aim to provide guidance to the Member States and Participating States regarding the certification of emergency response capacities that are committed to the European Civil Protection Pool, before their registration in CECIS as part of the Pool. They aim to provide practical information to prepare for, and go through the certification process, in an efficient and organised manner. These guidelines are for information purposes only and do not replace the possible consultation of any applicable legal sources.

For additional clarifications, questions or suggestions for improvement of the guidelines, please contact the relevant colleagues in DG ECHO via ECHO-EUROPEAN-CIVIL-PROTECTION-POOL@ec.europa.eu.

ABBREVIATIONS

CECIS	Common Emergency Communication and Information System
CP	Civil Protection
DG ECHO	Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
ECPP	European Civil Protection Pool
EMT	Emergency Medical Team
ERCC	Emergency Response Coordination Centre
FX	Field exercise
INSARAG	International Search and Rescue Advisory Group
MS	Member State
MODEX	Module exercise
OSOCC	On-site Operations Coordination Centre
PS	Participating State
TTX	Table top exercise
UCPM	Union Civil Protection Mechanism
USAR	Urban search and rescue
WHO	World Health Organization

BACKGROUND

Background and Legal Basis

The EU's competences in the area of Civil Protection are embedded in Article 196 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, stating that "*Union action should aim to [...] promote swift, effective operational cooperation within the Union between national civil-protection services as well as consistency in international civil-protection work.*"

The current legal framework was laid down by Decision No 1313/2013 of the European Parliament and Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM); it has been revised by Decision (EU) 2019/420, creating additional measures at EU level. The overall objective of the UCPM is to strengthen cooperation between Member States and Participating States in the field of civil protection, with a view to improving prevention, preparedness and response to disasters. All EU Member States participate in the Mechanism, as well as the Participating States Iceland, Norway, Serbia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Turkey.

The Mechanism is at the disposal of Member States and Participating States, as well as third countries in case a disaster strikes and national response capacities are insufficient. It works on a voluntary basis whereby any country may request assistance through the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC). Member States and Participating States will then decide whether to respond and offer assistance to the requesting country.

To enhance the predictability of the available response capacities, a European Civil Protection Pool (ECP or "the Pool"), i.e., a pool of voluntarily pre-committed response capacities of the Member States and Participating States, was created.¹ The Pool includes modules, other response capacities and categories of experts (Annex 1). When a disaster strikes, the ERCC, in close cooperation with the Member States and Participating States, facilitates a coordinated deployment of the European response capacities. In addition, financial support is available for the upgrade and repair of the capacities offered to the Pool, as well as for covering operational and transport costs in case of deployment.²

To strengthen the overall quality of the offered response capacities, Decision No 1313/2013 further tasks the Commission with establishing and managing a process for the certification and registration of the response capacities that Member States and Participating States make available to the Pool.³ The Commission Implementing Decision 2014/762/EU, as amended by Commission Implementing Decisions 2018/142 and 2019/570 (hereafter "the Implementing Decision"), sets out in more details the three steps of the certification process, i.e., a consultative visit, a table top exercise and a field exercise.⁴

The certification and registration process should be seen as one key element of the broader quality assurance of European response capacities. Other elements of the Pool's quality assurance include the training of team members, regular exercises of the capacities, expert exchange among peers in Member States and Participating States, etc.

¹ See Article 11 of the Decision.

² See Article 21 of the Decision.

³ See Article 11.4 of the Decision.

⁴ See Article 16 and Annex V of the Implementing Decision.

The guidelines are part of a broader “Pool toolbox”, which centralises all relevant information and tools that pertain to the Pool, including, along with the certification and registration process, also the recertification process, the possibilities for financial support through adaptation (upgrade and repair) grants, policy support aspects, etc. This toolbox is a dynamic platform, available on the [ERCC Portal](#).

Certification process: Objectives and description

The overall objective of the certification and registration process in the context of the UCPM in general, and of the ECPP in particular, is to ensure that the capacities in the Pool will properly function during international deployments, in close coordination with host nation authorities and with other deployed capacities.

Accordingly, the certification and registration process specifically aims to:

