

**INTERNATIONAL  
SMALL ARMS CONTROL  
STANDARD**

**ISACS  
03.10**

Version 1.0  
2014-06-17

---

**National controls over the manufacture  
of small arms and light weapons**

This document may not be up-to-date.  
All up-to-date International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) are available on the ISACS website.  
**[www.smallarmsstandards.org](http://www.smallarmsstandards.org)**

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document – one in a series of International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) – was produced by the United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) mechanism in collaboration with a broad and diverse group of experts drawn from governments, international and regional organizations, civil society and the private sector. A full list of contributors to the ISACS project is available on the website listed above.

The production of ISACS was made possible by the financial support of the governments of Australia, Canada, Ireland, Norway and Switzerland, as well as by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED).

© UN CASA 2014

All rights reserved. This publication may be reproduced for non-profit educational and training purposes without special permission from the copyright holders, provided that the source is acknowledged. The ISACS Inter-Agency Support Unit would appreciate receiving an electronic copy of any publication that uses this document as a source:

United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA)  
International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) Inter-Agency Support Unit  
E-mail: [support@smallarmsstandards.org](mailto:support@smallarmsstandards.org)  
Web: [www.smallarmsstandards.org](http://www.smallarmsstandards.org)

This document is not to be sold.

# Contents

Page

<b>Foreword</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>1 Scope</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Normative references</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>3 Terms and definitions</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>4 United Nations Framework</b> .....	<b>2</b>
4.1 General .....	2
4.2 UN Programme of Action .....	2
4.3 International Tracing Instrument .....	3
4.4 UN Firearms Protocol .....	3
<b>5 Licensing procedure</b> .....	<b>5</b>
5.1 General .....	5
5.2 Industrial and craft manufacturing .....	5
5.3 Prohibition on manufacturing without a licence or authorization .....	5
5.4 Licensing Authority .....	6
5.5 Licensing criteria .....	8
5.6 Application requirements .....	9
5.7 Particulars of a manufacturing licence .....	10
5.8 Licence renewal .....	11
5.9 Licence suspension and revocation .....	11
<b>6 Licensing restrictions</b> .....	<b>12</b>
6.1 General .....	12
6.2 Term of licence .....	12
6.3 Types of weapons and ammunition .....	12
6.4 Sale and transfer .....	12
6.5 Activities .....	12
6.6 Location of manufacturing .....	12
6.7 Non-transferability .....	12
<b>7 Licensing conditions</b> .....	<b>13</b>
7.1 General .....	13
7.2 Marking at the time of manufacture .....	13
7.3 Recordkeeping by manufacturers .....	13
7.4 Responding to tracing requests .....	13
7.5 Secure storage .....	13
7.6 Notification and reporting .....	14
7.7 Employees .....	14
<b>8 Enforcement powers</b> .....	<b>14</b>
8.1 Inspection .....	14
8.2 Permanent confiscation .....	14
8.3 Temporary seizure .....	14
8.4 Disposal .....	15
<b>9 Offences and sanctions</b> .....	<b>15</b>
9.1 Criminal offences .....	15
9.2 Penalties for violations .....	16
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	<b>17</b>

## Foreword

The United Nations (UN) Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) mechanism strives to improve the UN's ability to work as one in delivering effective policy, programming and advice to Member States on curbing the illicit trade, uncontrolled proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons. Established by the Secretary-General in 1998 with the task of coordinating the small arms work of the United Nations, CASA today unites more than 20 UN bodies active in policy development and/or programming related to small arms and light weapons.<sup>1</sup>

Building on previous UN initiatives to develop international standards in the areas of mine action (International Mine Action Standards)<sup>2</sup> and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants (Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards),<sup>3</sup> the United Nations has developed a series of International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) with the aim of providing clear and comprehensive guidance to practitioners and policymakers on fundamental aspects of small arms and light weapons control. The present document constitutes one of more than 20 ISACS modules that provide practical guidance on instituting effective controls over the full life cycle of small arms and light weapons (all ISACS modules can be found at [www.smallarmsstandards.org](http://www.smallarmsstandards.org)).

