

## Establishing a New Office, Responsibility for Property, and Asset Management in Emergencies

### Overview

During emergencies, it is necessary to plan and articulate the resources required such office, equipment, supplies etc. required to address the immediate and future needs of the operations. The purpose of emergency response is to rapidly respond to the needs of the affected beneficiaries. Chief of Mission (COM) / authorized delegate should establish appropriate facilities required to aide in the emergency response. Facilities may include office space that can be equipped to serve as emergency operation centers. This should also include the mobilization of equipment necessary for operations, such as the acquisition of radios, telephone systems, vehicles, personal computers. In established offices, much of the needed equipment will come from the inventory at hand.

This entry focuses on establishing a new office, responsibility for property, asset management and fire, theft, etc. insurance during an emergency.

### Key Points

- Plan and establish the type of facility and equipment required during the emergency.
- Property and equipment represent a significant portion of the organization assets and it's important that these assets are appropriately managed and recorded in the financial records to demonstrate accountability and stewardship.

### Scope and Application

#### Establishing a new office

Opening and closing an IOM office requires careful consideration, as there are significant political, financial, human resources and other implications of such an action. For more details, please refer to the Chief of Mission's (COM) handbook for more information.

The following aspects should be considered when choosing the premises:

- Location should be UNDSS-cleared and should be within close proximity with other UN agencies
- Utilities-water, electricity, sanitary facilities, parking space and other utilities are available
- The condition of the office should be reasonable for occupation and has appropriate floor space
- Cost of rental and maintenance of the office should be established
- Check for three options (have a bidding process), or justify if single option is only available

#### Asset Management

Proper asset records must be kept, control procedures should also be put to ensure effective asset management in support of the emergency response. The following points should be taken into consideration:

- It is essential to ensure that an Asset Register is set up/maintained.
- Ensure that items that are classified as assets are properly tagged and recorded in PRISM. Recommended to use the bar coding system for tagging of assets.
- Assets should not be handed to staff members without fist assigning them. Staff member should also sign the asset assignment form acknowledging responsibility for those assets until they are returned.
- Movement of assets from one location to the other must be documented and approved. The records should also

be updated in PRISM to reflect the new location of the asset.

- Physical verification should be conducted on regular basis, any losses or damage should be reported to the relevant programme manager, where necessary the donor(s) should be informed. The verified asset report must be approved by the programme manager.
- All beneficiary assets must be documented and be supported by deed of donations.
- Project agreements must be checked to ensure compliance with donor's procurement rules on asset.
- Any loaned assets should be tracked and managed in PRISM.
- All request for asset disposal should go through the programme manager for approval and must be disposed in accordance with donor guidelines.

## Responsibility for Property

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The direct responsibility for property rests with the staff member to whom it has been issued or who has it in his/her custody. He or she is relieved of responsibility only when:

- Custody of the property is assumed by another and the transfer has been fully effected and properly recorded;
- The property, in case of supplies, has been consumed;
- The property has been sold or donated after proper action;
- The property has been written off after proper survey action.

The responsibility for property in transit between two IOM offices rests with the consignor until title is accepted by the consignee, whether this takes place at the consignor's location, en route, or at the consignee's location.

## Fire, theft, etc. insurance

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With regard to insurance coverage for incidents, such as fire, flood, theft and robbery by armed men. According to general IOM guidelines, IOM field offices should procure relevant insurance coverage against fire, theft, third party's legal liabilities, etc. if obtainable locally or in neighbouring countries. Office and IT equipment and furniture shall be insured at their replacement value. If more information is needed, contact the Global Procurement and Supply Unit (GPSU)/DRM Crisis Support Unit, please see the insurance guidelines found in the Guidance Documents and Tools for Procurement and Logistics entry.

## Links

- [Chief of Mission's \(COM\) Handbook](#)

## References and Tools

- [CoM Handbook \(2016\)](#)

## Contacts

For more information please contact your Regional Resource Management Officer (RRMO) and the Department or Resource Management (DRM) Crisis Support Unit: [drmcs@iom.int](mailto:drmcs@iom.int).

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