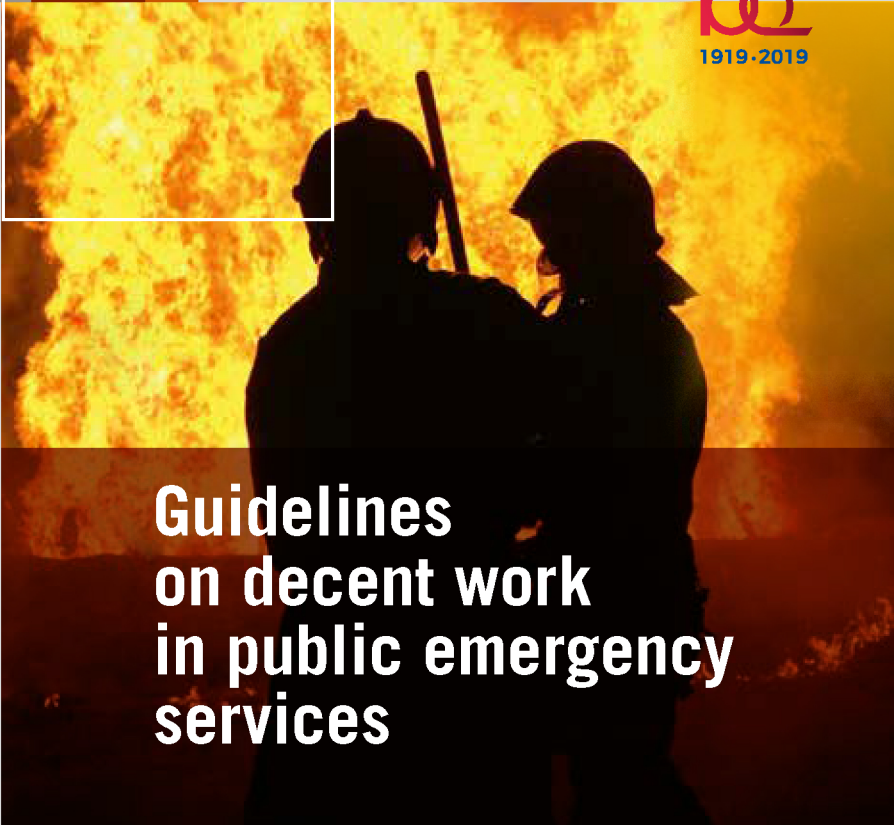




International
Labour
Organization

100
1919-2019

A large background image showing the silhouettes of two firefighters in the foreground, looking towards a massive fire. The fire is bright orange and yellow, filling the upper half of the frame. The firefighters are wearing helmets and holding a long pole.

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services



Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

**Meeting of Experts to adopt Guidelines on Decent Work in Public
Emergency Services**

(Geneva, 16–20 April 2018)

Geneva, 2018

Sectoral
Policies
Department

Copyright © International Labour Organization 2019

First published 2019

Publications of the International Labour Office enjoy copyright under Protocol 2 of the Universal Copyright Convention. Nevertheless, short excerpts from them may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. For rights of reproduction or translation, application should be made to ILO Publications (Rights and Licensing), International Labour Office, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland, or by email: rights@ilo.org. The International Labour Office welcomes such applications.

Libraries, institutions and other users registered with a reproduction rights organization may make copies in accordance with the licences issued to them for this purpose. Visit www.ifrro.org to find the reproduction rights organization in your country.

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services. International Labour Office, Geneva, 2019

ISBN: 978-92-2-133145-2 (print)

ISBN: 978-92-2-133146-9 (web pdf)

Also available in French: *Directives sur le travail décent dans les services publics d'urgence* *Directives sur le travail décent dans les services publics d'urgence*, ISBN: 978-92-2-133147-6 (imprimé); ISBN: 978-92-2-133148-3 (pdf web), Geneva, 2019 and in Spanish: *Directrices sobre el trabajo decente en los servicios públicos de urgencia*, ISBN: 978-92-2-133149-0 (impresol); ISBN: 978-92-2-133150-6 (web pdf), Geneva, 2019.

The designations employed in ILO publications, which are in conformity with United Nations practice, and the presentation of material therein do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the International Labour Office concerning the legal status of any country, area or territory or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers.

The responsibility for opinions expressed in signed articles, studies and other contributions rests solely with their authors, and publication does not constitute an endorsement by the International Labour Office of the opinions expressed in them.

Reference to names of firms and commercial products and processes does not imply their endorsement by the International Labour Office, and any failure to mention a particular firm, commercial product or process is not a sign of disapproval.

Information on ILO publications and digital products can be found at: www.ilo.org/publns.

Produced by the Document and Publications Production,
Printing and Distribution Unit (PRODOC) of the ILO.

*Graphic and typographic design, layout and composition,
proofreading, printing, electronic publishing and distribution.*
PRODOC endeavours to use paper sourced from forests managed
in an environmentally sustainable and socially responsible manner.

Code: CMD-SCR-REP

Preface

The ILO Guidelines on Decent Work in Public Emergency Services were adopted by a Meeting of Experts held in Geneva from 16 to 20 April 2018, in accordance with a Governing Body decision at its 329th Session (March 2017). The meeting was attended by 24 experts and their advisers - eight experts nominated by the Governments of Brazil, France, Italy, Jordan, Peru, Philippines, Sierra Leone, and Tunisia; eight nominated by the Employers' group of the Governing Body; and eight nominated by the Workers' group of the Governing Body. Expert observers from other governments, and observers from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, also attended the meeting.

These Guidelines replace earlier guidelines that were adopted in 2003 and that were considered outdated, in view of technological and other developments that have taken place since.

The good spirit of tripartite dialogue among all participants paved the way for developing consensus on a new, comprehensive and practical set of Guidelines that will help the ILO, its constituents and its partners improve the safety and well-being of the women and men who daily take risks to save lives and respond to emergencies.

The text of the code was approved for publication by the Governing Body of the ILO at its 334th Session (October–November 2018).

Alette van Leur
Director
Sectoral Policies Department

Sectoral Guidelines

ILO Sectoral Guidelines are reference tools setting out principles that can be reflected in the design and implementation of policies, strategies, programmes, legislation, administrative measures and social dialogue mechanisms in a particular economic or social sector or cluster of (sub)- sectors. Sectoral Guidelines are adopted by a Meeting of Experts comprising governments, employers and workers. They can be implemented progressively to take into account different national settings, cultures, and social, economic and political contexts.

Sectoral Guidelines draw their principles from the ILO's international labour standards (Conventions and Recommendations) and other sources, including Declarations, codes of practice, codes of conduct and other policy guidance adopted and endorsed by the International Labour Conference or the Governing Body. Sectoral Guidelines also draw on other international agreements and policy in the sector concerned, as well as relevant trends and developments in regional and national law and practice.

Sectoral Guidelines focus on the issues that are priorities for governments, employers and workers, and that are unique to particular economic and social sectors. While international labour standards normally deal with more general principles of labour law and practice, Sectoral Guidelines specify the principles and processes that could be implemented to promote decent work in particular sectoral workplaces or context. They benefit from the expertise of practitioners in the relevant sectors to capture good industry practices and innovations.

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

Sectoral Guidelines are not legally binding. They are not subject to ratification or supervisory mechanisms established under the ILO's international labour standards. Sectoral Guidelines can therefore be aspirational in scope and expand on principles laid down in international labour standards and other international agreements and policy, all the while recognizing that they can be adapted to different national systems and circumstances. ILO standards and other tools or guidance adopted and endorsed by the ILC and/or GB therefore form the foundation on which Sectoral Guidelines build further. It is therefore understood that Sectoral Guidelines are based on the full principles, rights, and obligations set out in international labour standards, and nothing set out in Guidelines should be understood as lowering such standards.