ISACS are framed by existing global agreements related to small arms and light weapons control, in particular the

- *UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons In All Its Aspects* (UN PoA);
- *International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons* (International Tracing Instrument); and
- *Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime* (UN Firearms Protocol).

Within this global framework, ISACS build upon standards, best practice guidelines, model regulations, etc. that have been elaborated at the regional and sub-regional levels. ISACS seek to cover the fundamental areas of small arms and light weapons control on which the United Nations may be called upon to provide advice, guidance and support.

ISACS were developed, and continue to be improved and supplemented, by a broad coalition of small arms control specialists drawn from the United Nations, governments, international and regional organizations, civil society and the private sector (a full list of contributors to ISACS is available at [www.smallarmsstandards.org](http://www.smallarmsstandards.org)).

ISACS modules were drafted in accordance with the rules set out in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2, *Rules for the structure and drafting of International Standards*, under the oversight of the CASA Working Group on ISACS, co-chaired by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

---

<sup>1</sup> For a full listing of CASA partners, see [www.poa-iss.org/CASA/CASA.aspx](http://www.poa-iss.org/CASA/CASA.aspx)

<sup>2</sup> [www.mineactionstandards.org](http://www.mineactionstandards.org)

<sup>3</sup> [www.unddr.org](http://www.unddr.org)

## Introduction

Effective domestic regulation of the manufacture of small arms, light weapons, their essential parts and components and their ammunition – whether they are manufactured by means of large-scale industrial production or small-scale craft production – is an essential element of an effective national small arms and light weapons control regime. The primary aims of such controls are to

- a) prevent illicit manufacturing of small arms and light weapons, their essential parts and components and their ammunition;
- b) ensure that all small arms and light weapons are adequately marked and recorded at the time of manufacture so that they can be traced to their point of diversion if recovered under illicit circumstances; and
- c) prevent theft and loss of weapons and ammunition from manufacturers' stocks by requiring adequate security and recordkeeping at manufacturing premises.



# National controls over the manufacture of small arms and light weapons

## 1 Scope

This document provides guidance on regulating the manufacture of small arms and light weapons, their essential parts and components and their ammunition at the national level. It specifies methods and means of preventing illicit manufacturing, as well as elements and procedures for licensing manufacturers, whether they be individuals or companies.

This document is applicable to

- a) regulatory authorities seeking guidance on drafting legislation and regulations to combat illicit manufacturing in accordance with international norms and obligations; and
- b) licensing authorities seeking guidance on licensing and monitoring procedures.

This document does not cover

- c) technical aspects of manufacturing small arms, light weapons, their essential parts and components or their ammunition, other than marking at the time of manufacture;
- d) quality control or proofing of manufactured weapons or ammunition; nor
- e) manufacture of weapons in one country under a licence issued in another country (licensed production), which is covered in ISACS 03.20, *National controls over the international transfer of small arms and light weapons*.

This document covers only the broad principles of marking and recordkeeping at the time of manufacture. More detailed guidance on this can be found in ISACS 05.30, *Marking and recordkeeping*.

## 2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISACS 05.20, *Stockpile management: Weapons*

ISACS 05.30, *Marking and recordkeeping*

ISACS 05.50, *Destruction: Weapons*

IATG 05.20, *Types of buildings for explosives facilities*

IATG 10.10, *Demilitarization and Destruction of Conventional Ammunition*

ILO R164, *Occupational Safety and Health Recommendation*, International Labour Organization

*Code of practice on safety and health in the use of machinery*, International Labour Organization

*Code of practice on safety in the use of chemicals at work*, International Labour Organization

### **3 Terms and definitions**

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISACS 01.20, *Glossary of terms, definitions and abbreviated terms*, and the following apply.

In all ISACS modules, the words 'shall', 'should', 'may' and 'can' are used to express provisions in accordance with their usage in International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standards.