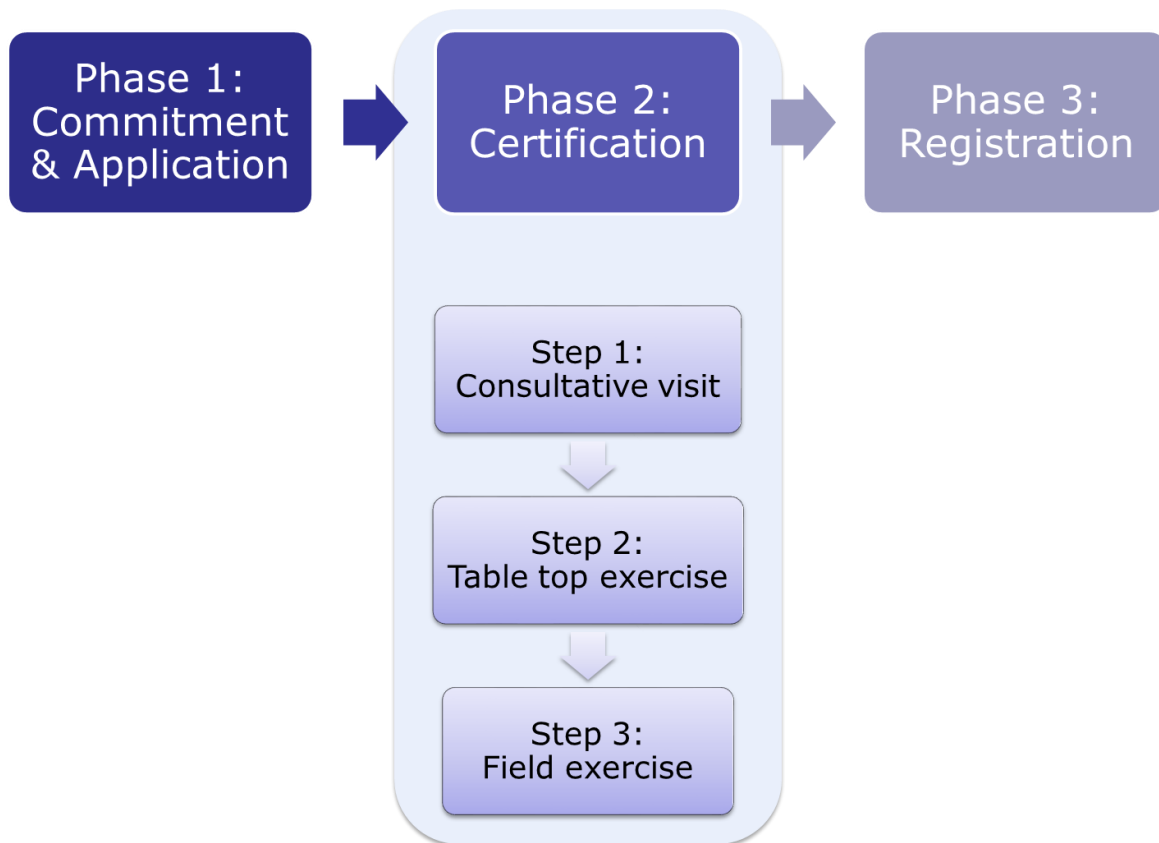
- 1) guarantee that the capacities registered in the ECPP meet the quality requirements for international deployment, and support the teams in the process towards reaching this goal;
- 2) strengthen the knowledge-base among Member States and Participating States regarding the modules and other response capacities, such as the quality requirements, standard operating procedures, technical and operational best practices, etc.

Therefore, the certification and registration process in the context of the Pool focuses on key criteria, namely

- 1) self-sufficiency, i.e. whether the response capacity is self-sufficient during deployment and as such doesn't cause an additional burden to the host nation;
- 2) interoperability, i.e. in how far the response capacity is interoperable with other deployed capacities;
- 3) logistic, financial, legal and administrative provisions for proper preparedness for mobilisation and deployment in international contexts, including appropriate training of team members;
- 4) coordination, i.e. how the response capacity ensures efficient coordination with other deployed capacities or response actors.

The certification and registration process consists of three phases, i.e., the political commitment and application, the three-step certification process, and finally the registration. (Figure 1)

Figure 1. Phases and steps in the certification and registration process



Scope and purpose of these guidelines

The purpose of the guidelines is to provide the necessary background information and practical guidance to support Member States and Participating States in their commitment to the Pool. The guidelines provide practical guidance on how to proceed for each of the phases and steps of the certification and registration process of response capacities in the context of the ECPP, and describe the roles of Member States and Participating States' Civil Protection authorities and capacities' staff, Commission representatives and other experts supporting the process.

In particular, the guidelines intend to be a working tool for:

- Member States and Participating States that intend to commit response capacities to the Pool;
- Representatives, and in particular the management team, of response capacities that (are planning to) undergo certification;
- The team of certifiers, including both Peer certifiers and DG ECHO Pool certifiers;
- DG ECHO Civil Protection Pool capacities team.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Member States and Participating States' commitment to register a response capacity in the ECPP entails some responsibilities: the capacities in the Pool shall be available for response operations under the UCPM and fulfil the agreed minimum quality requirements for international deployments.⁵

Member States and Participating States

The national civil protection authorities of the Member States and Participating States are the single responsible for the commitment of response capacities to the ECPP. This means that any response capacity interested in committing to, and registering in the Pool, should gain approval from the national civil protection contact point, i.e., the member of the civil protection committee, who will coordinate any communication with the European Commission in this regard.

The civil protection authorities carry the responsibility of ensuring that the response capacities to be committed to the Pool perform in accordance to national standards, and are (or preparing to be) ready for international deployments in the context of the UCPM. Accordingly, they provide the capacity with the necessary political support to go through the full certification and registration process.

Member States and Participating States may also support the ECPP certification and registration process, by making their experts available in the role of peer certifiers. The peer certifiers will actively contribute to the certification process.

Capacity team

Each response capacity committed to the Pool is expected to have a dedicated focal point, who centralises the day-to-day exchanges during the certification process. It is the responsibility of this focal point to ensure that the national civil protection authorities are kept informed on the progress of the certification process.