Contents

Preface	v
Sectoral Guidelines	vii
Part 1. Introduction	1
I. Scope	1
II. Definitions	3
III. General considerations..	5
Part 2. Ensuring decent work for public emergency services workers	9
IV. Fundamental principles and rights at work	9
V. Employment and diversity	9
<i>A. Employment levels</i>	12
<i>B. Employment diversity</i>	14
VI. Working conditions.....	16
VII. Occupational safety and health	19
<i>A. General considerations</i>	19
<i>B. Stress, violence and harassment</i>	24
<i>C. Communicable diseases</i>	25
<i>D. Personal protective equipment</i>	27
<i>E. Radiation</i>	30
<i>F. Extreme heat and cold</i>	31
VIII. Social protection.....	31
Part 3. Means of action	35
IX. Social dialogue	35
X. Training	37

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

XI. Monitoring and evaluation	39
XII. The special case of persons in volunteer work participating in crisis response.....	40
XIII. Coordination and cooperation in public emergency services	41
Appendix.....	45
ILO Declarations, Conventions, Recommendations, codes of practice and guidelines relevant to public emergency services.....	45
Other international instruments and processes.....	48

Part 1. Introduction

I. Scope

1. In January 2003, the International Labour Organization (ILO) adopted the guidelines on social dialogue in public emergency services (PES) in a changing environment.¹

2. Increasingly frequent and complex emergencies require that a more diverse range of PES workers labour under difficult and extreme conditions to save lives and protect property and the environment. In the light of these circumstances, these guidelines represent a revision and expansion and replacement of the abovementioned 2003 guidelines.

3. These guidelines seek to promote coherent measures for emergency preparedness and disaster prevention, access to the full range of social protection and effective, independent and impartial labour inspection.

4. These guidelines reflect changes since 2003, including the Sustainable Development Goals² (SDGs), the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 (Sendai Framework), and the Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205). While Recommendation No. 205 primarily covers “all measures on employment and decent work taken in response to crisis situations arising from conflicts and disasters” (paragraph 3), these

¹ ILO: *Guidelines on social dialogue in public emergency services in a changing environment* (Geneva, 2003).

² United Nations: General Assembly Resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015; see, in particular, goals and targets 1.3.1, 1.5, 3, 8.8, 11.5, 11.b, 13.1 and 16.1 (document A/RES/70/1).

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

encourage governments and PES employers to provide PES workers with adequate means, tools and resources to be able to respond effectively to emergencies. In this sense, the guidelines complement Recommendation No. 205 while incorporating its principles.

5. The guidelines focus on public services because each member State has the foremost responsibility to take care of the victims of disasters and emergencies occurring within its territory.³ Accordingly, each member State is responsible for defining the scope of emergency services within its jurisdiction. The guidelines do not distinguish by employment status or level of remuneration, including with respect to subcontracted workers in the public service. Volunteers are treated in a separate section of the guidelines.

6. In order to deliver effective PES, governments in practice assign tasks to the appropriate entities, such as agencies, state-owned corporations, local administrations and, as appropriate, other organizations. These guidelines seek to reflect the resulting diversity of government workers. Coordination between the different levels is critical. Members of the police and armed forces, unless specifically excluded, are covered by international labour standards and are therefore included in these guidelines with caveats as necessary.

7. These guidelines approach emergencies in terms of the types of tasks required to respond to them, which characterize the different groups of workers described under the definition of “emergency services” provided in section 2 below. This scope

³ United Nations: General Assembly Resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, annex, para. 4 (document A/RES/46/182).

is broader than that of the 2003 guidelines, which covered only police, firefighters and emergency health workers.

II. Definitions

8. “Disaster” is defined as “a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society at any scale due to hazardous events interacting with conditions of exposure, vulnerability and capacity, leading to one or more of the following: human, material, economic and environmental losses and impacts”.⁴ “Disasters can have causes that are biological (such as epidemics), hydro-meteorological (such as wild land fires, floods, landslides, avalanches, droughts, tsunamis, hurricanes, typhoons, cyclones and tornadoes), geological (such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions), and human (such as industrial accidents, conflicts, terrorist attacks).

9. “Emergency” is defined as “a sudden and usually unforeseen event that calls for immediate measures to minimize its adverse consequences”.⁵

10. “Emergency services” are defined as bodies which are available to handle major accidents and illnesses and their consequences both on site and off site. Public emergency services include police, firefighting, emergency medical services, search, rescue and evacuation services, and other services regularly called upon to respond in emergencies, such as health and social services, armed forces, security and surveillance services, bomb disposal units, local governments, mortuary and body-handling services, immediately necessary measures which are critical to

⁴ ILO Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205), Art. 2(a).

⁵ United Nations, Department of Humanitarian Affairs: *Internationally agreed glossary of basic terms related to Disaster Management*, 1992.

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

allow rescue and stabilization, services responsible for the restoration of water and electricity supply, and related professions, such as social workers, according to need and national context.

11. In these guidelines, “PES employers” are defined as the entities listed in paragraph 10 above under “emergency services”, in the context of their employment relations with PES workers.

12. “Response” is defined as “actions taken directly before, during or immediately after a disaster in order to save lives, reduce health impacts, ensure public safety and meet the basic subsistence needs of the people affected”.⁶ This meaning extends to all types of emergencies covered in these guidelines.

13. “Workers’ representatives”, as defined in Article 3 of the Workers’ Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 135), means:

... persons who are recognised as such under national law or practice, whether they are:

a) trade union representatives, namely, representatives designated or elected by trade unions or by the members of such unions; or b) elected representatives, namely, representatives who are freely elected by the workers of the undertaking in accordance with provisions of national laws or regulations or of collective agreements and whose functions do not include activities which are recognised as the exclusive prerogative of trade unions in the country concerned.

14. “Social dialogue” is “the term that describes the involvement of workers, employers and governments in decision-making on employment and workplace issues. It includes all types of negotiation, consultation and exchange of

⁶ United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction* (A/71/644), 1 December 2016, p. 22

information among representatives of these groups on common interests in economic, labour and social policy”.⁷

15. “Preparedness” is “[t]he knowledge and capacities developed by governments, response and recovery organizations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to and recover from the impacts of likely, imminent or current disasters.”⁸

III. General considerations

16. Changes in the economic, political, social and security environment in many regions have necessitated the enhancement of PES. Effective systems require a good understanding of the many dimensions of preparedness for, response to and mitigation of disasters and emergencies, as well as their inter-relationships. This includes a comprehensive approach to the labour dimension of PES delivery and operations. PES systems should be adequately resourced so that well-trained and properly resourced workers can deliver effective services that are responsive to the needs of different sections of the community.

17. In the light of the sharp increase in, and complexity of various types of disasters in the past two decades, and the growing impact of climate change, governments should, in collaboration with social partners, incorporate disaster risk reduction and climate risk management in their climate change strategies. They should recognize the challenges faced by the

⁷ ILO: *Social dialogue: Recurrent discussion under the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization*, Report VI, International Labour Conference, 102nd Session, Geneva, 2013, para. 15.

⁸ United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction* (A/71/644), 1 December 2016, p. 21.

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

most vulnerable populations, including unadapted and inadequate housing and infrastructure, the lack of support services and the expansion of flood areas. PES system infrastructure and supply chains should be prepared for, and resilient to, weather events and other crises.

18. Governments and social partners in the PES sector should endeavour to protect PES recipients from discrimination in the provision of services. They should ensure fair allocation of resources for services and cash disbursements to large and diverse population groups.