- a) **“shall” indicates a requirement:** It is used to indicate requirements strictly to be followed in order to conform to the document and from which no deviation is permitted.
- b) **“should” indicates a recommendation:** It is used to indicate that among several possibilities one is recommended as particularly suitable, without mentioning or excluding others, or that a certain course of action is preferred but not necessarily required, or that (in the negative form, 'should not') a certain possibility or course of action is deprecated but not prohibited.
- c) **“may” indicates permission:** It is used to indicate a course of action permissible within the limits of the document.
- d) **“can” indicates possibility and capability:** It is used for statements of possibility and capability, whether material, physical or casual.

## **4 United Nations Framework**

### **4.1 General**

This document provides practical guidance on the implementation of commitments related to regulating the manufacture of small arms and light weapons that are contained in United Nations multilateral instruments related to small arms and light weapons control.

### **4.2 UN Programme of Action**

In the United Nations *Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects* (UN Programme of Action), all UN Member States commit themselves

- a) “To put in place, where they do not exist, adequate laws, regulations and administrative procedures to exercise effective control over the production of small arms and light weapons within their areas of jurisdiction [...] in order to prevent illegal manufacture of [...] small arms and light weapons...” (section II, paragraph 2);
- b) “To adopt and implement, in the States that have not already done so, the necessary legislative or other measures to establish as criminal offences under their domestic law the illegal manufacture [...] of small arms and light weapons within their areas of jurisdiction, in order to ensure that those engaged in such activities can be prosecuted under appropriate national penal codes” (section II, paragraph 3);



- c) “To establish, or designate as appropriate, national coordination agencies or bodies and institutional infrastructure responsible for policy guidance, research and monitoring of efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. This should include aspects of the illicit manufacture [...] of small arms and light weapons” (section II, paragraph 4);
- d) “To identify, where applicable, groups and individuals engaged in the illegal manufacture [...] of illicit small arms and light weapons, and take action under appropriate national law against such groups and individuals” (section II, paragraph 6);
- e) “To ensure that henceforth licensed manufacturers apply an appropriate and reliable marking on each small arm and light weapon as an integral part of the production process...” (section II, paragraph 7);
- f) “To adopt where they do not exist and enforce, all the necessary measures to prevent the manufacture [...] of any unmarked or inadequately marked small arms and light weapons” (section II, paragraph 8);
- g) “To ensure that comprehensive and accurate records are kept for as long as possible on the manufacture [...] of small arms and light weapons under their jurisdiction. These records should be organized and maintained in such a way as to ensure that accurate information can be promptly retrieved and collated by competent national authorities” (section II, paragraph 9); and
- h) “To encourage the strengthening and establishing, where appropriate and as agreed by the States concerned, of moratoria or similar initiatives in affected regions or subregions on the [...] manufacture of small arms and light weapons [...] and to respect such moratoria, similar initiatives, and/or action programmes and cooperate with the States concerned in the implementation thereof...” (section III, paragraph 26).

#### 4.3 International Tracing Instrument

In the *International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons* (International Tracing Instrument), all UN Member States commit themselves to

- a) “At the time of manufacture of each small arm or light weapon under their jurisdiction or control, either require unique marking providing the name of the manufacturer, the country of manufacture and the serial number, or maintain any alternative unique user-friendly marking with simple geometric symbols in combination with a numeric and/or alphanumeric code, permitting ready identification by all States of the country of manufacture; and encourage the marking of such additional information as the year of manufacture, weapon type/model and calibre” (paragraph 8.a);
- b) “Encourage manufacturers of small arms and light weapons to develop measures against the removal or alteration of markings” (paragraph 8.e); and
- c) From the time of the adoption of this instrument, records pertaining to marked small arms and light weapons will, to the extent possible, be kept indefinitely, but in any case a State will ensure the maintenance of [...] Manufacturing records for at least 30 years...” (paragraph 12);

#### 4.4 UN Firearms Protocol

States party to the *Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime* (UN Firearms Protocol) are required to

- a) “adopt such legislative and other measures as may be necessary to establish as criminal offences the following conduct, when committed intentionally: (a) Illicit manufacturing of firearms, their parts and components and ammunition” [...] (Article 5.1);

