



# INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF MILITARY MEDICINE SECRETARIAT GENERAL

## PRACTICAL GUIDE

### USEFUL INFORMATION FOR DELEGATES

*This practical guide is based on the Statutes and regulations of the ICMM.  
It is not a regulatory document.*

**Edition: 2018**

#### **1. Purpose of this practical guide**

The purpose of this practical guide is to give ICMM delegates and their points of contact (POC) an overview of how the ICMM works. Delegates will have a better understanding of how they can be involved in the ICMM, and how the organization can help them and the country, which nominated them.

The National Delegate of a Member State of the ICMM represents its country at the ICMM General and Regional Assemblies. He can also be active in fostering scientific discussions, exchange of scientific knowledge and practical experience and collaborations with other Member States, by sending personnel of the Health Service of his or her national Armed Forces to the various activities of the ICMM (World Congresses, Regional Congresses, Courses,...) .

This guide outlines how the ICMM is organized and describes its main activities. This information will help National Delegates to improve communication with the Secretariat General and other Member States.

This information can be read in more detail on the ICMM website, and we will refer to this in the practical guide. We suggest you consult the website while reading this document:  
[www.cimm-icmm.org](http://www.cimm-icmm.org).

#### **2. History of the ICMM**

For more details, please look at the HISTORIC page on the website.

The International Committee of Military Medicine (ICMM) is a neutral and impartial organization, founded in 1921. More than 100 States of all five continents are now member of the ICMM. A list of Member States with their National Delegate and a link to website of their military health service can be found on the ICMM website under "Member States".

### **3. Objectives of the ICMM**

The ICMM is a neutral International Intergovernmental organization. The fundamental objective of the ICMM is to be a forum where all countries can exchange information and discuss their experience". After all, the mission of the Health Services consists of all activities that can preserve, maintain and restore the physical and psychological well-being of military and civilian personnel serving in the Armed and Defense Forces, in medical, pharmacy, dentistry, nursing care, veterinary services, administrative and logistical services. This is a long-term goal, and the ICMM can work towards achieving this in a number of ways: by encouraging activities at which scientific and technical experience is shared, by developing contacts with the scientific community, by promoting international and regional events.

Other ICMM objectives include:

- to maintain and strengthen relations between Medical Services of Member States
- to promote scientific military medical activities
- to provide where necessary best practices and standards which Member States can aim for
- to help to develop medical and military medical recommendations for humanitarian operations - these could range from Armed Forces humanitarian interventions to peacekeeping operations
- to facilitate relations between Armed Forces Medical Services of ICMM Member States and international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), the World Medical Association (WMA), the World Veterinary Association (WVA), the International Military Sports Council (CISM).

The above objectives are of interest to all sectors of military medicine in the wider sense. (Please refer to the Practical Guides to Scientific Aspects of World and Regional Congress organization, available on the OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS web page.) i.e.:

- screening personnel,
- medicine within military units,
- surgery in the theatre of operations,
- emergency medicine,
- disaster response,
- public health,
- dentistry,
- pharmacy,
- veterinary science,
- administration and medical logistics,
- nurses and paramedical personnel
- International Humanitarian Law and Ethics
- Education and training.

#### **4. How the ICMM try to reach the objectives ?**

Since its beginning, the ICMM always united, in uniform, Health Services from all over the world, even during the worst period of the Cold War, in strict neutrality and impartiality, respecting the decisions of the UN. Currently ICMM has over 100 Member States from all continents.

On the website, the page “**MEMBER STATES**” gives the list of these countries, the names of their National Delegates and links to the websites of their individual Armed Forces Medical Services.

It is essential for ICMM to maintain contact with all the Member States, and to make sure they are involved in preparing the topics for discussion and decision-making at General Assembly.

The Secretariat General of the ICMM also tries to ensure that information relating to the activities of the ICMM reaches all the members of the Medical Services (and not only the National Delegates). There is an increasing need within regions to share information at all levels, by means of training courses, regional congresses and holding international courses at regional venues.