19. PES employers and employers' and workers' organizations should work towards alleviating potential conflicts between the responsibilities of PES workers to the community and their responsibilities to their families during emergencies. PES employers should assist PES workers to develop family emergency plans such as childcare, elderly care, and care for members with special needs for when PES workers need to leave their homes and families for active duty.

20. The need to achieve greater diversity of the PES workforce requires enhanced efforts to eliminate prejudice and discrimination in these services.

21. PES work is unique in terms of the responsibilities it imposes, the exigencies of service delivery and the ways it is organized. Governments, employers' and workers' organizations should therefore ensure respect for the fundamental principles and rights at work of PES workers, regardless of their employment status.

22. Effective social dialogue mechanisms, including tripartite or bipartite consultative institutions and collective bargaining between PES employers and workers, should be established where they do not exist. Where they do exist, they

should address the specific demands placed on workers by PES. Such mechanisms are key to providing social partners with an effective voice in determining the conditions that make for effective services.

23. Governments should protect the right of populations affected by disasters and emergencies to receive humanitarian assistance without discrimination, recognize the crucial role played by women in communities susceptible to disasters and emergencies, and protect and preserve the dignity of beneficiaries. The introduction of new management information technologies may facilitate PES work but bring risks of personal data breaches. To establish the right balance, governments should adopt the necessary privacy protection policies.

24. It is recognized that good advanced planning can significantly reduce the adverse impact of an emergency or disaster and thereby reduce the vulnerability of a community to such an event. Effective preparedness results in effective intervention. In essence, effective preparedness may be secured by:

- a) having trained workers with the right skills and provided with the right range and type of equipment to perform the foreseeable task and activities;
- b) working within effective and well-understood procedures, including those related to intra- and inter-service communication, coordination and control;
- c) regularly holding drills and other training on practicing the implementation of such procedures using relevant skills and equipment;
- d) having sufficient numbers of PES workers located in sites that will allow them to be deployed as quickly as possible in the event of an emergency or disaster;

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

- e)* immediately notifying the emergencies to the labour inspection authorities.

Accordingly, PES employers should invest enough resources to ensure that the best arrangements and equipment are in place in advance. In order to measure progress, governments should align their monitoring mechanisms to relevant SDG indicators and the Sendai Framework monitoring system.

Part 2. Ensuring decent work for public emergency services workers

IV. Fundamental principles and rights at work

1. Governments and social partners have the responsibility to ensure that the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up (1998) and relevant ratified ILO Conventions protect and apply to all PES workers, under the conditions set out in each Convention.

2. Governments should:

- a)* recognize the important role of employers' and workers' organizations in crisis response, taking into account the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98);
- b)* implement policies that aim to address obstacles to the full exercise of freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining in PES, as set out in Conventions Nos 87 and 98 and in technical ILO Conventions which lay down their key elements and conditions and that complement them, specifically the Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 135), the Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention, 1978 (No. 151), and the Collective Bargaining Convention, 1981 (No. 154);
- c)* protect workers against anti-union discrimination and take measures to eliminate other forms of discrimination in the PES sector;
- d)* respect, promote and realize equality of opportunity and treatment for women and men without discrimination of

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

any kind, taking into account the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), the Equal Remuneration Recommendation, 1951 (No. 90), the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), and the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Recommendation, 1958 (No. 111);

- e) take measures to eliminate child labour in PES, especially in armed forces engaged in emergency work, taking into account the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), the Minimum Age Recommendation, 1973 (No. 146), the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation, 1999 (No. 190);
- f) pursue policies that eliminate the use of compulsory labour in PES other than that strictly required to counter an imminent danger to the population in accordance with the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), and its Protocol of 2014¹ and the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention,

¹ This Convention exempts from its provisions “any work or service exacted in cases of emergency, that is to say, in the event of war or of a calamity or threatened calamity, such as fire, flood, famine, earthquake, violent epidemic or epizootic diseases, invasion by animal, insect or vegetable pests, and in general any circumstance that would endanger the existence or the well-being of the whole or part of the population” (see Article 2(2)(d)). Prison labour, often used in firefighting, is accepted if it follows a conviction in a court of law, is carried out under the supervision and control of a public authority and the convicted persons are not hired to, or placed at, the disposal of private individuals, companies or associations. Regarding members of the armed forces, the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations has stated that “persons who have voluntarily entered into an engagement [with the armed forces] cannot be deprived of the right to leave the service in peacetime within a reasonable period, either at specified intervals, or with previous notice, subject to the conditions which may normally be required to ensure the continuity of the service and also taking into account the possibility of proportional reimbursement of the cost of training incurred.” Governments of Bahrain and Egypt, 2011.

Part 2. Ensuring decent work for public emergency services worker

1957 (No. 105), and that provide for appropriate remedies and compensation; and

- g)* implement awareness-raising campaigns on fundamental principles and rights at work and other international labour standards.

3. Public emergency services employers should:

- a)* remove any existing obstacles to the activities of free and independent trade unions representing PES workers;
- b)* provide workers' representatives with facilities to conduct their normal activities, the freedom to hold meetings and access to PES workplaces, to the extent that is practicable without hindering the efficiency of PES;
- c)* ensure that the minimum age of employment or work is respected;
- d)* take immediate and effective measures to prevent and eliminate child labour;
- e)* ensure that PES workers are not forced to work overtime hours beyond the limits permitted under national law and in collective agreements or without adequate compensation;
- f)* develop policies to promote non-discrimination and equal treatment, ensuring that these are clearly communicated and made accessible to management, supervisors and workers;
- g)* ensure that PES workers are paid the same wages for work of equal value.

4. Workers' organizations should:

- a)* promote PES workers' education, including on their rights and obligations, professionalism and ethics;
- b)* address practical challenges to the freedom of association and collective bargaining rights of workers in non-standard forms of employment;

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

- c)* generate social awareness and mobilization against the use of child labour, forced labour and discrimination;
- d)* engage with social dialogue partners in the monitoring of discrimination in PES work by, for example, establishing complaint procedures, including equality concerns in collective bargaining agreements, setting up gender committees and promoting pay equity;
- e)* tackle the challenge of achieving equality within workers' organizations with the aim of making the membership base and all levels of leadership reflective of the diversity of the PES workforce.

V. Employment and diversity

5. The challenges facing PES require the adoption of targeted employment policies and service delivery mechanisms. In order to achieve this, clear responsibilities for dealing with emergencies should be assigned at the appropriate levels to governments, employers and workers and other organizations, while training policies should take account of the new challenges posed to each category of PES worker by increasingly diverse and complex emergencies.

A. Employment levels

6. Decisions intended to enhance services for effective delivery should balance the following considerations:

- a)* adequate staffing levels to prevent excessive individual workloads and minimize the risk of unsustainable working hours;
- b)* the nature and scope of anticipated and emerging needs;
- c)* application of new technologies;
- d)* contingency planning for unanticipated incidents;
- e)* budgetary allocations and appropriate use of funds;

Part 2. Ensuring decent work for public emergency services worker

f) adequate equipment and other relevant resources.

7. Investments in PES should therefore be planned to maintain adequate and appropriate levels of services in emergencies and, where necessary, to increase staffing levels so as to provide more effective response rates and services.

8. If PES workers are not needed outside crises or emergency situations, measures should consider retraining and/or re-employing demobilized PES workers or assigning them to other productive activities without loss of income, and without diminishing their ability to be deployed quickly should an emergency arise. These arrangements should not be abused such as to enable minimal staffing models.

9. Since resiliency principles call for a certain degree of redundancy of services in case of multipronged threats, contingency efforts should be undertaken to assess the organization's unique needs and to make plans accordingly. Attempts should be made to protect PES workers by ring fencing PES from the impact of fiscal austerity.

