



# RMDS/G 04.20

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## SALW Accounting

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### **Warning**

This document is current with effect from the date shown on the cover page. As the Regional Micro-Disarmament Standards/Guidelines (RMDS/G) are subject to regular review and revision, users should regularly consult the RMDS/G project website in order to verify their current status: [www.seesac.org](http://www.seesac.org)

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## Foreword

On 08 May 2003 the development of regional micro-disarmament<sup>1</sup> standards and guidelines was discussed during the RACVIAC sponsored seminar on '**SALW - A year after Implementation of the Stability Pact Plan**'. The consensus was that such standards and guidelines were desirable, and SEESAC agreed to develop a framework and then take responsibility for the future development of regional standards. It was agreed RMDS/G would be designed to support the work at the operational level, and would go further than the more generic 'best practice' documents currently available. After a wide-ranging discussion between stakeholders as to the status of RMDS/G it has been agreed that the term 'standards' will refer to the technical issues, whilst 'guidelines' will apply to 'programme' issues.

This RMDS/G<sup>2</sup> reflects the development of operational procedures, practices and norms, which have occurred over the past four years in the area of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)<sup>3</sup> control. Best operational practices have been identified and reviewed from within the region and beyond, and included as appropriate within this RMDS/G.

SEESAC has a mandate under the Stability Pact Regional Implementation Plan to fulfil, among others, operational objectives of 1) sharing information on and enhancing co-operation in the establishment and implementation of SALW control and reduction programmes and approaches among regional actors; and 2) providing linkage and co-ordination with the other relevant regional initiatives. The development of RMDS/G is one means of fulfilling that mandate.

The work of preparing, reviewing and revising these standards and guidelines is conducted by SEESAC, with the support of international, governmental and non-governmental organisations and consultants. The latest version of each standard, together with background information on the development work, can be found at [www.seesac.org](http://www.seesac.org). RMDS/G will be reviewed at least every three years to reflect developing SALW control norms and practices, and to incorporate changes to international regulations and requirements. The latest review was conducted on 01 March 2006, which has reflected the development of the UN Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) [www.unddr.org](http://www.unddr.org), which include RMDS/G as a normative reference in the Disarmament and the SALW Control modules.

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<sup>1</sup> Defined as: 'The monitoring, collection, control and final disposal of small arms, related ammunition and explosives and light weapons of combatants and often also of the civilian population. It includes the development of responsible weapons and ammunition management programmes'. Often used interchangeably with SALW control in the past, but SALW Control is now the recognised terminology. The term Micro-Disarmament has only been used here to ensure consistency of the RMDS/G concept, rather than renaming the standards.

<sup>2</sup> The layout and format of RMDS/G are based on the highly successful International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). The cooperation of the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) is acknowledged by SEESAC during the development of RMDS/G.

<sup>3</sup> There is no agreed international definition of SALW. For the purposes of RMDS/G the following definition will apply: '**All lethal conventional munitions that can be carried by an individual combatant or a light vehicle, that also do not require a substantial logistic and maintenance capability**'

## Introduction

Small arms, light weapons and ammunition are inherently dangerous. In the wrong hands, and in sufficient quantities, they can be politically destabilising and lead to and exacerbate conflict. As such, they can present grave dangers, both to national governments and to international and regional peace-building efforts. The most effective way that they can be kept in check is by interventions and programmes for micro-disarmament and the control of SALW.

There are many inter-relational factors that determine the type of SALW control intervention, and its subsequent success or failure. This requires that a number of mechanisms have to be set up to implement the process. These mechanisms need to be planned, coordinated and used to ensure the success of a national SALW plan. One of these mechanisms is the system for SALW accounting, which is necessary for assessing the nature of the problem, ensuring transparency of the process, as a control measure in its own right and as a tool to support the measurement of the success of the SALW intervention. As such, it is an important part of the SALW programme.

# SALW Accounting

## 1 Scope

This RMDS/G establishes the guiding principles for the establishment of a methodology for accounting for SALW. The national SALW commission<sup>4</sup>, which is responsible for the safe, efficient and effective planning and execution of SALW control intervention activities, should make an appropriate organization(s) responsible for the accounting process.

## 2 References

A list of normative references is given in Annex A. Normative references are important documents to which reference is made in this standard, and which form part of the provisions of this standard.