Another challenge is to meet the need for specialized training for medical personnel in specific regional situations, particularly in a context where personnel could be deployed anywhere in the world, in different types of operations. The ICMM can play a role in promoting practical and theoretical training and introduce personnel to the international organizations they may need to work with in the field.

#### **5. Activities**

##### Forum

The main role of the ICMM is to promote the sharing of both scientific and technological information in all fields of military medicine.

This is achieved through World Congresses and Regional Congresses with oral presentations, poster sessions, round table discussions and workshops, attended by member state delegations and observers. Multilateral discussions and international courses also serve this purpose.

In addition, the ICMM has a regularly updated website ([www.cimm-icmm.org](http://www.cimm-icmm.org)), a Newsletter and publishes an official quarterly review: the International Review of the Armed Forces Medical Services.

##### Education and Training support

The main objectives of the ICMM in this field are:

- to encourage discussion of training methods used worldwide,
- to suggest program outlines (for optional use),
- to create a library of resources based on existing training courses,
- to organize international courses, if necessary.

##### Assessment of crisis situations

This is a subject, which is regularly addressed at the congresses. The ICMM would like to promote discussions of lessons learned and experience in the field, by organizing a symposium to assess the activity of medical services in the case of major natural or technological disasters.

## Cooperation with international organizations

The ICMM has signed agreements with WHO, ICRC, OIE, WMA, WVA and CISM. These agreements provide for cooperation with medical services of our Member States.

## Study of the evolution of International Humanitarian Law (IHL)

It is clear today that current conflicts and military interventions impose an evolution of the international humanitarian law. Thanks to experiences in the ICMM environment, we can collaborate, for this matter, with specialized organizations.

A course on Law of Armed Conflicts and a basic course on military medical ethics is organized every year by the ICMM Reference Center for Education of International Humanitarian Law and Ethics, thanks to the support of the Armed Forces of Switzerland. This course is also organized at a regional level.

Every year, a workshop on Military Medical Ethics is organized by the Reference Center, also with the support of Switzerland.

The General Assembly of the ICMM in Bali in May 2015 approved the document "Ethical Principles of Health Care in Times of Armed Conflict and Other Emergencies". This Ethical document was prepared within the framework of the "Health Care in Danger" project of the ICRC in cooperation with the WMA, the International Council of Nurses, the International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA ), the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) and the ICMM. After publication, this document was endorsed by several other health organizations, such as the WHO, MSF, .... This document is a reminder not only of the ethical principles for health care providers but also of those principles protecting health care providers as set out in the Geneva Conventions.

The Resolution 2286 of the Security Council of the United Nations adopted on May 3, 2016, was based on this ethical document.

The Resolution 2286 of the Security Council of the United Nations:

- Strongly condemns acts of violence, attacks and threats against the wounded and sick, medical personnel and humanitarian personnel exclusively engaged in medical duties, their means of transport and equipment, as well as hospitals and other medical facilities....
- Demands that all parties to armed conflicts fully comply with their obligations under international law and international humanitarian law...and that all parties to armed conflicts facilitate safe and unimpeded passage for medical personnel exclusively engaged in medical duties...
- Strongly urges States and all parties to armed conflict to develop effective measures to prevent acts of violence..
- Underlines the important role of education and training in international humanitarian law.

## **6. Statutes and management of the ICMM**

The Statutes are available on the OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS page of the website. It will be easier to understand the structure of the ICMM by looking at the web page TEAM.

The following paragraphs describe in more detail the work of the team members and refer to important aspects of the Statutes.

The ICMM is a neutral intergovernmental organization, composed of Member States which are part of the UN, or have UN observer status, or are recognized by the WHO. Each Member State has submitted an official request to join the ICMM (and subscribe to its Statutes) from its Ministry of Defense or Ministry of Foreign Affairs or a high governmental authority. This request is addressed to the Secretary General and is then submitted for approval by the General Assembly of the Member States. The government then appoints its delegate, who is generally the Head of the Armed Forces Medical Service.

