



INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF MILITARY MEDICINE

SECRETARIAT GENERAL

PRACTICAL GUIDE

ICMM REGIONAL CONGRESS ORGANIZATION

SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS

Ref: ICMM Statutes and Regulations.

Edition: May, 2008

The aim of this guide, based on the ICMM Statutes, Regulations and the experience of the Secretariat General, is to support the countries during the organization of an ICMM Regional Congress.

This guide is not a regulation.

Another practical guide is available, concerning the questions of protocol.

Since its creation in 1921, the ICMM has organized a number of International Congresses at which delegates from Member States have been able to meet. These Congresses provide an opportunity to share information about scientific research and technical innovations, and allow us to discuss our experiences for the benefit of all.

Since 2002, the ICMM has facilitated the creation of Regional Working Groups in order to adapt to specific regional situations. These Regional Working Groups, consistent with article 22 of the ICMM Statutes, may be created under the responsibility of the Secretary General, whenever a certain number of Member States (having a common linguistic or geographical link) make the request. This policy has naturally led to the organization of Regional Congresses, based on the model of the International Congress.

The Member State appointed by the Regional Assembly to hold the next Regional Congress must manage the organization of the Congress itself, along with the preparation of the scientific sessions. The Secretariat General of the ICMM serves as a resource for technical support for the organizing country. Within the country, two organizing bodies are created: the Congress Organizing Committee and the Congress Scientific Committee. The Director General of the Congress is appointed by the Head of Armed Forces Medical Services of the host country, and it is his role to coordinate the work of the two organizing committees.

The decision to approve a country's request to hold a Regional Congress is taken by a vote at the Regional Assembly, generally during an ICMM Regional Congress. Approval may be granted up to six years before the Congress. For the country's request to be considered, the Secretary General must receive confirmation signed by the Head of Armed Forces Medical Services of that country.

The national delegate of a Member State designated to organize a Regional Congress becomes Deputy Chairman of the Regional Group and is appointed to serve from the Congress preceding his own until the Congress which follows it.

I- DIRECTOR GENERAL, ORGANIZING COMMITTEE AND SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE.

1- The Director General of the Congress (DGC).

Article 12 of the statutes stipulates that the Head of Armed Forces Medical Services commissioned by his Member State to organize Regional Congress of Military Medicine, may appoint a person to serve as Director General of the said Congress. Some nations prefer to use the term Secretary General of the Congress, but this is not the title mentioned in the Statutes of the ICMM.

The DGC

- must be a member of a medical profession or of an ancillary medical profession or of a health profession, serving or having served with the regular or reserve officer corps of the Armed Forces Medical Services;
- is officially appointed and assumes office until all the administrative tasks related to the Congress organized by his Member State are completed;
- is responsible for the material organization of scientific and administrative activities related to the Congress;
- serves as a temporary member of the Scientific Council during his period of office.

2- The Congress Organizing Committee (COC).

This committee is comprised of officers serving in the Armed Forces Medical Services of the host country.

Its members and Chairman are appointed by the Head of the Armed Forces Medical Services of that country.

The Chairman of the COC is the person in direct contact with the ICMM Secretariat General **for all matters concerning the material organization of the Congress, logistics and communication.**

He will also be in contact with the Director of Communication of the ICMM in order to prepare announcements about the upcoming Congress to inform all the Member States. This information will then be published in the *International Review of the Armed Forces Medical Services* and on the ICMM and the Congress websites. **He must ensure that the logo of the Congress and the logo of the ICMM appear jointly on all the documents used for the announcements.**

The COC is responsible for the organization of the **material aspects of the Congress, which is vital to the success of the scientific activities.**

A major part of this task is selecting suitable rooms and making sure the necessary equipment is available (see paragraphs VII and VIII).

It is important to provide for:

- the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the Congress,
- scientific sessions,
- round table meetings,
- space to display *posters*,
- Regional Assembly sessions,
- ICMM Secretariat General team meetings,
- space for commercial stands,
- the Cocktail party held to welcome participants,
- coffee breaks and refreshments between the scientific sessions,
- the Gala evening.

Field demonstrations (equipment deployment, exercises ...) may be organized by the Armed Forces Military Medical Services of the host country. These activities need to be planned and rehearsed in advance.