Team of certifiers

The certification and registration process is overseen by the Commission; a DG ECHO Pool certifier is assigned to lead this process and act as the main interlocutor for the capacity during the process.

In addition, experts from Member States and Participating States are nominated by the civil protection authorities to be "peer" certifiers. The peer certifiers are trained by the Commission, before becoming part of a certifiers' roster. They assist the Commission with part of the certification process, i.e., in the table top and the field exercise.

Experts outside the certifiers' roster may be selected on an ad hoc basis by the Commission, in order to certify capacities for which the required expertise is not found in the roster.

⁵ See Article 11 of the Decision and Article 15 of the Implementing Decision.

Table top and field exercise related actors

Trainers

The trainers observe, analyse, review and provide feedback to the capacities participating in the exercise, providing coaching and mentoring. They cooperate with the certifiers team to ensure a coherent and accurate assessment of the capacities undergoing the certification.

Co-trainers

For the purpose of certification, the response capacity is assigned a co-trainer during the table top and field exercise. The co-trainer is a representative of the Member State or Participating State with a deep knowledge of the capacity. The co-trainer participates both in the exercise planning phase and during the exercise. His/her role is to observe, co-train and provide overall support to the capacity during the exercise. In addition, the co-trainer is the main reference person for the certification team, ensuring a supportive exchange of information and providing clarifications as relevant.

Exercise providers

The exercise providers are in charge of the overall exercise organisation (typically ModEx simulation exercises). Their role is to facilitate the certification process during the design, planning and conduction of the exercise and to ensure that the certification requirements are embedded in the exercise, covering relevant scenario, events and injects.

Commission expert group on Capacities

The Commission expert group on Capacities is a registered Commission expert group. It was established in order to ensure the continuous improvement and strengthening of the Pool in general, and the certification and registration process and the tools used for this purpose in particular. The terms of reference of this expert group are available on request.

European Commission

The European Commission coordinates the certification and registration process for all response capacities that are committed to the Pool. The Commission provides the necessary support to ensure that all steps in the process can be finalised in a reasonable time frame, and organises the ModEx simulation exercises as a key platform supporting the process. Annex 2 provides more details on the organisation of the ModEX exercises.

In addition to the administrative support, the Commission makes its staff available to lead the certification teams in each step of the process. It organises trainings for Member States and Participating States' experts to support the pool of the "peer certifiers" that are part of the certification teams.

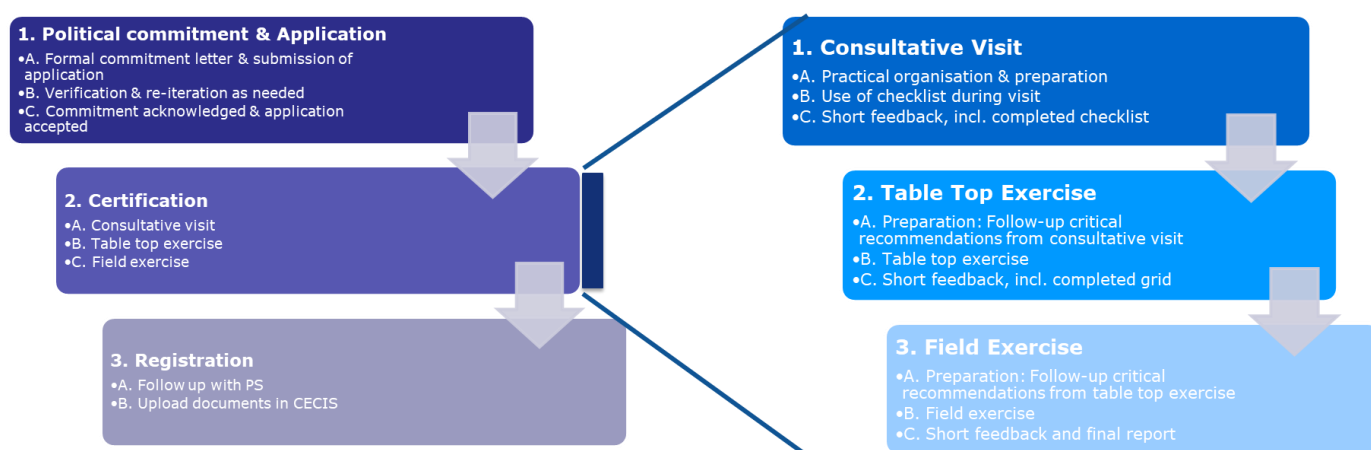
All communications with the Commission relating to the certification and registration process are channelled through the dedicated functional mailbox: ECHO-EUROPEAN-CIVIL-PROTECTION-POOL@ec.europa.eu.

INTRODUCTION TO THE CERTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION PROCESS

Process overview

1. The start of the process is launched when a Member States or a Participating State expresses its political commitment for a response capacity to become part of the ECPP. This political commitment should be combined with the submission of the application file, providing the necessary documentation on the capacity;⁶
2. Upon acceptance of the application, the capacity starts the certification process, which includes a consultative visit (CV), a table top exercise (TTX) and a field exercise (FX). At the end of the certification process, a final report leads to the acceptance of the capacity in the ECPP;
3. When the capacity is certified, it is registered in the Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS), as part of the ECPP.