10. As a result of changes in the nature, complexity and frequency of disasters and the increased complexity of the current global environment, the PES sector has experienced constant changes and adjustments in tasks, scope of work, occupational job profiles and job contents, creating new challenges and needs that should be addressed through social dialogue.

11. PES have an extremely strong public nature and in principle should not be privatized or contracted out. If private resources are mobilized when dealing with an emergency or disaster, any policies to privatize or contract out emergency services should avoid reducing the financial resources required to maintain adequate staff levels, infrastructure and decent working conditions.

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

12. Governments, in accordance with the 1998 ILO Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, should ensure the respect, promotion and realization of fundamental principles and rights at work and social protection for employees of contractors that are no less favourable than those established for PES workers, should ensure transparent management and procurement of contracts, and should guarantee a system of recruitment, remuneration and career management that can mobilize the required skills, taking into account the Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Convention, 1949 (No. 94).

B. Employment diversity

13. Governments should ensure the PES workforce reflects the diversity of the communities that it serves. Improving diversity may enhance sensitivity to the needs of local populations and their receptivity towards PES workers.

14. The need to achieve greater gender, ethnic and other diversity of persons engaged in PES requires enhanced and sustained efforts to eliminate prejudice and discrimination in line with the equality of employment opportunity and treatment principles set out in the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111).

15. To enhance employment diversity, PES employers, in cooperation with workers and their organizations by means of social dialogue, should undertake to define and implement a policy on diversity in all its dimensions. Under such a policy, planning and management tools should include:

- a) monitoring, documenting and following up the service's employment composition over time, based on age, gender, ethnicity, race and disability;
- b) establishing objective and fair recruitment and selection criteria;

Part 2. Ensuring decent work for public emergency services worker

- c)* using an objective and fair system to evaluate results;
- d)* developing and implementing PES staff development plans.

16. Human resource planning should include an active campaign to recruit and retain youth, women and ethnic and racial minority candidates (as well as candidates from under-represented groups as determined by the government and social partners) who are interested in and qualified for serving in PES.

17. Measures to facilitate the achievement of recruitment and retention benchmarks may include:

- a)* strategies to counter the image of certain types of PES work as male-dominated;
- b)* introduction of career counsellors who understand the different patterns of women's and men's career development and attend to the needs of women returning to work;
- c)* legislation and policies for maternity protection and to facilitate family leave, including paternity, parental and other leave measures for other family members with care needs, and subsequent reintegration to professional activity;
- d)* policies aimed at helping to balance work and family life, such as increased access to childcare facilities;
- e)* analysis and action to alleviate obstacles to career progression;
- f)* provision of both initial and continual diversity-conscious training opportunities linked to PES staff development plans;
- g)* development of appropriate gender-sensitive occupational safety and health (OSH) policies, including policies governing personal protective equipment (PPE) and its effective use;

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

- h) ensuring a work environment free of violence and harassment, with training on respect for diversity that includes, but is not limited to, gender, disability, geographic origin, ethnicity and race for all staff;
- i) a complaints policy or mechanism that is accessible, equitable, independent and impartial for all staff.

VI. Working conditions

18. Salaries and other terms and conditions of employment should be an integral part of employment policies designed to recruit, train and retain well-qualified and experienced workers.

19. Establishment of PES working conditions should take account of the needs of the different occupational groups that deliver PES outputs. Terms and conditions of work, including working time and leave conditions, should be determined through collective bargaining or its functional equivalent, conducted at the appropriate level according to national law and practice.

20. In anticipating and after crisis situations, governments should, in consultation with PES employers' and workers' organizations, review, establish or reinforce labour legislation applicable to PES workers, as set out in Recommendation No. 205. This should be done in a manner consistent with the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up (1998), as well as applicable international labour standards.

Remuneration

21. Levels of remuneration of PES workers should be established through involvement of social partners in wage setting, including collective bargaining. PES workers should be entitled, in law and in practice, to a minimum wage which covers

Part 2. Ensuring decent work for public emergency services worker

the needs of workers and their families, while taking into account economic circumstances at the national or sectoral levels. An effective minimum wage could reduce or eliminate the need to work off-duty hours to supplement incomes, which puts PES workers at extra risk due to fatigue and may endanger the health and security of the public.

22. Where not established by national law or practice, a legal mechanism should be set up, with the participation of workers and/or their representatives, to define the criteria for fixing minimum wage levels, their application and implementation. Where necessary, and in a gender-sensitive manner, consideration should be given to mechanisms for determining hazardous duty pay.

23. To assist the recruitment and retention of professional PES staff, competitive pay structures should be established based on all relevant factors, including required qualifications for employment, hours of work, risk and stress level. Parties should seek to understand that each PES occupational group plays a unique yet equally vital role in the provision of public safety. This equality of work among PES occupational groups should command equal value in areas of wages, benefits and funding. Excessive hours of work should be discouraged. Where extra hours are necessary, compensatory measures such as overtime pay or compensatory time off should be considered.

24. The provisions of the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) should be applied to pay structures in order to ensure that work of equal value is compensated accordingly, irrespective of the sex of the person performing the duty.

Retirement benefits

25. PES employers should, where they do not exist, plan for, design and finance retirement systems that guarantee benefits

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

on retirement. These systems should reflect the tendency for PES workers to retire earlier than other workers due to the hazardous and strenuous nature of their work and the increasing imbalance between the number of staff reaching retirement age and the number of new recruits. Such systems should be managed by bodies on which all stakeholders, including PES workers, are represented.

Working time

26. Working time arrangements should establish a balance between the need for sufficient staff at all times, including on nights and weekends, and the need for rest periods for PES workers, including to attend to their family responsibilities. Where general laws on maximum weekly hours of work, minimum daily rest, rest periods and standby time do not cover PES workers, special laws, regulations or agreements should be adopted to protect them from excessive working time.

27. In recognition that PES workers may need to work atypical and irregular hours and are expected to respond to emergencies, the following principles should be observed in defining working time and organization:

- a) laws stipulating maximum weekly hours of work, the minimum daily consecutive rest period and the minimum weekly consecutive rest period should be observed, except in unusual circumstances, such as situations when it is necessary to protect human health and life, property or the environment, in which case compensatory periods of rest should be provided. If the crisis goes on for an extended period of time, the government should take measures to return as soon as possible to the legal stipulations;
- b) rest periods taken while on duty should be counted as working hours;

Part 2. Ensuring decent work for public emergency services worker

- c) in shifts of any length outside normal working hours during which the employer requires the worker to stand by for specific service requirements or at specific locations, such standby time should be treated as working hours unless other compensatory arrangements exist. The employer should be responsible for notifying the workers of any such policies.

28. Governments should compile comparative and national information on remuneration and pay issues, industrial disputes and collective bargaining conflicts with regard to PES workers.

VII. Occupational safety and health

A. General considerations

29. PES employers should commit themselves to establishing a proactive policy and high OSH standards. Preventive measures should be taken both within institutional settings and outside them, where risks cannot be controlled and it is more difficult to take routine precautions. Particular attention should be paid to physical and psychological overstrain, exposure to debris, leakages of dangerous materials, electrocution, polluted air and water, asbestos and radiation, as well as extreme temperatures, the collapse of buildings, vehicular accidents and the risk of falling. In addition, account should be taken of risks posed by chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosives (CBRNE) hazards.

30. Governments and PES employers should provide sufficient financial and human resources to effectively identify and prevent occupational hazards and implement existing instruments and guides prepared by the ILO, other United Nations institutions and regional bodies.

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

31. PES workers have the duty to comply with prescribed safety and health measures that have been adopted in accordance with Article 19 of the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155).

32. Although PES workers assume risks as part of their duties, PES workers must never be forced to take excessive risks. PES workers should have the right to remove themselves from situations involving imminent and serious danger to life or health without fear of reprisals.