The Head of Armed Forces Medical Services of the organizing country (future Chairman of the Regional Group) provides a biography to be published in the edition of the *International Review of the Armed Forces Medical Services* distributed at the Congress. Information about the military medical services of the host country, along with practical information for visitors about the city of the Congress, will also be included in this publication.

It is necessary to give attendees information about accommodation: a list of hotels within a short distance from the Congress venue (including different price ranges to suit every budget) should be provided. Transport from the hotels to the Congress venue should be made available.

Before the start of the Congress, a reception area should be set up, so that attendees can register.

A Regional Congress may not be held at the same time as an International Congress. An International Congress will always take precedence over a Regional Congress.

Usually, cultural activities are also organized, and these may be free of charge or paid for by attendees. A program of activities for accompanying family members is also customary.

3- The Congress Scientific Committee (CSC).

This committee is comprised of personnel from the Armed Forces Medical Services of the organizing country, having specific skills from the different fields of activity of military medicine. Scientific experts from other Member States of the ICMM may also be part of the Committee.

Its members and its Secretary are appointed by the Head of Armed Forces Medical Services of the organizing country.

The Secretary of the CSC will be in direct contact with the Chairman of the Scientific Council of the ICMM, in order to determine the **topics of the Congress**, and the **choice of the scientific presentations** (in keeping with the criteria defined in the ICMM Statutes).

He will be in contact with the Director of Communication of the ICMM in order to provide the names and details of the authors selected to give a presentation.

The topics of the sessions must refer to the fields of activity of military medicine.

II- THE DIFFERENT FIELDS OF ACTIVITY OF MILITARY MEDICINE.

Military medicine today goes beyond the simple act of giving treatment. It is part of a wider public health system and its main activities are as follows:

1- Screening personnel, assessing and testing their physical and psychological aptitude to serve in the Armed Forces:

a) In medical screening centers.

b) In infirmaries in garrison (regiments, battalions, Air Force bases, Naval bases, Security units).

c) In specialized departments in military hospitals.

2- Medical, surgical and dental treatment:

a) By the medical services of military units, in garrison, in unit infirmaries,

in the theatre of operations to support forces deployed in peacekeeping missions or disaster response programs.

b) By military hospitals,

pre- and post- deployment in military hospital units,

in the theatre of operations in Combat Support Hospitals to support forces deployed in peacekeeping missions or disaster response programs.

3- Preventive medicine:

a) Vaccination of military personnel

b) Food hygiene and water safety (doctors and particularly military veterinarians), in or outside the theatre of operations.

c) Hygiene of living quarters in or outside the theatre of operations.

d) Hygiene and Safety at work.

e) Medical supervision of sport and physical training.

f) Health education.

4- Veterinary medicine.

Veterinary medicine applied to animals used by the Armed Forces (guard dogs, rescue dogs, horses etc.).

Compliance with regulations governing animal protection and welfare in the Armed Forces.

5- Medical Material and Military Pharmacy.

a) Production of certain medicines, serums and vaccines.

- b) Acquisition and storage of medicines, serums, vaccines and medico-surgical equipment.
- c) Supply of medicines, serums, vaccines and medico-surgical equipment to medical units and hospitals in and outside the theatre of operations.

6- Military Medical Logistics:

- a) Financial management for Armed Forces medical services.
- b) Human Resource management.
- c) Management of infrastructures and equipment.
- d) Information management systems.

7- Scientific and medical research.

- a) Research centers, institutes.
- b) Hospitals, specialized centers.
- c) Applied research within units in or outside the theatre of operations.

III- SELECTING THE TOPICS OF THE CONGRESS.

The Congress will have:

- a maximum of 4 main topics, which are the basis for the plenary scientific sessions and the exhibition of *posters*;
- a number of sub-topics, which are the basis for round table discussions, open presentation sessions and displays of *posters*.

The organizing country chooses one of the 4 main topics, while the other 3 are chosen jointly by the Secretary of the Congress Scientific Committee and the Chairman of the Scientific Council of the ICMM.

The sub-topics are chosen by the Congress Scientific Committee after discussion with the Chairman of the Scientific Council of the ICMM.