The official languages used in debates are French and English (Article 32.1 of the Statutes). The use of any other language, whether on a temporary or permanent basis, shall be subject to a protocol decided and signed by the Secretary General of the ICMM and one or more Member States in accordance with Article 32.2 of the Statutes.

We will now look at each of the key positions in the management team. If you would like to know the name of the person currently holding a position, this can be found on the web page TEAM. E-mail addresses are given on the WHO WE ARE page.

It is important to mention that none of the management team receives a salary. The Secretariat General is run on an entirely voluntary basis, with related expenses paid either by the ICMM or by the team member's own country.

The **Chairman of the ICMM** is from the country, which organized the last World Congress. He heads the **legislative branch** of the ICMM, directing the work of the General Assembly. His mandate (non-renewable) spans the period between two World Congresses, which is normally 2 years. There are two Deputy Chairmen: one is the immediate past Chairman, the other is the future Chairman.

The **Secretary General** is elected by the General Assembly for a 4-year renewable mandate. In accordance with the Statutes, he must be a Belgian military physician and, to guarantee his neutrality, it is preferable that he be retired. He heads the **executive branch** of the ICMM and reports on his activities to the Chairman and to the General Assembly. He is supported by a secretariat of which the headquarters have always been in Belgium (Brussels), at the invitation of the Belgian government. This situation has enabled the ICMM to function in a stable environment without the relocation costs and staff turnover, which would inevitably be incurred if a Secretary General of a different nationality were elected. The Secretary General is assisted by the Deputy Secretary General, also elected by the General Assembly for a 4-year mandate.

The **“political and diplomatic”** aspect of the Secretary General's responsibilities includes communication, international relations, political and financial issues. To support this aspect of his assignment, he may appoint staff, if necessary, to the team of the Secretariat General.

The **International Working Group** (IWG) is composed by the Bureau of the ICMM according to Art 21 of the Statutes and the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Regional Working Groups. The IWG has a role of interface between the Secretary General and the participants of the next General Assembly. The IWG assists the Secretary General in policy development and proposes measures to be discussed or voted during the next General Assembly. The IWG has only an advisory role and its proposals do not engage the political responsibility of the participating members

The **Scientific Council** is in charge of the **“scientific and technical”** aspect of the ICMM's activities. The Scientific Council discusses all scientific matters. Its Chairman is elected by the General Assembly for a 4-year renewable mandate. He is assisted by several **Technical**

**Commissions** (TC's). Each of these Commissions represents a part of the military health community and is chaired by one of the Member states. The Chairman of a TC is elected by the General Assembly for a 4-year mandate (renewable once). There are TC's for Dentistry, Pharmacy, Veterinary Sciences, Medico-Military Administration, Nurses and Paramedical Personnel and the ICMM reference Center for Education on International Humanitarian Law and Ethics.

The Chairman of the Scientific Council may also nominate specialists and advisors to assist him where necessary. Specific Working Groups of national experts around well-defined projects may be created. These groups receive a clear mandate, limited in time, with fixed objectives.

The Chairman of the Scientific Council is the Editor-in-Chief of the ICMM Review : "The International Review of the Armed Forces Medical Services".

The Chairman of the Scientific Council is in contact with International Course Coordinators, who are in charge of the training/teaching methods and scientific content of international courses. He tries to guarantee the scientific level of the World Congress, of the Regional Congresses and of the international courses by liaising with the Secretaries of the Scientific Committees of the Congresses (in order to choose scientific topics and select presentations).

In order to promote experience-sharing or to organize scientific events on a regional basis, certain Member States in a region may wish to form a **Regional Working Group** (RWG), under the Secretary General's responsibility. The RWG must be recognized at the General Assembly session following its inception. At the present time, there are 6 Regional Working Groups (Maghreb, Pan-African, Pan-American, Pan Arab, Pan Asia Pacific and Pan European), and they organize events such as congresses and courses during the period between World Congresses. The Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the RWGs also assist the Secretary General in the IWG and in the political and diplomatic aspect of his work.