33. Efforts to improve OSH in PES may include:

- a) designing and implementing OSH measures that are adjusted to the particular functions of PES workers and employers, to be achieved through the participation of both groups in social dialogue;
- b) enhancing the legal system and administrative regime for safety;
- c) building the capacities of those responsible for safety and health supervision and inspection;
- d) providing OSH training before PES workers enter into service and continuously after their recruitment;
- e) launching special safety and health awareness and enforcement campaigns;
- f) enabling labour inspectorates to monitor OSH and create mechanisms for data coordination with national employment injury insurance schemes.

34. In consultation with workers and their representatives, PES employers should establish OSH management systems to identify hazards and assess risks to safety and health, in line with the ILO *Guidelines on occupational safety and health management systems, ILO-OSH 2001*. Control measures should be applied in the following order of priority:

Part 2. Ensuring decent work for public emergency services worker

- a)* eliminate the hazard;
- b)* control the hazard at source by the use of engineering controls or organizational measures;
- c)* minimize the hazard by the design of safe work systems that include administrative control measures;
- d)* where residual hazards cannot be controlled by collective measures, the PES employer should provide for appropriate PPE, including clothing, at no cost to the worker, and should implement measures to ensure its use and maintenance.

35. To ensure the application of a coherent national policy on the safety and health of PES workers under the SDGs, governments and social partners should monitor the following policy elements:

- a)* the mapping, mitigation, prevention and limitation of occupational risks;
- b)* the impact of measures taken and whether the desired effect is achieved;
- c)* the manner in which communication and cooperation at all the appropriate levels is ensured in practice;
- d)* the availability of specialist groups of labour inspectors to oversee the work of PES.

36. To this end, concrete measures should take into account PES specificities, should incorporate the knowledge and experience of front-line PES workers at the local, national and trans-national levels and should include:

- a)* adopting OSH standards where they do not exist;
- b)* applying existing general, local or national safety and health laws to PES workers, including government workers, and ensuring their adequate enforcement;

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

- c)* including specific provisions on OSH, such as safety metrics, in any special legislation covering PES workers;
- d)* allocating adequate resources and systems for PES worker protection and rescue in situations where they are exposed to hazards;
- e)* improving the PES working environment by adapting new technologies in the area of safety and health;
- f)* making available equipment that meets international standards;
- g)* recognizing situations of extreme danger from which PES workers may need to be removed or have the right to remove themselves;
- h)* adopting policies and practices to prevent, reduce and manage alcohol- and drug-related problems, ensuring PES worker compliance with them and providing rehabilitation services where needed;
- i)* providing for collective bargaining, where applicable, on safety and health standards and their application;
- j)* conducting safety audits and implementing other measures that periodically review the PES working environment with the aim of identifying major problems, developing effective solutions and evaluating results.

37. Given the potential for PES workers to be exposed to diseases and to be at risk of suffering work-related injuries, PES workers should be guaranteed access to the full range of first aid, health and medical services.

38. Given that PES often involve long working hours and exposure to different work environments, welfare facilities such as water, sanitation and hygiene should be made easily available to PES workers. Housing and transportation, where necessary,

Part 2. Ensuring decent work for public emergency services worker

should be adequate, also and especially in remote regions where PES workers can be assigned.

39. Governments should promote preventive measures and provide advice to employers, workers and their representatives on requirements for establishing and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment and on adapting work to individual physical and mental health needs.

40. Provision should be made for ongoing, participatory research and the monitoring of it on ways to mitigate the effects of diseases and work-related injuries directly affecting PES workers.

41. Governments should ensure the protection and security of all health workers and all health facilities, as recommended by the High-Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth and the ILO/Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)/World Health Organization (WHO) *Five-Year Action Plan for Health Employment and Inclusive Economic Growth (2017–21)*² and its deliverables. Governments of high-risk countries should strengthen their capacities to protect the OSH of health and emergency aid workers.

42. Measures to protect PES workers against hazardous ambient factors and substances such as air pollutants, carcinogens, mutagens and biological agents, radiation, asbestos, noise and vibration should follow the provisions in the Asbestos Convention, 1986 (No. 162), and the Asbestos Recommendation, 1986 (No. 172), as well as the Recommendations included in the ILO codes of practice on

² ILO, OECD, WHO: *“Working for Health”: Five-year Action Plan for Health Employment and Inclusive Economic Growth (2017–21)* (Geneva, May 2017), WHO document A/70/18, annex.

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

ambient factors in the workplace (2001), occupational exposure to airborne substances harmful to health (1980), safety in the use of asbestos (1984) and safety in the use of chemicals at work (1993).

B. Stress, violence and harassment

43. To reduce the negative impact of stressors and their consequences, including mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression and suicidal thoughts, the incidence of “burnout” and of violence and harassment against PES workers, and the consequences of critical incidents that lead to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), PES employers with the support and assistance of governments should implement the following practices:

- a) undertake risk assessments of critical incident stress and possibilities of violence and harassment, based on up-to-date evidence and expert analysis;
- b) establish adequate stress management and counselling programmes to protect PES workers and immediate family members from the effects of cumulative or specific incidents of stress;
- c) adopt a zero-tolerance policy towards workplace violence and harassment, and ensure dynamic intervention to address problems arising from violent incidents, including by providing support to victims and witnesses;
- d) provide appropriate training for managers and workers to reduce the likelihood of harassment and violence at work;
- e) arrange for regular reviews through effective social dialogue of challenges, policies and measures to address issues of stress, violence and harassment.

Part 2. Ensuring decent work for public emergency services worker

In addition, governments should organize information campaigns to explain its crisis response plans towards the affected populations in order to avoid violence against PES workers.

44. In addition, governments and social partners should apply the relevant recommendations in the *ILO Code of practice on workplace violence in services sectors and measures to combat this phenomenon* (2003).³

45. In addressing incidences of violence and harassment against PES workers, PES employers should establish investigation procedures that protect the rights of all parties, including witnesses and whistle-blowers. In particular:

- a) investigation procedures should respect the principles of discretion, confidentiality, speediness, professionalism and ethics, ensure the availability of external assistance and include effective sanctions and remedies;
- b) PES employers, in consultation with PES workers and/or their representatives, should review and monitor these procedures periodically to ensure that they are effective in both preventing and dealing with issues as they arise.

C. Communicable diseases

46. Employers' and workers' organizations should strive to ensure jointly that workers are educated on diseases to which they may be exposed and sensitized in the use of "universal precautions" and are given proper protective equipment, including protection against communicable diseases, blood-borne

³ The 107th and 108th Sessions of the International Labour Conference, to be held in Geneva in June 2018 and 2019, will be holding discussions on a standard-setting item on violence at work, which may result in further principles, standards and guidance on this topic.

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

pathogens or HIV transmission,⁴ while responding to the needs of the injured and the sick. This may include providing protective clothing (especially in rural areas), post-exposure prophylaxis, confidential testing, counselling, immunization (where applicable), training and the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to assess the effectiveness of the above measures.

47. Where exposure and infection are work-related, PES workers should be provided with adequate compensation, including when quarantined.

48. In the event of scarcity of treatment for those contracting communicable diseases, each PES employer should develop, through social dialogue, a treatment distribution protocol and specify the priority of PES workers in receiving treatment.

49. With regard to the measures described in paragraphs 43–45 above, confidentiality should be strictly observed and formally prescribed to avoid the stigma and potential workplace isolation that might otherwise be attached to those who undergo testing, stress management and counselling programmes.