Figure 2: Elements of the certification and registration process



For the capacities to get maximum benefit, the sequence of the three-step certification process should be respected. Derogations from the three-step certification process are accepted only for those capacities for which international quality standards exists.⁷ This is the case for:

1. Urban Search And Rescue (USAR) teams (medium and heavy), which are subject to the INSARAG Classification;
2. Emergency medical teams (EMT) (types 1, 2, 3 and specialised care), which are subject to the verification process of the World Health Organization (WHO).

It is important to note that for USAR and the EMTs, the political commitment and application are still required, as well as the registration in CECIS once the UN verification process is finalised. Finally, when the Commission, based on the available information, considers that the quality and interoperability requirements are fulfilled, it

⁶ See Annex V of the Implementing Decision.

will declare the capacity as certified and ask the Member State or the Participating State to register the capacity.

How to prepare

Before the political commitment to the Pool and formally submitting the application, it is recommended for the Member State or the Participating State to ensure optimal preparedness of the concerned response capacity. This includes:

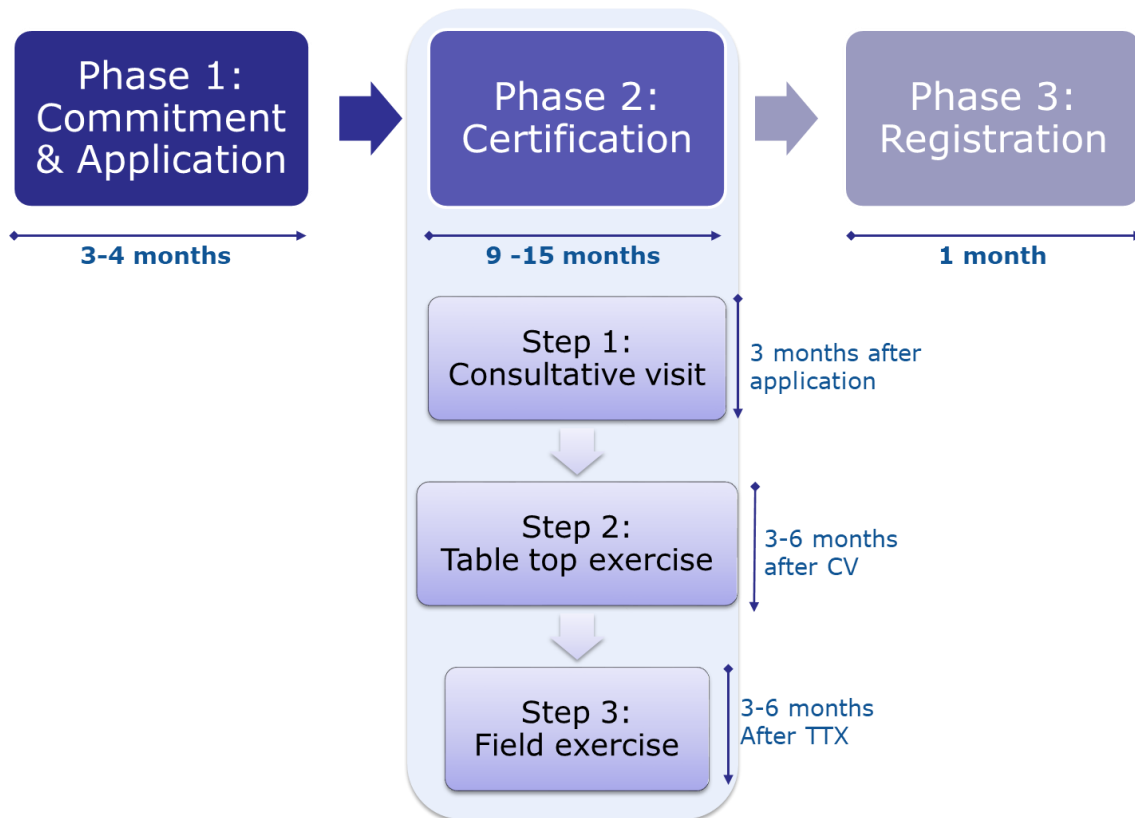
- The capacity should make sure to be fully acquainted with the capacity's expected quality requirements and standards as outlined in Decision No 1313/2013 and its implementing rules, and verify that all documentation that is required for the application is ready and up to standard. In addition, the team should be familiar with the evaluation grids used during the certification process (see Pool toolbox on the [ERCC portal](#)).
- Particular attention in these preparations should be given to the ECPP certification key criteria, i.e., self-sufficiency; interoperability; logistic, financial, legal and administrative provisions for proper preparedness and mobilisation in international contexts; coordination with other field actors and response capacities; and minimum technical requirements as defined in the Implementing Decision 2014/762/EU.
- As a minimum, staff members with key responsibilities in the management of the response capacity should have received the relevant UCPM training, at least the Module Basic Course. Functional knowledge of English, which is the most commonly used language to interact in international deployments, is also of key importance. National Civil Protection authorities could consider providing a general introductory training on civil protection and international deployments for all the team members of a capacity undergoing the certification.
- It is strongly recommended that a project management approach is applied to the certification and registration process, including a dedicated project management team and appropriate human resources, a dedicated budget, and expected timelines for each step of the process and the corresponding milestones. In the case of a response capacity that has its origins outside of the civil protection (e.g., health, transport), the project management and staff should reflect the combined authorities contributing to the capacity.
- In the project management planning, particular attention should be given to the expected timeframes of the table top and field exercises. It is of key importance to timely communicate this planning to the Commission, in order to allow for proper arrangement with the consortia organising the ModEX simulation exercises. (See also Annex 2)
- Regarding the financial aspects, the team should be well-informed about the possibility of an EU grant for the adaptation (upgrade and repair) of the response capacities committed to the ECPP.