During Regional Congresses (generally held during even-numbered years), delegates from Member States may hold a Regional Assembly meeting. This meeting is a means for the RWG to discuss questions relating to its organization and activities. However, the Regional Assembly does not have any legislative authority, unlike the ICMM General Assembly.

Rules governing the Scientific Council, the IWG, the RWGs, World Congresses, Regional Congresses and courses are published in the form of official **Regulations of Internal Order** (as decided by the General Assembly). There is also a set of Practical Guides edited by the Secretariat General. The finalized approved documents are available for download on the web page **OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS**. They contain useful information for any Member State wishing to organize an event.

## **7. The General Assembly**

Decisions are taken at the ICMM General Assembly, where all the National Delegates convene. It is held during the ICMM World Congress, every 2 years (odd-numbered years).

As the ICMM is a neutral, apolitical organization, the recommendations of the General Assembly are not binding, and respect the principle of sovereignty for each Member State. Only the legislative authority of a Member State can implement recommendations within its own Armed Forces. During the General Assembly, National Delegates may only express the official opinion of their governments.

Prior to the General Assembly, the Secretariat General works with the IWG to ensure that discussions are as brief and pertinent as possible. The agenda of the General Assembly (and any

necessary documents regarding issues to be discussed) are sent to the National Delegates in the months preceding the meeting.

During the Congress, each National Delegate is requested to pass at the stand of the Secretariat General, which is usually near the registration desk. Delegates may be asked to provide any missing information (see paragraph 11). They are given a file with additional information, along with a yellow card, which serves as an entrance pass to the General Assembly. A National Delegate may be accompanied by two people (max.): a deputy delegate and an interpreter, for whom entrance passes are also issued. At registration, National Delegates are given a (red) voting card or an electronic voting box, provided that their country's membership contributions have been paid in full.

All yellow passes are checked at the entrance to the General Assembly hall. Delegations are to be seated at their designated tables.

The General Assembly holds two half-day sessions.

- Reports on activities and future plans are given by: the Secretary General, the Chairman of the Scientific Council, the Chairmen of the Technical Commissions, the Directors of International Courses, the secretary nominated to speak for the IWG and the Chairmen of RWGs.
- International organizations may be invited to present their collaboration with the ICMM.
- Three officers are named by the General Assembly to sit in the Auditing commission. They are appointed to audit the accounts and check that the report of the financial expert expert's accurately reflects the state of the ICMM accounts. During the second session, this commission reports to the General Assembly, and a vote of discharge is held.
- The Secretary General presents the budget for the upcoming period for approval by voting.
- The General Assembly then votes on matters on the agenda and, after hearing candidates' presentations, elects new officials (according to vacancies: ~~the~~ Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General, Chairman of the Scientific Council, Deputy Chairman of the Scientific Council, Chairmen of Technical Commissions).
- Only the Head of each national delegation has the right to vote, providing the country's contributions have been paid in full. Observers are not allowed to vote.
- For decisions on proposals, voting is by show of hands (holding up the red cards) or by an electronic voting system in response to the Chairman's questions: "Who votes in favour?", "Who votes against?", "Who abstains?". For matters concerning individual people, voting is by secret ballot.

An example of agenda of the General Assembly is presented in the annex.

## **8. Budget and Membership Contributions**

The budget primarily covers: the normal cost of running the secretariat, expenses incurred by members of the Secretariat General which are not covered by countries organizing an event (see "Regulations of Internal Order", approved by the General Assembly, on the ICMM webpage, under "**OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS**"), and the cost of mailing the International Review of the Armed Forces Medical Services.

The budget is dependent on the payment of membership contributions. Each Member State pays a yearly contribution, taking into consideration objective criteria (classification by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, Global Domestic Product).

Payment of membership contributions allows the country and its National Delegate to:

- discuss and vote at the General Assembly
- nominate candidates for key positions within the ICMM
- organize activities recognized by the ICMM (World Congresses, Regional Congresses, Courses...)
- send its Medical Service personnel to any scientific activities organized by the ICMM
- participate in one or several RWGs and to discuss and vote at the Regional Assembly
- receive the International Review of the Armed Forces Medical Services.