⁴ In relation to HIV, prevention strategies should be based on the application of “universal precautions” as defined in the ILO code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work (2001) and in para. 31 of the HIV and AIDS Recommendation, 2010 (No. 200): Safety and health measures to prevent workers’ exposure to HIV at work should include universal precautions, accident and hazard prevention measures, such as organizational measures, engineering and work practice controls, personal protective equipment, as appropriate, environmental control measures and post-exposure prophylaxis and other safety measures to minimize the risk of contracting HIV and tuberculosis, especially in occupations most at risk, including in the health-care sector.

Part 2. Ensuring decent work for public emergency services worker

D. Personal protective equipment

50. Personal protective equipment (PPE) should be used as protection against exposure to hazardous conditions for PES workers where the safety of workers cannot be ensured by other means, such as eliminating the hazard, controlling the risk at source or minimizing the risk.

51. Suitable and sufficient PPE, having regard to the type of work and risks, and in consultation with workers and their representatives, should be used by the workers and provided and maintained by the employer. Consultation and participation of the workers and/or their representatives includes the processes of specification and selection of PPE, the information about the risks of work, the protective effect of the PPE and the correct use of PPE.

52. PPE should be provided by the employer, who should ensure its good working order and satisfactory hygienic condition by means of the necessary maintenance, repair and replacements, all at no costs for the worker. This should mean: PPE and protective clothing should comply with technical standards set by the competent authority, or recognized by national or international bodies, taking ergonomic principles into account, and be provided, as prescribed by national laws and regulations:

- a) having regard to the type of work, the gender of the worker and based on a risk assessment;
- b) without cost to the workers; and
- c) in consultation with workers and their representatives.

The employer should arrange for training and organize demonstrations on the wearing and appropriate use of PPE. All PPE should only be used according to the certification received by, and instructions and specifications of the manufacturer. It

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

should be used in accordance with instructions. Such instructions should be understandable to the workers.

53. A competent person having a full understanding of the nature of the hazard and the type, range and performance of the protection required should:

- a)* select suitable items of PPE and protective clothing; and
- b)* arrange that PPE are properly stored, maintained, cleaned, examined, replaced and, if necessary for health reasons, disinfected or sterilized at suitable intervals, using the facilities provided by the employer, all in accordance with nationally and internationally recognized instruments or guidance set or otherwise recognized by the competent authority.

54. PPE should be issued as new to an individual worker and not interchanged.

55. Employers should provide workers with appropriate instructions and means to enable them to use, maintain and store PPE and protective clothing properly.

56. Workers should be required to:

- a)* make proper use of and take good care of PPE and protective clothing provided for their use;
- b)* use the provided PPE and protective clothing throughout the time they are exposed to the risk that requires its use; and
- c)* examine the PPE periodically to respect its expiration and to ensure that it is in good condition and is replaced or repaired, as necessary, by the employer, at no cost to the user.

57. PPE should be ergonomically designed and, as far as practicable, should not restrict the user's mobility or field of vision, hearing or other sensory functions. PPE should

Part 2. Ensuring decent work for public emergency services worker

be selected considering the characteristics and gender of the wearer and additional physiological load or other harmful effects caused by the PPE. All PPE should:

- a) be appropriate for the risks involved, without itself leading to any increased risk;
- b) correspond to existing conditions at the workplace; and
- c) fit the wearer correctly after any necessary adjustment.

58. Different PPE and their components should be compatible with each other when they are worn together. PPE must be compatible with other equipment which must also be used, such as respiratory protective equipment.

59. PPE that may be contaminated by materials hazardous to health should not be laundered, cleaned or kept at workers' homes. Accommodation for clothing should be provided when protective clothing is required to be used or when there is a risk of the contamination of outdoor clothing by hazardous materials. Changing facilities should be so situated and designed to prevent the spread of contamination from protective clothing to personal clothing and from one facility to another. Employers should ensure that workers do not take contaminated clothing home and should provide for the cleaning of such clothing at no cost to the worker

60. Before reissuing the clothing or equipment, employers should provide for the laundering, cleaning, disinfecting and examination of protective clothing or equipment which has been used and may be contaminated by materials that are hazardous to health.

61. In providing PPE and protective clothing, employers should take into account that:

- a) proper maintenance and use of PPE, including appropriate behaviour of the user, are essential in providing the protection for which it is designed;

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

- b) PPE itself may produce uncomfortable, unhealthy or unsafe working conditions;
- c) only the user is protected, while others coming into the environment continue to be exposed;
- d) PPE can provide a false sense of security, in particular when it is not properly used or has lost its effectiveness as a result of improper storage or maintenance; and
- e) PPE may introduce additional hazards to the workforce.

62. PES employers should provide PES workers with sufficient sets of PPE to ensure continuity of service delivery. PES employers should maintain a sufficient reserve should the need arise. In the consultation between workers and employers in respect of PPE, it should account for good standards for all matters in respect of:

- a) respiratory protective equipment;
- b) protection for the head, face, eyes, body, hearing, as well as protection from falls; and
- c) paying regard to the sound guidance provided by the more advanced ILO OSH standards and codes of practice that covers the sectors.

E. Radiation

63. Governments and social partners should take the necessary steps indicated in the Radiation Protection Convention, 1960 (No. 115), to ensure that the exposure limits established by national authorities for workers in critical situations are not exceeded and that workers are informed about the risks involved prior to their exposure.

64. All staff working with, or who may be exposed to, radiation should wear personal dosimeters. Personnel working in a

Part 2. Ensuring decent work for public emergency services worker

hot laboratory must wear a wrist or face dosimeter in addition to the routine body dosimeter. PES employers should ensure the availability of sufficient personnel to allow the necessary staff rotation in events involving radiation.

F. Extreme heat and cold

65. Excessive heat is a growing challenge related to climate change that will likely have an impact on both PES workers and the provision of PES itself. Excessive workplace heat can lead to high body temperature, dehydration, heat exhaustion and heat stroke and, in extreme cases, it can lead to death. Ready access, at no cost to workers, to re-hydration fluids to PES workers is essential.

66. Governments and PES employers should have in place plans to account for hot working environments, whether for short or long periods of time, that have been designed with the participation of PES workers and their representatives, both to protect PES workers and to ensure that they are able to provide a resilient response to weather events and other crises.

67. All workers in extremely cold working environments will need specialized skills to be able to handle equipment and installations, firefighting and emergency preparedness in those conditions. Related survival equipment, survival suits and rescue equipment must be updated with the latest available technology.

VIII. Social protection

68. Governments and PES employers should aim at ensuring that PES workers and their dependants are progressively entitled to the full range of social security benefits, which are at least in accordance with national legislation or practice, as provided by the Social Security (Minimum Standards)

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

Convention, 1952 (No. 102). Whenever possible, governments should raise the levels of protection made available to PES workers guided by the more advanced ILO social security standards.

69. Where the entire range of statutory social security benefits is not applicable to PES workers, governments and PES employers should aim at progressively ensuring that all those in need benefit from at least basic social security guarantees comprising access to essential health care and basic income security, as established in the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202).

70. Governments and PES employers should ensure that every PES worker effectively enjoys the protection mandated by the national legal framework.

71. PES workers should not suffer loss of income as a result of employment injuries and occupational diseases. To ensure this Governments should prioritize the establishment of robust, comprehensive, and sustainable national social insurance and/or compensation schemes. Employment injury protection schemes for PES workers should take into account that illnesses or disabilities due to emergencies or disasters can occur years after exposure. Ideally, they should also cover cases where a PES worker suffers injury or illness incurred while not at work in situations where they are required or compelled by circumstances to exercise their PES skills and knowledge. In particular:

- a) governments and PES employers should, under prescribed conditions, provide rehabilitation services that are designed to facilitate the return to work of PES workers with an acquired disability, wherever possible, or if this is not possible to provide alternative work in the PES sector;

Part 2. Ensuring decent work for public emergency services worker

- b)* governments and PES employers should take measures to facilitate the placement of PES workers with disabilities in suitable employment, including appropriate training, recognizing that, in general, disability does not equal inability to work.
- c)* appropriate arrangements should be established by relevant government institutions for the coordination of activities and data sharing to support the development of OSH policies in ways that contribute to the financial sustainability of employment injury protection schemes.