In case further information and clarifications are needed, at any stage in these preparations, before as well as after the political commitment, please contact the Commission via the ECPP functional mailbox: ECHO-EUROPEAN-CIVIL-PROTECTION-POOL@ec.europa.eu.

Estimated timeframe

Indicative timeframes are provided below for the different phases and steps of the process with the intention to keep it swift and predictable. This will allow national Civip Protection authorities to better plan and anticipate the mobilisation of concerned staff. In addition, the Commission will be able to provide optimal support with particular regard to the capacity's integration in the overall ModEX planning. (See Figure 3)

Figure 3: Indicative timeframes for the certification and registration process



For the certification (Phase 2), a minimum of three months is needed between the different steps, to allow for the integration of the recommendations of the previous step. After each step of the certification process, a feedback report including recommendations for improvement will be provided to the response capacity.

PHASE I. POLITICAL COMMITMENT & APPLICATION

Submission of the application

The political commitment and application of a new response capacity to the ECPP is the first phase of the process. The political commitment takes the form of an official letter to DG ECHO's Director-General, with the ECPP functional mailbox in copy: ECHO-EUROPEAN-CIVIL-PROTECTION-POOL@ec.europa.eu.

Together with the political commitment, the Member State or the Participating State sends a complete application file. This consists of a completed application template together with the documentation outlined in Annex V of the Implementing Decision; the template can be found in the Pool toolbox, on the [ERCC portal](#). The entire application file is sent to the functional mailbox: ECHO-EUROPEAN-CIVIL-PROTECTION-POOL@ec.europa.eu.

Already at this initial stage, it would also be very helpful for the capacity to have the project management details ready, as referred to above. The possibility for requesting for an adaptation (upgrade and repair) grant should also be considered.

Verification and re-iteration, as needed

Based on the documentation provided by the Member State or the Participating State in the application file, the Commission assesses whether the capacity can be considered for inclusion in the ECPP.

From an overall perspective, this initial assessment takes into account: the capacity goals compared to the capacities present in the Pool; the geographic spread of the available response capacities; and the relative contributions of the Member States or the Participating States.

From the perspective of the capacity in particular, the assessment considers to what extent the minimum quality requirements of the capacity are reached, as well as the elements indicating self-sufficiency and interoperability. The UCPM related training of team management is assessed, and potential training requirements or other follow-up actions to support the certification process can already be identified at this stage. Finally, considering the importance of strong project management approach, a timeline of the key milestones in the anticipated certification process, and an overview of the corresponding dedicated resources, are expected to be submitted as part of the application documents.

As relevant, the Commission will request further details or clarifications from the Member State or the Participating State regarding the received documentation, until the application file is considered complete and the capacity ready to move to the certification phase. During the entire application phase, the Commission remains available to provide support to Member States and Participating States to complete their files.

Acceptance of the application

Once this first "desk" assessment is considered finalised, and the documentation provided meets all initial requirements, the Commission will accept the application by sending a formal reply to the offering national civil protection authority. With this communication, the three-step certification process is launched.

Timeline

In terms of timing, the period between the formal submission of the application by the Member State or the Participating State and the formal acceptance by the Commission is expected not to exceed four months.

PHASE II. CERTIFICATION

Introduction

Scope

The ECPP certification process aims to assess the capacity's ability to contribute to international response scenarios, in order for UCPM deployments to meet the ECPP key quality requirements.

The minimum quality requirements for civil protection modules and TAST are spelled out in Annex II of the Commission Implementing Decision 2014/762/EU; the TAST Guidance Document further complements the requirements described for TAST. No minimum requirements for "Other Response Capacities" have been defined at this point.

For all capacities, the certification will cover the minimum quality requirements as identified in the Implementing Decision referred to above, as well as the key criteria that are specific for the European Civil Protection Pool, namely:

- **Self-sufficiency:** the capacity should be able to provide for its own needs (e.g., food, water, fuel, basic medical support, communication) during a given time after arrival on the deployment site, without requiring any external assistance. This is to ensure that a capacity can act in complete autonomy, even in difficult circumstances, without placing an additional burden on the host nation.
- **Interoperability:** the capacity should be capable to work efficiently with other mobilised response capacities and contribute smoothly to common operations. This implies a common understanding of basic principles in disaster response operations, flows of communication and communication equipment, technical complementarity of equipment, etc.
- **Logistic, financial, legal and administrative provisions:** the capacity should have all procedures in place, to ensure smooth *preparation* for the capacity's deployment in international contexts, for the actual international *deployment* itself, and for the *return* of the capacity at the end of the deployment. These provisions should cover the management of human resources, as well as of the equipment, and the necessary logistics and administration around it.
- **Coordination:** the capacity should be prepared to coordinate its intervention with the other response capacities that are mobilised (both European and international capacities), as well as with the host nation coordination team.
- **On a technical level, and in particular during the field exercises, attention will be given to the minimum technical requirements of the response capacities, as defined in Implementing Decision 2014/762/EU.**

Process

The certification process itself consists of three steps: 1) a consultative visit; 2) a table top exercise (TTX); 3) a field exercise (FX). The sequence of the certification process should be respected to allow for the teams to gain the maximum benefit from the process.