In addition, in case of enough participation, 5 round table discussions can be organized, specifically dealing with 5 particular fields of activity of military medicine. The topics of these sessions are selected jointly by the Chairman of the Scientific Council of the ICMM, the Chairmen of the five Technical Commissions of the ICMM (Medico-Military Administration and Logistics; Dentistry; Pharmacy, Veterinary Sciences; Education) and the Congress Scientific Committee.

It is important that the chosen topics cover as extensively as possible the different fields of activity of military medicine outlined in paragraph II. In this way, the Congress will attract a wider audience and be of interest to different categories of personnel from the Armed Forces medical services, thus ensuring a wider variety of input and more interesting discussions. If the choice of topics is too narrowly focused, the Congress will interest only those specialized in a particular field. The effect of this would be the opposite of the objectives of the ICMM: to serve as a forum or meeting place for sharing knowledge and experience.

IV- SELECTING PRESENTATIONS.

The Secretary of the CSC is responsible for:

- diffusing, through several medias (mail, reviews, website), *Calls for Abstracts* and *Instructions to the Authors* of these abstracts (see proposed samples in annexes 1 and 2);
- selecting the presentations and building a scientific program for the Congress.

Each author must provide a detailed summary to be published in the *Abstract Book*.

Each abstract selected should be submitted with the complete text of the presentation, illustrations and bibliography, in compliance with the *Recommendations to Authors* (see annex 3) to be published in the *International Review of the Armed Forces Medical Services*.

These documents must be submitted to the organizers before the oral presentation.

Each person attending the Congress will receive (along with some documents and promotional items) the *Abstract Book* of the scientific presentations and a copy of an issue of the *International Review of the Armed Forces Medical Services*.

The CSC must respect the founding principles of the ICMM: **universality of military medicine, strict political neutrality, equal rights for each Member State, respect of the code of medical ethics**. This must be kept in mind when selecting the scientific works to be presented at the Congress. The CSC should, therefore, ensure that:

- no presentation will be accepted if it represents a political standpoint, or if it criticizes any Member State;
- no presentation will be rejected on the basis of criteria other than those listed below (scientific and organizational);
- the official working languages of the ICMM will be used on an equal basis (see paragraph V).

The final choice of scientific presentations (conferences, round table discussions, posters) must be made using very strict scientific and organizational criteria:

- Firstly: to what extent is the work of scientific interest ?
- Secondly, it is necessary to consider the quality of the presentation itself (style and clarity).
- The maximum number of oral presentations will be determined by the time allotted to each speaker (10, 15, 20 or 30 minutes depending on each case). This number must not be exceeded, to avoid the problem of overlapping sessions and the disorganization of the Congress schedule.

The Chairman of the Scientific Council of the ICMM and his team must ensure that the scientific value of the documents is of the highest quality. They will select the best of these texts for publication in the *International Review of the Armed Forces Medical Services*. They are responsible for ensuring that the CSC applies the founding principles of the ICMM.

V- USE OF LANGUAGES AND TRANSLATION FACILITIES.

The official languages are English and French, therefore simultaneous translation into these languages is to be provided, except in **small meetings**.

An official protocol also provides for translation into Spanish, but only during the main sessions. Spanish may be considered as a third working language, and is used in conjunction with English and French in ICMM publications, Regional Assemblies and in Congresses held in Spanish-speaking countries.

A country organizing a Regional Congress may provide for the use of other languages, including its own. In this case, it is imperative to ensure simultaneous translation into one of the official languages used by the ICMM. It is extremely important to respect this rule concerning the use of languages: an ICMM Regional Congress must provide for the use of English, French or Spanish.

The organizing country is responsible for ensuring that translations are of an acceptable quality. It is not possible to prevent a speaker from a Member State from using one of the three languages recognized by the ICMM, simply because translation facilities are not available in the conference rooms. Debate Chairmen and Moderators need to make sure that speakers are free to express themselves, thus respecting the founding principles of the ICMM (as mentioned above).

VI- ROLE OF THE DEBATE CHAIRMEN AND MODERATORS OF THE SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS.

The scientific debates owe their success largely to the competence and leadership of the Chairmen and Moderators of the sessions. Their individual roles need to be clearly defined in order for them to work in partnership. This is particularly important for the round table discussions, where there is a natural tendency for the debate to become confused if there is no clear guidance and structure.