Part 3. Means of action

1. Governments and social partners should promote and engage in social dialogue, training and monitoring and evaluation when implementing the recommendations included in these guidelines.

IX. Social dialogue

2. Social dialogue is an effective means to both ensure emergency preparedness and improve emergency response. It seeks to improve working conditions for PES workers, including in situations of increased workload and responsibility.

3. These guidelines have espoused the use of social dialogue to address the emerging challenges and needs of PES work, promote employment diversity, establish working conditions, design job-evaluation and pay-evaluation systems, design and implement OSH measures, and monitor and evaluate policies regarding stress, violence and harassment in PES work. The guidelines have referred to the use of collective bargaining and other relevant mechanisms, as applicable, to establish levels of remuneration, OSH measures and other working conditions.

4. The unique and essential role of PES workers should not be used as a justification to deny their participation in effective social dialogue mechanisms. An overriding policy consideration for PES employers and workers should be to establish an environment and mechanisms for effective social dialogue on working conditions, including appropriate pay structures and levels. To this end, PES workers' representatives should be fully involved in social dialogue processes. PES employers should afford paid leave for workers' representatives to engage in such activities.

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

5. Social dialogue regarding PES should be based on freedom of association, should be conducted in good faith and, where applicable under the relevant ILO Conventions, should include the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining or, where appropriate, recourse to consultations. In addition, it should be supported by enabling institutional, legal and regulatory frameworks.

6. Strong, independent and representative organizations of PES workers and employers, in collaboration with each other, can contribute to the improvement of issues such as social protection, OSH and access to training. In ensuring effective social dialogue, emphasis should be placed on:

- a) reviewing the legal framework to eliminate any legal and practical obstacles that impede the realization of freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining regarding PES, where ILO Conventions allow it, such as excessive minimum membership thresholds, the absence of formalized social dialogue mechanisms and inadequate funding;
- b) enabling the establishment of facilities, as appropriate, for the representatives of recognized PES workers' organizations that allows for representational functions to be carried out promptly and efficiently, both during and outside working hours, in a manner that does not impede the efficiency of PES operations;
- c) creating an enabling environment for social dialogue by providing appropriate education and training programmes for representatives of PES workers, employers and governments.

7. Governments should encourage and promote the full development and utilization of machinery for voluntary negotiations between employers or between employers' and workers' organizations. A state of emergency, which should only be

declared by an appropriate authority and for a reasonable and defined period, should not justify exempting PES employers from their obligations under relevant ratified ILO Conventions or suspending the application of those Conventions.

8. Governments and social partners should take measures to mainstream diversity in social dialogue mechanisms, including by ensuring the representation of under-represented groups of workers. Social dialogue is an effective means of securing commitments to greater diversity in the PES workforce.

9. Tripartite commissions or bodies on OSH or other working conditions should include PES employers' and workers' representatives. Collective agreements between PES employers and workers, as well as memoranda of understanding between agencies responsible for OSH and PES, could provide guidance in this regard. Social dialogue between PES workers and employers may include other relevant parties deemed necessary or desirable by the government or social partners.

10. In addition to legal restrictions on freedom of association rights applicable to the police and armed forces, other categories of PES workers may be classified as essential services if the interruption of their work would endanger the life, health or personal safety of the whole or part of the population. If deprived of the right to strike by national laws, such workers should have access to adequate, impartial and speedy conciliation and arbitration proceedings in interest disputes.

X. Training

11. Attention is drawn to the importance of training to promote emergency preparedness, career development, respect for diversity, the prevention of violence and harassment, the application of "universal precautions" and the proper use of

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

PPE. Training should be an integral part of employment policies and should facilitate the reintegration or re-employment of demobilized PES workers.

12. Governments should ensure that government entities in charge of PES, as well as response and recovery organizations, communities and individuals, acquire the knowledge and capacity to effectively anticipate, respond to, and recover from, the impacts of likely, imminent or current disasters. First responders should be prepared at all times for the complex and variable situations they confront. In conflict-prone countries and where increasingly complex emergencies have developed in recent years, governments should design PES training programmes that provide the particular skills and competencies needed at all levels.

13. For those workers whose jobs do not involve PES on a regular basis, employers should include response management, including simulation drills, in their routine training programmes and academic curricula.

14. Governments and PES employers should allocate adequate resources for training and knowledge sharing with a view to improving emergency services.

15. Governments at all levels, employers and workers should establish joint mechanisms to design and provide training programmes related to subjects identified as necessary for effective PES.

16. Governments and PES employers should incorporate ethics and standards of professional conduct as a subject in PES training, which should include the principles of solidarity, joint responsibility of all stakeholders, non-discrimination, respect, tolerance, compassion, impartiality, neutrality, cooperation, and prevention.

17. Regarding emergency health workers, PES employers should ensure investment in the core capacities of the International Health Regulations,¹ including skills development for national and international health workers in humanitarian settings and in public health emergencies, both acute and protracted, as recommended by the High-Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth. Consequently, PES employers should engage with PES workers in developing workforce strategies to be incorporated into national health emergency planning.

18. Community-based training should be conducted locally and with regular frequency, using training materials relevant to the specific hazards, vulnerability patterns and resources of each particular location.

XI. Monitoring and evaluation

19. It is important to monitor and evaluate the progress of response management schemes, national policies on the safety and health of PES workers, measures to prevent the transmission of communicable diseases (in particular to emergency health workers), investigation protocols on violence and harassment at work and the provision of PPE.

20. When planning these processes, PES employers and workers should agree on evaluation goals, performance measures and benchmarks, evaluation tools, data-collection sources and system-modification steps in order for newly designed systems to evolve and improve over time.

21. Labour inspectorates should be involved in efforts to inspect and monitor progress in labour rights and working

¹ WHO, document WHA58/2005/REC/1, resolution 58.3, annex.

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

conditions, while collective agreements and other social dialogue processes can promote collaborative labour relations based on joint problem-solving and collaboration at the national, regional or local levels.

22. Tripartite or bipartite consultative bodies may be useful to monitor and evaluate the implementation of regulations or agreements, with particular attention to specific PES-related subjects, including employment and vocational training.

XII. The special case of persons in volunteer work participating in crisis response

23. Volunteer work may be used in PES. It is defined as “non-compulsory work performed for others without pay”,² and is one of the five distinct forms of work recognized by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians. By definition, PES volunteers are not employees of PES. Nonetheless, they are workers, and therefore the fundamental principles and rights at work should be observed in respect to volunteer workers, to the greatest possible extent.

24. Many persons in volunteer work participate in crisis response, including fighting fires and epidemics, tending to displaced persons and engaging in rescue operations. Since managing and motivating paid staff and volunteers demand different approaches, PES employers should carefully consider the conditions under which they take on volunteer staff and whether paid PES workers and volunteers should be designated different specific activities.

² International Conference of Labour Statisticians: *Resolution I – Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization*, 19th ICLS (Geneva, October 2013), para. 7(d).

25. The use of volunteers should not impair the coordination of PES, substitute PES workers, or undermine the wages or working conditions of other PES workers, or be used to justify the understaffing or underfunding of PES.

26. Governments should consider measures to allow persons to take leave without loss of employment or pay (including post-event reimbursement) in order to engage in unpaid community service during public emergencies. Such leave should include reasonable rest time immediately following the period of service. Persons engaged in these activities should be provided full OSH protection, including PPE, adequate training and social protection measures.