The table top and field exercises are usually conducted through the ModEX exercises. (see Annex 2)⁷ These are commissioned by DG ECHO and allow capacities to be certified to train their preparedness for international deployments.

In accordance to the legislation, “the field exercise may be waived for fire-related modules, emergency temporary camps, medical aerial evacuation modules, and certain other response capacities on a case-by-case basis”.⁸ As for capacities for which an international system exists, namely the urban search and rescue teams (medium and heavy), and the emergency medical teams (types 1, 2, 3 and specialised care), they are considered certified if they have undergone the UN classification process of respectively INSARAG and WHO. No separate or additional certification process for these types of capacity is foreseen under the ECPP.

Team

The certification team will differ in the different steps of the certification process, as outlined in Table 1. At each step of the process, the certification team observes and verifies a series of indicators, as outlined in the evaluation grids. As for the table top and field exercise, the Commission selects peer certifiers included in the roster, on the basis of their expertise, corresponding to the concerned response capacity(ies).

Table 1 – Participation in the certification process

Role	Consultative visit	Table top exercise	Field Exercise	Final report
Representative from PS (headquarters)	Yes	Desirable	Desirable	-
Trainer	-	Yes	Yes	-
Co-trainer	-	Desirable	Yes	-
Peer certifiers	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
Commission Representative	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Validity

After completing each of the three steps of the certification process, the certification team provides the response capacity with a short and informal feedback, including recommendations for improvement and the completed draft evaluation grid. This feedback will help the capacity to move forward in reaching the minimum requirements

⁷ Other options are also possible, e.g., full scale exercises organised by a specific PS.

⁸ Annex III of Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/142.

The ECPP certification of a capacity is valid for five years, upon reception of the certificate. The process for re-certification will be defined in the near future.

Step 1 - Consultative visit

Description

The consultative visit is the first step of the certification process and consists of an extended meeting between the Commission and the Member state or the Participating State Civil Protection authority offering a response capacity to the ECPP. The consultative visit takes place in the country that is offering the capacity.

Scope and purpose

The consultative visit aims for the Commission to get a better understanding of the capacity that is offered, and to further consider the information elements provided in the application phase. A particular focus is put on the logistical arrangements, the staff preparedness aspects, as well as financial and legal arrangements in place for international deployments of the capacity. The post-mission phase will also be covered during the consultative visit. The list of issues addressed during the consultative visit can be found in the toolbox on the [ERCC portal](#).

In case more than one response capacity is offered to the ECPP, and these capacities have a number of components in common (e.g., procedures, equipment, training etc.), the consultative visit may cover all those resources at once.

During the consultative visit, the project management planning will serve as a key reference, and the next steps of the certification, i.e., the table top and field exercises, will also be discussed to ensure adequate planning (allowing sufficient time to include the recommendations of the consultative visit) and proper coordination with the exercise organisers.

Who is involved?

Usually, the Civil Protection authority of the offering State hosts the consultative visit, together with representatives from the relevant Ministries who are involved in international deployments. Key management staff of the response capacity is also represented, as are representatives from other ministries in case the response capacity is not fully hosted by the Civil Protection authorities, e.g., health.

The Commission is usually represented by one representative (DG ECHO staff), i.e., the desk officer in charge of the certification and registration process of the concerned capacity.

Timing

The consultative visit should take place within three months after the Commission sent the formal acceptance of the capacity.

Documents to be provided

The Member State or the Participating State Civil Protection authority makes available the latest versions of all relevant information regarding the capacity to be certified; cf. application file and process.

Step 2 – Table top exercise

Description

The table top exercise (TTX) is the second step of the certification process and is done after the consultative visit. It consists of the participation of the capacity in a table top simulation exercise, together with other international response capacities and following a predetermined scenario.

A maximum number of five capacities can be certified in a single TTX. The maximum number of certifiers in a TTX will be six (five experts and one Commission representative).

Purpose and scope

The table top exercise aims to test the management as well as the strategic and tactical decision making of the capacity during an international deployment, e.g., coordination with headquarters and with other capacities, procedures, reporting and other communication arrangements. Other issues covered include situational assessments, definition of objectives, implementation of operations, information management, and monitoring and evaluation as well as the preparations to phase out. Decision-making and managerial aspects in a disaster are directly associated, among others, to the relation with authorities, international coordination, interoperability with other assets and autonomy for carrying out operations.

In case a national civil protection authority offers more than one capacity for inclusion in the ECPP, which share the same procedures, components, equipment, training etc., the certification process during the TTX will cover all those resources.

Who is involved?