## 3 Terms and definitions

A list of terms and definitions used in this standard is given in Annex B. A complete glossary of all the terms and definitions used in the RMDS/G series of standards is given in RMDS/G 02.10.

In the RMDS/G series of standards, the words 'shall', 'should' and 'may' are used to indicate the intended degree of compliance. This use is consistent with the language used in ISO standards and guidelines.

- a) 'shall' is used to indicate requirements, methods or specifications that are to be adopted in order to satisfy the standard in full;
- b) 'should' is used to indicate the preferred requirements, methods or specifications; and
- c) 'may' is used to indicate a possible method or course of action.

The term 'national authority' refers to the government department(s), organisation(s) or institution(s) in each SALW country charged with the regulation, management and co-ordination of SALW activities.

## 4 Role of accounting in a national SALW programme

For SALW intervention efforts at a national level to be truly effective it is important that an integrated and comprehensive approach is taken to understand the nature of the national SALW problem, in numerical as well as societal terms. It is also vital during an arms collection and destruction programme to have a rigorous and transparent accountancy system, to ensure that all weapons surrendered are destroyed, and that weapons surrender is, and is seen to be, equal or proportional across the various groups holding illicit weapons.

## 5 Establishment of an accounting system

### 5.1 Setting up the accounting organisation

The accounting organisation shall be nominated by the national SALW commission during its initial planning for the SALW intervention programme. It should be staffed, accommodated and functioning before the survey of weapon impact and distribution, because accounting staff will need

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<sup>4</sup> National SALW commissions have been called a variety of names in previous SALW interventions. These include; national SALW co-ordination committee, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) committee, DDR authority etc. For the purposes of this RMDS/G these names all refer to a 'national SALW commission'. For information on the national commission see RMDS/G 03.10.

to contribute to the survey process. It is important that their activities are seen to be neutral, independent and subject to monitoring and verification by appropriate organizations.

## 5.2 Roles of the accounting organisation

The role of the accounting organisation shall include responsibility for:

- a) assistance during the weapons impact and distribution survey, to estimate the numbers of illegal weapons held by the various warring factions, communities or entities;
- b) collection of records of legal and stolen weapons and ammunition from the police and armed services;
- c) preparation of a weapons database, to include the quantities, types, serial numbers and sources of legal and surrendered weapons<sup>5</sup>;
- d) assistance at the weapons collection points, for the gathering of data on surrendered weapons;
- e) analysis of the weapons data, to indicate the weapons numbers surrendered from each group or faction, and the estimated numbers retained;
- f) monitoring of the weapons destruction points to register the destruction of each surrendered weapon or group of ammunition items;
- g) monitoring of the destruction of explosive munitions surrendered during the programme;
- h) preparation of weapon destruction certificates for the warring factions, communities or entities;
- i) continuous updating of the SALW programme database; and
- j) briefing the national SALW commission, donors and sponsors of the SALW programme, members of the SALW awareness campaign, communities, media and NGOs on the numbers and estimated proportions of the weapons surrendered.

## 5.3 Composition of accounting organisation

The accounting organisation team should include:

- a) sufficient staff to be present at weapons collection points;
- b) staff members trained in the use of computers;
- c) staff members with sufficient seniority and standing to gain detailed information from police and military sources;
- d) staff members with sufficient integrity and credibility to be able to gain and maintain the confidence of all stakeholders
- e) staff members with knowledge of all relevant national languages, or a team of interpreters;
- f) an independent group to monitor the accounting organisation's data collection and storage; and
- g) an element for liaison with the national SALW awareness campaign.

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<sup>5</sup> SEESAC has developed a SALW Inventory Software system based on Microsoft® Access. It is available direct from SEESAC on request. UNDP BCPR SADU has developed a fully integrated system (DREAM) to support all SALW control and DDR programmes, which is available on request from SADU.

## **5.4 Authority for direct contact**

The accounting organisation will be authorised to work directly where necessary with the following national organisations:

- a) Ministry of Interior / Internal Affairs;
- b) Ministry of Defence;
- c) Ministry of Justice;
- d) National Focal Point <sup>6</sup>; and
- e) United Nations Development Programme, (as Chief Technical Advisor if directly supporting a national programme).