If a number of countries do not pay their contributions, the budget suffers, and the number of organized activities may need to be reduced.

The notice to pay the yearly contributions is sent to the National Delegate of each Member State (both directly and through diplomatic channels) during the first quarter. National Delegates are, therefore, vital in ensuring that their country's contribution is paid on time.

## **9. The International Review of Armed Forces Medical Services**

Every quarter, the ICMM publishes its official journal, the International Review of Armed Forces Medical Services (IRAFMS). This publication is one of the ways we can connect the different Medical Services of our members.

It contains scientific articles by military medical scientists from Member States, which have been approved by the ICMM Scientific Council. The Review is the scientific showcase for the ICMM as well as for the Member States presenting the articles.

National Delegates are expected to encourage their staff to submit scientific or technical articles.

Recommendations to authors are to be found in the IRAFMS, and on the ICMM web page, under "**REVIEW**" and in the Practical Guide - Guidelines for Authors" is to be found on the ICMM web page, under "**OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS**". You can also find archives of abstracts of all the published articles, along with a search option based on keywords, authors or countries.

Each issue of the IRAFMS has an « Add-in folder » - a middle-page supplement giving information about ICMM news, upcoming events, and reports on organized activities. This information can also be found on the website, with links to specific event websites to register. Additionally an ICMM Newsletter is sent, on a regular basis, giving more information.

## **10. The Website of the ICMM**

The website of the ICMM is an increasingly important way to communicate with our Members. Besides the webpages already mentioned in this guide, the language option on the home page leads you to a page with news on upcoming or recent events.

The pages "WORLD CONGRESSES", "REGIONAL CONGRESSES", "TRAINING/EDUCATION", "NEWS", "REVIEW" and "CALENDAR" give more details on these activities.

"WORLD CONGRESSES" is divided into 3 parts – one describing upcoming congresses with links to official congress websites and information on how to register - another showing reports on



past congresses – the third giving scientific abstracts of a selection of the best past presentations.

Under “REGIONAL CONGRESSES” you will find information on the activities of the six regional ICMM working groups.

“TRAINING/EDUCATION” leads to 5 other pages – the first three pages presenting the ICMM Reference Center for Education of International Humanitarian Law and Ethics and the courses on the Law of Armed Conflicts and Military Medical Ethics in Times of Armed Conflicts – the other allows you to read about upcoming courses and events with a link to the course/event website and information on how to register as well as reports on past courses.

The page “WHAT WE DO” is also worth a visit.

You will find a subpage with more information about the types of Scientific Meetings that may be organized under the aegis of the ICMM.

The subpage “ACTIVITIES” opens a PowerPoint presentation of the ICMM, with slides showing some, although not all, of ICMM activities.

Finally, the page “LINKS” gives a list of links to important international organizations.

“CALENDAR” is a page showing a schedule of activities for this year and next year

## **11. The Prizes of the ICMM**

Periodically, the ICMM awards TWO prizes for scientific work in military medicine or in the medico-legal field. The results are announced during the World Congress.

The JULES VONCKEN PRIZE rewards the original unpublished work of an author or group of authors belonging to the regular or reserve ~~officer~~ corps of the Armed Forces Health Services. In principle, the best article published in the IRAFMS between two World congresses is awarded with the JULES VONCKEN PRIZE.

The WILLIAM S. BAINBRIDGE PRIZE rewards the original work of an author or group of authors, presented as a poster presentation at the scientific sessions, organized by the Scientific Committee of the country organizing the World Congress of the ICMM.

The Prize consists of a sum of money. The Bureau of the International Committee decides the amount, at the time of announcement of the Prize.

## **12. How National Delegates can get involved**

When a country becomes a member of the ICMM, there is an implied moral obligation to be as active as possible.

Involvement in the ICMM can be measured by the way countries actively participate in activities, or successfully host ICMM events.