The main participants in the TTX are the key management personnel from the capacity. They should bring along all documentation⁹ that would be necessary for an actual international deployment.

In addition, it is desirable that the institution owning the capacity sends a headquarters representative and/or a co-trainer to the TTX, so that their supportive role can also be played out during the exercise. They are also expected to take part in the feedback sessions regarding their response capacity, in order for them to assist in the further development of the response capacity, including for the field exercise.

⁹ For example, inventory list, contact lists, customs documentation, SOPs.

The certification team is made up of one Commission representative (DG ECHO staff), together with one peer certifier per capacity. The certification team will use the certification grid for TTX (available from the [ERCC portal](#)) to collect the relevant evidence from the capacity's functioning during the exercise, and will also take into consideration the information provided through the consultative visit.

Timing

The table top exercise should take place within three to six months after the consultative visit, in order to allow for sufficient time to integrate the recommendations from the consultative visit. As needed, the response capacity could take more time, or might be recommended to repeat the table top exercise, to allow more opportunity to integrate the recommendations.

Documents to be provided

The capacity should provide all updated documentation related to the capacity and in particular the standard operating procedures.

Step 3 – Field exercise

Description

The field exercise (FX) is the third and last step of the certification process; it is done after the table top exercise. It consists of the participation of the capacity in a field exercise, together with other international capacities and following a predetermined scenario.

Purpose and scope

The field exercise aims to provide a realistic field scenario for the response capacity to show its performance, in line with the minimum quality requirements as outlined in Decision No 1313/2013 and its implementing rules, and described in the evaluation grid available from the [ERCC portal](#). The field exercise focuses on the operational aspects of these requirements during the different phases of an international deployment, i.e., mobilisation/arrival, operations and demobilisation.

The performance of the technical activities might reveal positive actions/ best practices and /or identify potential adaptation needs. Based on the field performance, consultations with the trainer/co-trainer, and secondary data such as daily reports, e-mails or virtual OSOCC posts, the certification team will make recommendations on how to improve the preparedness and the response of the capacity during an international deployment.

Who is involved?

For the field exercise, the entire capacity and its staff are involved. Furthermore, the presence of a co-trainer coming from the institution owning the capacity is required. The co-trainer is the main reference person for the certification team, ensuring supportive exchange of information and clarifications as relevant. The co-trainer is also expected to take part in the feedback sessions during the exercise.

For each response capacity using the field exercise for certification purposes, a certification team of three persons is mobilised, i.e., two peers and one Commission representative. In case different capacities undergo certification in the same field exercise, the number of peers may be adapted. The aim is for at least one of the certifiers to have a relevant technical profile consistent with the type of capacity undergoing certification.

Timing

The field exercise should take place within three to six months after the table top exercise, in order to allow for sufficient time to integrate the recommendations from the table top exercise. As needed, the response capacity could take more time, or might be recommended to repeat the field exercise, to allow more opportunity to integrate the recommendations.

Documents to be provided

The capacity should provide all updated documentation related to the capacity, and in particular the standard operating procedures.

Final certification report

At the end of the three-step certification process, a final overview report is prepared by the DG ECHO Pool certifier in close collaboration with the peer certifiers who contributed to the process. This final report will integrate the key findings on the capacity with specific regard to the ECPP certification criteria, including some key recommendations for the further development of the capacity, as relevant.

The final report, together with the certificate confirming the process was completed successfully, is sent by the Commission to the offering Member State or Participating State Civil Protection authorities.

In case a capacity is considered not to fully comply yet with the ECPP certification criteria at the end of the last step of the certification process, some reiterations may be undertaken in order to give the capacity more time to make the necessary investments to comply with the European quality requirements. A follow-up visit by the Commission can be organised at a later stage and the certification can then still be granted.

For capacities that do not make the necessary progress and are considered not to comply with the ECPP certification criteria, the Commission may suggest to revoke the acceptance of the application to the Pool.

PHASE III. REGISTRATION

At the occasion of sending the final report and the certificate for the capacity, the Commission also invites the national civil protection authority, through the ERCC focal point, to register the certified capacity in the CECIS database as part of the ECPP and make available the necessary documentation in the system.

In accordance with Implementing Decision 2018/142, certification should be reassessed at the latest after five years.

CONCLUSIONS

This document provides practical guidance to Member States and Participating States wishing to offer an emergency response capacity to the European Civil Protection Pool. The guidelines are part of a “Pool Toolbox” that is accessible through the ERCC portal, and which centralises the relevant supporting documentation, including the checklist for the consultative visit and the evaluation grids used for the table top and field exercises. All documentation is versioned, and updates are posted as they become available.

For any questions, please feel free to contact the responsible team in the Commission at ECHO-EUROPEAN-CIVIL-PROTECTION-POOL@ec.europa.eu.

ANNEX 1. DEFINITIONS

Modules

A 'module' refers to a self-sufficient and autonomous predefined task- and needs-driven arrangement of Member States and Participating States' capabilities or a mobile operational team of the Member States and Participating States, representing a combination of human and material means that can be described in terms of its capacity for intervention or by the task(s) it is able to undertake.

The general requirements of the modules identified by the legislation are defined in Annex II of the Implementing Decision (2014/762/EU).