- b) “adopt, to the greatest extent possible within their domestic legal systems, such measures as may be necessary to enable confiscation of firearms, their parts and components and ammunition that have been illicitly manufactured [...]” (Article 6.1);
- c) “adopt, within their domestic legal systems, such measures as may be necessary to prevent illicitly manufactured [...] firearms, parts and components and ammunition from falling into the hands of unauthorized persons by seizing and destroying such firearms, their parts and components and ammunition unless other disposal has been officially authorized, provided that the firearms have been marked and the methods of disposal of those firearms and ammunition have been recorded. (Article 6.2);
- d) “At the time of manufacture of each firearm, either require unique marking providing the name of the manufacturer, the country or place of manufacture and the serial number, or maintain any alternative unique user-friendly marking with simple geometric symbols in combination with a numeric and/or alphanumeric code, permitting ready identification by all States of the country of manufacture; (Article 8.1.a);
- e) “encourage the firearms manufacturing industry to develop measures against the removal or alteration of markings” (Article 8.2);
- f) “In an effort to detect, prevent and eliminate the theft, loss or diversion of, as well as the illicit manufacturing of [...] firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, each State Party shall take appropriate measures [...] To require the security of firearms, their parts and components and ammunition at the time of manufacture...” (Article 11);
- g) “exchange among themselves, consistent with their respective domestic legal and administrative systems, relevant information on matters such as: (a) Organized criminal groups known to take part or suspected of taking part in the illicit manufacturing of [...] firearms, their parts and components and ammunition; (b) The means of concealment used in the illicit manufacturing of [...] firearms, their parts and components and ammunition and ways of detecting them; [...] (d) Legislative experiences and practices and measures to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit manufacturing of [...] firearms, their parts and components and ammunition” (Article 12.2);
- h) “provide to or share with each other, as appropriate, relevant scientific and technological information useful to law enforcement authorities in order to enhance each other’s abilities to prevent, detect and investigate the illicit manufacturing of [...] firearms, their parts and components and ammunition and to prosecute the persons involved in those illicit activities” (Article 12.3);
- i) “cooperate at the bilateral, regional and international levels to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit manufacturing of [...] firearms, their parts and components and ammunition” (Article 13.1);
- j) “seek the support and cooperation of manufacturers [...] of firearms, their parts and components and ammunition to prevent and detect the illicit activities referred to in paragraph 1 of this article” (Article 13.3);
- k) “cooperate with each other and with relevant international organizations, as appropriate, so that States Parties may receive, upon request, the training and technical assistance necessary to enhance their ability to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit manufacturing of [...] firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, including technical, financial and material assistance in those matters identified in articles 29 and 30 of the Convention” (Article 14);
- l) “exchange among themselves, consistent with their respective domestic legal and administrative systems, relevant case-specific information on matters such as authorized producers [...] of firearms, their parts and components and ammunition” (Article 12.1);

## 5 Licensing procedure

### 5.1 General

For the purposes of this document, manufacturing is the making, producing or assembling of

- a) a complete small arm or light weapon;
- b) a frame or receiver for a small arm or light weapon;
- c) a pressure-bearing part or component of a small arm or light weapon (e.g. barrel, slide, cylinder, bolt, breech block, etc.); or
- d) ammunition for a small arm or light weapon.

Manufacturing includes

- e) reactivating a deactivated small arm or light weapon; and
- f) substantially modifying the function of a small arm or light weapon (e.g. converting a semi-automatic weapon to fully-automatic).

Manufacturing does not include

- g) repair, restoration, maintenance or cosmetic enhancement or alteration of a small arm or light weapon; nor
- h) the non-commercial reloading of ammunition (e.g. by hunters and sport shooters) where this is permitted by domestic law.

### 5.2 Industrial and craft manufacturing

The licensing requirements set out in this clause shall apply irrespective of the scale of manufacture; i.e. they shall apply equally to large-scale (industrial) manufacture and to small-scale (craft) manufacture.

Where small-scale craft manufacturers exist, they should either be made to

- a) comply with the licensing requirements as set out in this clause; or
- b) cease their manufacturing operations.