If, as a National Delegate, you want to get the most from your involvement with the ICMM, here are some ideas about what you can do:

- send your staff to take part in ICMM training courses
- bring a significant delegation with you to the World and Regional Congresses and encourage them to submit abstracts for oral or poster presentation
- encourage staff to submit scientific articles for publication in the IRAFMS
- during the period between World Congresses, stay in contact with other National Delegates, and give them your views about what should be discussed at the next Congress
- volunteer to work in one of the key positions in the ICMM, or submit the name of one of your staff, if they are interested
- decide to organize a recognized ICMM course or congress (World Congress or Regional Congress)
- stand for election as Chairman of a RWG, to head the Regional Assembly and thus take on the organization of the group's Regional Congress in your country
- stand for election as Chairman of the ICMM, to head the General Assembly of all National Delegates and undertake the organization of the most important ICMM event: the World Congress.

### **13. Important information to be given to the ICMM secretariat general**

Ideally, when a new National Delegate is appointed to represent his country, he should contact the Secretary General by e-mail [info@cimm-icmm.org](mailto:info@cimm-icmm.org) to notify him of the changes. A letter may also be sent through diplomatic channels, in addition to the e-mail.

He or she should send his/her CV in one of the official languages, along with a photo. The website can then be updated and the CV published in the "Add-in folder" of the IRAFMS.

Two e-mail addresses should be given to the Secretary General: the Delegate's own address, and the address of the Officer in charge of relations with the ICMM (POC). To avoid problems contacting Member States, it is advisable to keep the same e-mail address for relations with the ICMM, whoever the National Delegate may be. These e-mail addresses will be used if the ICMM needs to contact the National Delegate directly, and also to send ICMM news (which in turn could be forwarded to any other staff in the Medical Service who may be interested).

The address of the website of the Military Health Service of the Delegate should also be given, so that a link can be set up from the ICMM website.

National Delegates should also confirm the number of copies of the Review they wish to receive, and the address they should be sent to (from which the copies can be distributed internally). Any information concerning these points can be sent by e-mail at any time to the ICMM address: [info@cimm-icmm.org](mailto:info@cimm-icmm.org).

The protection of personal data of the National Delegates and the members of their Armed Forces Health Service is top priority issue for the ICMM, which we are taking very seriously. The data is are treated confidentially and according to legal regulations, especially the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of the EU.

## **Annex: Example of an agenda of a General Assembly**

<b>FIRST SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY</b>
Welcome speech and opening of the General Assembly by the Chairman of the ICMM
1) Verification of legal requirements of the General Assembly
2) Nomination of new Member States: presentation of candidatures and vote on the admission of new members
3) Activities report by the Secretary General
4) Activities report of the Chairman of the Scientific Council, the Chairmen of the Technical Commissions, the Director of the ICMM Center of Reference for Education on IHL and Ethics and the Chairmen of the Ad Hoc Working Groups
5) Report of the Secretary of the Chairman of the International Working Group
6) Voting by the General Assembly concerning proposals requested in the points 3, 4, and 5
7) Mandates of the team of the Secretariat General and the Scientific Council: presentation of the candidatures
8) Appointment of the new Vice-Chairman of the ICMM
9) Presentation of the candidatures of Member States for the next World Congresses (4 or 6 years later)
10) Presentation of the financial report of the past period
11) Appointment of the three members of the Auditing Commission

<b>SECOND SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY</b>
Opening of the second session by the Chairman of the ICMM
1) Interventions of the International Organizations in relation with the ICMM
2) Elections for the new mandates of the team of the Secretariat General and the Scientific Council: vote
3) Elections for the host of the next World Congress: vote
4) Activities report by the Regional Working Groups (RWG)
5) Presentation of upcoming events and Regional Congresses by each Chairman of a RWG.
6) Possible proposal of creation of one or several new RWG or 'ad hoc' WG
7) Presentation of the proposed budget for the next year
8) Vote on the financial balance and the budget
9) Invitation to the next World Congress - Presentation of the place of the next World Congress by the next host country
10) Miscellaneous - ICMM honorary appointments
11) Conclusion, thanks and closing of the General Assembly