1- The Debate Chairman.

The Debate Chairman must have eminent authority, either because of military rank and/or academic expertise. He should provide firm but fair leadership in order to be effective.

His first priority is to ensure that speakers or round table participants are treated equally: each speaker is given a specific amount of time in the schedule. It would be unacceptable for the earlier speakers to take more than their allotted time and thus deprive those giving talks later in the schedule. The Debate Chairman has the authority to interrupt any speaker who goes over his scheduled time, and he may exercise this authority from the beginning of the session. He should do so **politely and without exception**.

No exception should be made because a speaker is from a particular Member State.

The second priority of the Debate Chairman is to ensure that the discussions comply with the ICMM Statutes, particularly in terms of **neutrality and respect of the dignity of each Member State**. The Debate Chairman must **intervene immediately** to put a stop to any behavior, which does not respect these two principles.

2- The Moderator.

The Moderator must have first-hand experience and be qualified in the field of the subject being discussed in the session or round table he is leading. This will allow him to make pertinent comments based on his own knowledge and to guide the discussions for the benefit of all participants.

His role is to manage the technical and scientific questions following a presentation or the discussions relative to a round table topic.

He invites questions, moderates the discussions (both in number and in length) and may decide to exclude a question or comment if he thinks it is irrelevant.

He tries to make sure that the subject of the discussion is respected throughout the session.

Both he and the Debate Chairman work to prevent comments and secondary discussions which are not related to the subject.

VII- CONFERENCE ROOMS AND MEETING SPACES.

1- Scientific sessions

a) Official ceremonies and plenary sessions with presentations:

Large conference halls or lecture theatres are required, with the capacity to seat all the registered participants of the Congress, along with guests invited by the host country.

These rooms should have a raised platform or dais, with a lectern for speakers and a table for representatives of authorities, Debate Chairmen and Moderators. They should be equipped with simultaneous translation facilities (see paragraphs V and VIII)

b) Oral presentation sessions:

These sessions are dedicated to discussing more specialized topics and thus attract a smaller number of participants. Smaller rooms are therefore required, but it is necessary to take into account the number of sessions scheduled to be held at the same time.

c) Round table discussions.

These are generally attended by fewer people, although we should be aware that some topics may attract a larger audience. For smaller audiences, it is better to use a room in which the tables and chairs can be moved so that attendees can form a group. This type of seating is likely to encourage more discussion.

However, it is not always possible to have rooms of this type. Generally, the same rooms are used as those of the scientific oral presentations. In this case, the Debate Chairman and Moderator play a particularly important role in leading the discussions, avoiding problems and ensuring continuity.

d) Displays of *posters*.

The spaces used for these displays must be well lit and big enough for attendees to be able to walk round and look at the posters without getting in each other's way.

e) Breaks between sessions.

Coffee breaks are an important moment for the scientific aspect of the Congress. They give attendees the opportunity to discuss subjects more informally and thus contribute to the success of the Congress. The space where these breaks are held must be big enough, with enough tables for the number of attendees. It is important to make sure it is easy to get refreshments in a short time, to avoid delaying the schedule of the sessions. They should, therefore, be close to the conference rooms.

Signs to the restrooms (separate facilities for men and women) should be clearly displayed. The number of restrooms should be appropriate for the number of participants, and they should be kept clean.

VIII- AUDIO-VISUAL EQUIPMENT.

Congress organizers must ensure that the necessary audio-visual equipment is available for both the Regional Assembly sessions and the scientific sessions.

This includes computers, software, overhead projectors, screens (of a suitable size for the room and which can be seen by the whole audience) and sound equipment.

In the rooms equipped for simultaneous translation, the number of headphones must be sufficient for all attending. This equipment is indispensable in the rooms to be used for the plenary scientific sessions and the General Assembly.

All the audio-visual equipment must be tested at the latest on the day preceding the opening ceremony.

May 2008

Contact:

www.cimm-icmm.org

info@cimm-icmm.org

Annex 1

Annex 2

Annex 3



ANNEX 2

REGIONAL CONGRESS ON MILITARY MEDICINE

INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

- All material intended for presentation in the ...th Regional Congress on Military Medicine, organized under the aegis of the International Committee of Military Medicine, should be submitted to:

Congress Scientific Committee:

regular mail address

website: <http://www>.