### 5.3 Prohibition on manufacturing without a licence or authorization

#### 5.3.1 Small arms and light weapons

National legislation shall prohibit any person, natural or legal, from manufacturing a small arm or light weapon without a licence or authorization granted by a competent authority of the State.

Manufacturers that are licensed to manufacture complete small arms or light weapons need not in addition be licensed or authorized to produce the individual pressure-bearing parts and components that go into producing a complete weapon.

### **5.3.2 Parts and components**

#### **5.3.2.1 Frame/receiver**

National legislation shall prohibit any person, natural or legal, from manufacturing a frame or receiver of a small arm or light weapon without a licence or authorization granted by a competent authority of the State.

NOTE The frame or receiver is the most essential component of a small arm or light weapon and may, for legal purposes, be considered to be the weapon.

#### **5.3.2.2 Other parts and components**

National legislation should prohibit any person, natural or legal, from manufacturing other pressure-bearing parts and components of a small arm or light weapon without a licence or authorization granted by a competent authority of the State. Pressure-bearing parts and components include the

- a) barrel;
- b) slide;
- c) cylinder;
- d) bolt; and
- e) breech block.

### **5.3.3 Ammunition**

National legislation shall prohibit any person, natural or legal, from manufacturing ammunition for a small arm or light weapon without a licence or authorization granted by a competent authority of the State.

An exception may be made for the non-commercial reloading of ammunition (e.g. by hunters and sport shooters) where this is permitted by domestic law.

## **5.4 Licensing Authority**

### **5.4.1 Creation and function**

A national licensing authority shall be created and a licensing system shall be established to assess applications and to grant licences or authorisations to manufacture

- a) complete small arms and light weapons;
- b) frames or receivers for small arms and light weapons; and
- c) ammunition for small arms and light weapons.

The licensing authority should also be mandated to grant licenses or authorizations to manufacture pressure-bearing parts and components of small arms or light weapons (see Clause 5.3.2.2).

### **5.4.2 Monitoring of compliance**

The licensing authority shall monitor compliance with the conditions of the licences and authorizations it issues, including by carrying out periodic inspections of manufacturing facilities and records, or ensuring that such inspections are carried out.

### 5.4.3 Recordkeeping by the licensing authority

#### 5.4.3.1 Recordkeeping and security of records

The licensing authority shall maintain secure, accurate, and up to date records of

- a) licensed manufacturers; and
- b) manufacturing licenses issued.

Records should be maintained in a centralized location, in electronic format and should regularly be backed up, in hard and electronic formats, at a separate location in order to minimize the risk of data loss in the event of fire or other catastrophic event.

#### 5.4.3.2 Content of records

##### 5.4.3.2.1 Records of licences

The records maintained by the licensing authority should include the following information for all licensed manufacturers:

- a) name and address;
- b) date of issuance of the licence;
- c) date of expiration of the licence;
- d) unique licence number;
- e) licensed activities, including the
  - 1) types of small arms, light weapons and/or ammunition (and, if applicable, pressure-bearing parts and components) that the manufacturer is licensed to manufacture; and
  - 2) the quantity range of small arms or light weapons that the manufacture produces, i.e.
    - less than 100,
    - from 100 to 1,000, or
    - more than 1,000;
- f) information on licence modifications, including extensions and changes to licence conditions;
- g) grounds for and dates of any suspensions and/or revocations of the licence;
- h) information obtained through inspections (see Clause 8.1); and
- i) Information supplied by manufacturers, including
  - 1) as part of licensing applications, in accordance with Clause 5.6;
  - 2) as part of notification and reporting obligations, in accordance with Clause 7.6; and
  - 3) when the manufacturer goes out of business, in accordance with Clause 7.3.

**5.4.3.2 Records on seized and destroyed weapons and ammunition**

Small arms, light weapons or their ammunition that are manufactured without a licence or authorization from the licensing authority shall be destroyed, and records kept of their destruction, in accordance with ISACS 05.50, *Destruction: Weapons* and IATG 10.10, *Demilitarization and Destruction of Conventional Ammunition*, respectively.