TAST (technical assistance and support teams)

The primary task of TAST is to accompany experts or teams deployed via the UCPM and to ensure their ability to work by providing support in different areas according to the circumstances and needs of a mission: administrative and ICT support, subsistence/logistics support etc. This enables the experts to concentrate on their original mission tasks.

The TAST provides or arranges for

- support for set-up and running of office;
- ICT support;
- logistics and subsistence support;
- transport support on site.

The general requirements of the TAST are defined in Annex II of the Implementing Decision (2014/762/EU).

Other Response Capacities

Under Decision 1313/2013, the “other response capacities” represent the innovative element of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM). They often respond to the increasing demand for multi-sectoral assistance, and allow the UCPM to contribute to a more comprehensive EU response to disasters and crises. A preliminary list of capacity goals (i.e., type and number of “other response capacities”) was agreed by the Member States and the Commission, however without defining general requirements as was done for the modules.¹⁰

Member States and Participating States can offer “other response capacities”, based on the particular disaster-related needs and the lessons identified during previous response operations. The “other response capacities” may comprise resources from one or more Member State, should adhere to established international guidelines, be deployable on very short notice, work self-sufficiently and autonomously, and cooperate with other relevant international actors (cf. Articles 9.1 and 9.4).

¹⁰ Cf. Annexes II and III of the Implementing Decision of 16 October 2014

“Other response capacities” undertaking the registration process must be clear on their factsheets about technical and non-technical capabilities (e.g., self-sufficiency and transportation).

ANNEX 2: PLANNING OF THE ModEX EXERCISES

The ModEX exercises are planned in accordance to cycles; one cycle usually runs from September of year X to August of year X+1. The table top and field exercise required for the certification of a response capacity should as much as possible be integrated in the planning of the ModEX cycles, which is done between January and March of year X.



Capacities

As soon as the planning of the ModEX exercises are available, the Commission will 1) contact the capacities in the process of certification to be informed in which exercises they plan to participate for certification purposes; and 2) will provide the feedback to the ModEX contractors which capacities require exercises for certification purposes, in order to better accommodate them in the most relevant scenarios.

The planning of the capacities' participation in the ModEX exercises shall respect the sequence of the certification process, i.e., first attending a table top exercise (step 2) and then a field exercise (step 3). Moreover, sufficient time, i.e., a minimum of three months, needs to be anticipated between the different steps of the certification process, to allow the capacities to integrate the recommendations from the previous step. The final planning of participation of capacities in the ModEX exercises is confirmed by June the latest.

Certifiers

When the ModEX exercise dates are available, the Commission will also invite peer certifiers in the Member States and Participating States to express their availability to be part of certification teams. The Commission selects the peer certifiers from the roster, considering availability and expertise, and avoiding possible conflict of interests (e.g., peer certifiers should have different nationality from the teams undertaking certification). Other selection factors are the prerequisite participation in a certification workshop, a balanced mix of nationalities in the certification team, proximity to the exercise location, previous experience as certifier, profile of the other candidates, etc.

Conclusion

The final schedule of planned capacities and certifiers for each ModEX exercise represents a firm commitment for all involved to participate in given exercises. Member States and Participating States' Civil Protection authorities should ensure availability by relieving the concerned persons and teams of other commitments during these times.

In case of international deployments, changes to the planning may be requested. In those cases, the decision of when to undertake certification will be re-evaluated by the Commission in coordination with the Member state or the Participating State.

ANNEX 3: LIST OF DOCUMENTS ASSESSED DURING THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

During the different steps of the registration and certification process, a relevant number of documents will be assessed.

The table below provides a list of them, and is intended as an operational tool to support the capacities undergoing the certification. In particular, concerning the Standards Operating Procedures, the reference document is the EU “Guideline for Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), integrated with some best practices and lessons learnt.

Relevant documentation list		Available (Y/N)	Comments
Political Commitment			
Application form			
Capacity fact sheet			To be up-dated for any specific deployment/exercise (contact details, transport, radio frequencies, requested area for BoO, fuel, subsistence,...)
Standard Operating Procedures including:			Ref. to EU guidelines
General	Capacity structure and organigram with personnel tasks		
	Training file for capacity members (national, UCPM, Safety and Security, other international), including English language skills		
	Equipment packing list (including dangerous goods)		
	Team members contact list (including passport, driving license, vaccination, emergency contact,..)		
	Capacity Terms of Reference/Mission Order		
	Operation manual for tools and equipment		
Check-lists	Checklist for establishing BoO (including Safety and Security, camp management, waste management,...)		
	Sketch of BoO lay-out		
	Check-list for personnel preparedness before mission(including grab bag)		
	Checklist for RDC		
Procedures and Plans	Border crossing, customs and visa procedures		
	Personnel accountability procedure		
	Vaccination protocol		
	Medical protocol (including screening before and after deployment)		
	Equipment control procedure		
	Information Management plan		
	Communication plan		
	Media plan		
	Demobilisation plan		
	Safety and security plan		
Templates	Evacuation plan (including medical evacuation plan)		
	Daily situation report template		
	Affected country information template		
	Log-book template		
	Plan of action template		
	Handover template		
	Donation template		
End of mission report template			