27. Governments and PES employers should encourage and promote the prior registration of volunteers to ensure their training, including drills, providing safety for these workers, as well as adequate and effective provision of services to the population. No volunteer should be asked to carry out any work or activity that is not commensurate with the training they have received and for which they have been assessed as competent.

XIII. Coordination and cooperation in public emergency services

28. Governments and PES employers need to adapt quickly to evolving situations and jointly devise immediate action. PES employers should put in place arrangements for coordination and joint working, in agreement with governments and PES workers' organizations, in order to achieve more rapidly and efficiently the main objectives of their mission. To this end, they can rely on structured role systems, common expectations of workflow and shared task knowledge. In particular:

- a) governments and social partners should recognize that response management systems operate in complex environments, that the events these systems handle are

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

unpredictable and complex, and that systems must be equipped with proper resources and expertise to prevent the consequences of these events from escalating rapidly;

- b) preparedness should be based on sound analysis of risks and good linkages with national and international early warning systems and must include such activities as contingency planning, the maintenance of sufficient reserves of equipment and supplies, the development of arrangements for coordination, evacuation and public information, and associated training and field exercises, including those with the community. These activities must be supported by formal institutional, legal and budgetary capacities;
- c) people-centred early warning systems should integrate four elements:
 - i) knowledge of the risks faced;
 - ii) technical monitoring and warning services;
 - iii) dissemination of meaningful warnings to those at risk, including evacuation and relocation plans, using relevant means based on demographic composition, including accessibility of communication to persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups;
 - iv) public awareness and preparedness to act.

29. A proactive communications policy should be established for information sharing, trust building and partnership development between PES providers, primarily through greater diversity of demographic representation.

30. Governments and PES employers should consider establishing a PES fund, particularly in countries that are frequently affected by disasters and emergencies, in order to support a timely and effective response. Additionally, time frames, responsibilities for implementation and sources for funding should be specified

in PES strategic and risk reduction plans. Social partners should take advantage of the most recent communications technologies to enhance community members' voice in order to improve the responsiveness of emergency services.

31. Governments should ensure that the different sectors work together, including the government entities in charge of labour relations and employment. Environmental health planning should be an integral part of occupational health planning. In order to be responsive to local needs, PES worker organizations and employers, as well as communities, should participate fully in all phases of emergency relief and recovery decision-making. Governments and PES employers should ensure that all procedures and practices are reviewed regularly in light of developments and research by other sectors, such as advice and evidence from agencies dealing with radiation and climate

32. In keeping with the guidance provided by Recommendation No. 205, governments should promote the exchange of information between agencies at the local, national, regional and cross-border levels, including faith-based organizations, non-governmental organizations and other civil society organizations, as deemed necessary. Special attention should be paid to coordination between entities responsible for early warning systems, as indicated in the seventh global target of the Sendai Framework.³ In particular:

- a) institutions dealing with prevention, rehabilitation, income replacement compensation and access to health benefits in case of occupational injury and illnesses and those responsible for labour inspection should coordinate and share data

³ United Nations: General Assembly Resolution 69/283 of 3 June 2015, Annex II, para. 18(g) (document A/RES/69/283).

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

in order to create synergies and enlarge and harmonize available data. This includes establishing mechanisms and technologies to support this harmonization and to improve the assessment, monitoring and regular review of risks and prevention measures;

- b) to ensure a smooth transition to peace and resilience, coordination between the different agencies should include social services and other post-crisis employment generation and recovery activities, such as the skilling or reskilling of workforces to confront climate-related changes in labour markets by focusing on climate adaptation or mitigation measures.

33. International cooperation mechanisms should recognize and respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of states when implementing coordination plans. Humanitarian assistance, including for relevant PES, should therefore be provided on the basis of an appeal by, or, permission given by, the government of the affected country and in coordination with that government through, for example, clusters of responsible entities.

34. Governments should promote dialogue on the varying roles and responsibilities of different agencies and entities responsible for PES, including local governments. In particular, the fundamental role of local governments and appropriate ministries such as social welfare in the provision and coordination of PES should be clearly highlighted. The significant gaps and challenges faced by local authorities in terms of capacities and financial resources should be noted and addressed.

Appendix

ILO Conventions, Recommendations and codes of practice relevant to public emergency services

A. Conventions

Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) and its Protocol of 2014

Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)

Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Convention, 1949 (No. 94)

Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)

Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)

Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)

Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)

Radiation Protection Convention, 1960 (No. 115)

Employment Injury Benefits Convention, 1964 [Schedule I amended in 1980] (No. 121)

Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 135)

Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)

Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention, 1978 (No. 151)

Collective Bargaining Convention, 1981 (No. 154)

Asbestos Convention, 1986 (No. 162)

Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)

Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

B. Recommendations

Equal Remuneration Recommendation, 1951 (No. 90)

Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Recommendation, 1958 (No. 111)

Employment Injury Benefits Recommendation, 1964 (No. 121)

Minimum Age Recommendation, 1973 (No. 146)

Labour Relations (Public Service) Recommendation, 1978 (No. 159)

Collective Bargaining Recommendation, 1981 (No. 163)

Asbestos Recommendation, 1986 (No. 172)

Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation, 1999 (No. 190)

HIV and AIDS Recommendation, 2010 (No. 200)

Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205)

C. Codes of practice

Occupational exposure to airborne substances harmful to health. An ILO Code of Practice (1980)

Safety in the use of asbestos: an ILO code of practice (1984)

Radiation protection of workers (ionising radiations) (1987)

Prevention of major industrial accidents (1991)

Safety in the use of chemicals at work: an ILO code of practice (1993)

Management of alcohol- and drug-related issues in the workplace. An ILO code of practice (1996)

Ambient factors in the workplace. An ILO Code of Practice (2001)

An ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work (2001)

Guidelines on occupational safety and health management systems (ILO-OSH 2001)

Code of practice on Workplace violence in services sectors and measures to combat this phenomenon (2003)

ILO Code of practice: Safety and health in opencast mines (2017)

ILO code of practice: Safety and health in shipbuilding and ship repair. International Labour Office (2018)

Other international instruments and processes

WHO International Health Regulations (2005)

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992) and related Kyoto Protocol (1998) and Paris Agreement (2015)

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030

ILO–OECD–WHO “Working for Health”: A Five-Year Action Plan for Health Employment and Inclusive Economic Growth (2017–21)

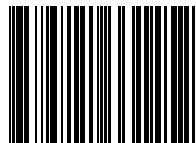
Guidelines on decent work in public emergency services

Natural disasters, epidemics and violent acts require a rapid response by effective Public Emergency Services, ranging from police forces to health and sanitation workers, operating at many different levels of government service. These workers serve under difficult and extreme conditions to save lives and protect property, and hence require increased coordination, preparedness, protection and appropriate technology.

The *Guidelines on Decent Work in Public Emergency Services* were adopted by a meeting of experts in April 2018 and draw upon the expertise of the representatives of governments, employers, workers and other participants. The Guidelines contain proposals for action to provide employment stability, workplace safety, health guarantees and social protection to public emergency workers, including volunteer workers, so they can dedicate all their energies to protecting communities against the effects of disasters. They also provide recommendations for social dialogue, training and inter-agency coordination so public servants can share their knowledge, have a voice in their work environment and be fully prepared to confront the growing threat of disasters, epidemics, climate change and violent acts.

These *Guidelines* revise the *Guidelines on social dialogue in public emergency services in a changing environment* adopted in 2003 and should serve as a reference tool for ILO constituents and other stakeholders in their efforts to address labour-related challenges and opportunities in ensuring well-prepared, adequately staffed and resilient Public Emergency Services.

ISBN 978-92-2-133145-2



9 789221 331452