## **6 Areas of responsibility**

### **6.1 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**

UNDP has a general responsibility for enabling, assisting and encouraging the effective management of SALW control programmes by continuously maintaining an overview of RMDS/G to reflect developing SALW control norms and practices, and by informing all stakeholders of any changes to international regulations and requirements.

UNDP should apply RMDS/G to its SALW intervention programmes, activities and contracts within South Eastern and Eastern Europe unless the local situation precludes their effective application. In such circumstances, when one or more RMDS/G is not appropriate, UNDP will provide alternative specifications, requirements and guidance.

### **6.2 Regional organizations**

In certain areas of the world, regional organizations have been given a mandate by their member states to coordinate and support SALW control programmes within a state national boundaries. (For example EUFOR within Bosnia and Herzegovina).

In these circumstances the regional organization should assume many of the responsibilities and roles of the national SALW authority, and could also act as a conduit for donor resources. The responsibilities and roles of regional organizations for SALW control will vary from state to state and may be subject to specific Memoranda of Understanding, or similar agreements.

### **6.3 National SALW authority <sup>7</sup>**

The national SALW authority should be responsible for ensuring the national conditions that enable the effective management of national SALW intervention projects. The national SALW authority is ultimately responsible for developing and managing the SALW intervention programme within its national boundaries.

The national SALW authority shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining a SALW accounting system in support of SALW intervention planning and operations. The system should be consistent with the guidelines provided by RMDS/G, and other relevant national and international standards, regulations and requirements.

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<sup>6</sup> This should be the nominated individual, not the organisation providing the NFP.

<sup>7</sup> In this case the national SALW authority, if the same as the national SALW commission, may be responsible to itself.



#### **6.4 SALW Control organizations**

NGOs, commercial companies and other organizations involved in SALW control interventions shall make every effort to liaise and cooperate with the national SALW commission in order to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and safety of SALW control interventions.

## **Annex A (Normative) References**

The following normative documents contain provisions, which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this part of the standard. For dated references, subsequent amendments to, or revisions of, any of these publications do not apply. However, parties to agreements based on this part of the standard are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent editions of the normative documents indicated below. For undated references, the latest edition of the normative document referred to applies. Members of ISO and IEC maintain registers of currently valid ISO or EN:

- a) RMDS/G 01.10 - Guide to RMDS/G and SALW control measures;
- b) RMDS/G 03.40 - Marking and tracing of SALW;
- c) RMDS/G 04.40 - Monitoring of SALW programmes;
- d) RMDS/G 05.10 - SALW collection;
- e) RMDS/G 05.20 - SALW destruction;
- f) RMDS/G 05.80 - SALW survey; and
- g) RMDS/G 06.10 - Development and implementation of SALW awareness campaigns.

The latest version/edition of these references should be used. SEESAC hold copies of all references used in this standard. A register of the latest version/edition of the RMDS/G standards, guides and references is maintained by SEESAC, and can be read on the RMDS/G website: <http://www.seesac.org/>. National SALW authorities, employers and other interested bodies and organisations should obtain copies before commencing SALW programmes.

## **Annex B** **(Informative)** **Terms and definitions**

### **B.1.1**

#### **micro-disarmament**

the collection, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives, light and heavy weapons of combatants and often also of the civilian population. It includes the development of responsible arms management programmes.

### **B.1.2**

#### **national authority**

the government department(s), organization(s) or institution(s) in a country charged with the regulation, management and coordination of **SALW** activities.

### **B.1.3**

#### **Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)**

all lethal conventional munitions that can be carried by an individual combatant or a light vehicle, that also do not require a substantial logistic and maintenance capability.

Note: There are a variety of definitions for SALW circulating and international consensus on a 'correct' definition has yet to be agreed. For the purposes of RMDS/G the above definition will be used.

### **B.1.4**

#### **standard**

a standard is a documented agreement containing technical specifications or other precise criteria to be used consistently as rules, guidelines, or definitions of characteristics to ensure that materials, products, processes and services are fit for their purpose.

Note: RMDS/G aim to improve safety and efficiency in SALW Control by promoting the preferred procedures and practices at both headquarters and field level. To be effective, the standards should be definable, measurable, achievable and verifiable.