- Authors submitting an abstract do not need to be registered participants.
- Authors presenting abstracts must be registered participants (an accepted abstract does not give you free registration).
- The form has to be completed by the first author: full name(s), military rank, professional titles, institution, city, country of the author(s) should accompany each contribution. Underline the speaker's name.
- The Congress Scientific Committee may require authors to justify the assignment of authorship.
- All partial or complete reproductions of an article, which has been presented in the X...th Regional Congress on Military Medicine, are submitted to the previous agreement of the International Committee of Military Medicine.
- Manuscripts should be typewritten on one side only, single-spaced throughout, in standard 10-point Times font, with no spaces between paragraphs, a 3 cm margin at the left hand side and a maximum of 300 words. Abstracts should be submitted as a RTF (Rich Text Format) file.

It should be submitted on line via the website <http://www.....>, or via postal service on CD-Rom to the above address.

The summary has to be submitted only in one of the three working languages of the International Committee of Military Medicine: English, French or Spanish.

- No charts, pictures or photos are allowed in the abstract.
- The title should indicate the content of the abstract in a concise manner.
- Three to five keywords should be provided in order to assist indexers in cross-indexing the presentation.
- Abbreviations should be avoided in the text, except for accepted scientific units of measurements (SI units). Other abbreviations, if used, should be spelt out in full when first mentioned in the text.
- Any abstract that does not conform to instructions will be returned to the author(s).
- Abstracts sent by fax will not be considered.
- The number of abstracts submitted per author is not limited; however, the author has to guarantee that if selected, the presentation will be made.
- Abstracts not selected for oral presentation will automatically be considered for poster presentation
- After an abstract has been accepted, regular papers of about eight to ten pages, including all figures, tables and references have to be submitted to the Congress Scientific Committee in order to be eligible for publication in the *International Review of the Armed Forces Medical Services*, official review of the International Committee of Military Medicine.

ANNEX 3

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF THE ARMED FORCES MEDICAL SERVICES

RECOMMENDATIONS TO AUTHORS

- All material intended for publication in the *International Review of the Armed Forces Medical Services* (IRAFMS) should be submitted to the Editor's office :
International Committee of Military Medicine
Hôpital Militaire Reine Astrid
BE - 1120 Brussels, Belgium
- Scientific articles, analyses or reviews of books and articles related to military medicine, symposia or congress proceedings, scientific events and announcements written in French, English or Spanish would be considered.
- Full name(s), address (es), short curriculum vitae and photograph(s) of the author(s) should accompany each contribution.
- The authors implicitly recognize that the proposed documents have not been sent simultaneously to other journals or have not been recently published under the same title.
- The Editor of the IRAFMS may require authors to justify the assignment of authorship.
- All partial or complete reproductions of an article, which has been published in the IRAFMS are submitted to the previous agreement of the editor of the IRAFMS.
- Manuscripts should be typewritten on one side only, double-spaced throughout, with a 3 cm margin at the left hand side and a maximum of 35 lines. The text should not exceed 25 typewritten pages, including bibliographic references. It should be submitted on A4 paper (Word format Arial 12) via e-mail to edition@cimm-icmm.org or via postal service on CD-Rom with a printing proof.
- A summary of no more than 150 words should be include. It would be desirable to submit the summary in both French and English (Spanish ad libitum).
- Three to five keywords should be provided in order to assist indexers in cross-indexing the article.
- Abbreviations should be avoided in the text except for accepted scientific units of measurements (SI units). Other abbreviations, if used, should be spelt out in full when first mentioned in the text.
- When sending their manuscripts, the authors are invited to include the necessary tables and illustrations. Drawings and legends should be carefully printed so as to be directly reproduced. Each illustration should be identified by writing a figure number or a short mention on the back.
- References should be numbered in the order in which they appear in the text and referred to by Arabic numerals in brackets. They are listed as follows :
 1. *For a journal* : author's name and initials, full title of the article (in the original language), title of the journal, year of publication, volume number, first and last page numbers.
 2. *For a book* : author's name and initials, title of the book, name of the publisher and city, year of publication, pages corresponding to the quotation.