Records shall also be kept of small arms, light weapons or their ammunition that have been seized, in accordance with Clause 8.3, on suspicion of having been manufactured without a licence or authorization.

**5.4.3.3 Transparency of records**

Subject to domestic privacy, anti-trust and security laws, records maintained by the licensing authority may be made available to the public.

**5.4.3.4 Duration of records**

The licensing authority shall maintain its records for at least 30 years and should maintain them indefinitely.

**5.5 Licensing criteria**

A person, natural or legal, wishing to obtain a licence or authorization to manufacture small arms, light weapons, their pressure-bearing parts and components or their ammunition, should fulfil at least the following criteria:

**5.5.1 Age**

Natural persons shall have achieved the age of majority in the State where they are seeking a manufacturing licence.

**5.5.2 Suitable facilities, premises and practices**

Applicants should dispose of facilities and follow practices that are suitable for the safe manufacture of weapons and/or ammunition, in accordance with international labour recommendations and codes of practice, in particular those relating to occupational safety and health, including the

- a) Occupational Safety and Health Recommendation, International Labour Organization;
- b) Code of practice on safety and health in the use of machinery, International Labour Organization; and
- c) Code of practice on safety in the use of chemicals at work, International Labour Organization.

Applicants should dispose of premises suitable for the safe and secure storage of manufactured weapons and ammunition, in accordance with, as applicable,

- d) ISACS 05.20, Stockpile management: Weapons; and
- e) IATG 05.20, Types of buildings for explosives facilities.

**5.5.3 Qualifications**

Only applicants who are in compliance with domestic laws, regulations and administrative procedures as they relate to the manufacture of small arms, light weapons, their parts, components and ammunition, as applicable, shall be licensed.

Only applicants that possess the necessary technical, financial, managerial and administrative capacity to engage safely and securely in manufacturing activities, in accordance with their business plan, shall be licensed.

#### 5.5.4 Background checks

All applicants for manufacturing licences should undergo a background check in order to verify that they are capable of engaging in manufacturing activities without posing a threat to public safety or security. Background checks should verify that the applicant

- a) does not have a criminal record;
- b) does not have a history of mental illness or mental disability; and
- c) is of good character.

NOTE 1 The character of the applicant may be ascertained, for example, by interviewing and/or obtaining references from persons of responsible social standing who are acquainted with the applicant.

NOTE 2 Where the applicant is a legal person (e.g. a corporate body), as opposed to natural person (e.g. an individual), the representative of the legal person who is listed on the licence application, as well as the legal person itself, should be subject to a background check.

### 5.6 Application requirements

#### 5.6.1 Natural person

A natural person (i.e. an individual) applying for a manufacturing licence should be required to provide

- a) proof of the identity of the applicant and of all persons the applicant proposes initially to employ in the manufacturing business, including
  - 1) names,
  - 2) physical addresses, and
  - 3) recent photographs;
- b) information about the types of small arms, light weapons, pressure-bearing parts and components, and/or ammunition to be manufactured; and
- c) information about the expected quantity range of small arms or light weapons to be manufactured per year, i.e.
  - 1) less than 100;
  - 2) from 100 to 1,000; or
  - 3) More than 1,000.

#### 5.6.2 Legal person

A legal person (e.g. a company) applying for a licence to manufacture small arms, light weapons and/or their ammunition should be required to provide

- a) original or certified copies of the company's founding documents, articles of incorporation or other proof of licensed business;
- b) information about the types of weapons, parts, components and/or ammunition to be manufactured;

## **ISACS 03.10:2014(E)V1.0**

- c) information about the expected quantity range of small arms or light weapons to be manufactured per year, i.e.
- d) less than 100;
- e) from 100 to 1,000; or
- f) More than 1,000.
- d) proof that the company meets State standards for protection of proprietary and State classified information, as applicable; and
- e) information about foreign control and/or ownership in the applicant company, as applicable.

An applicant that is a legal person may also be required to provide

- f) the identity of the company's officers;
- g) the identity of the person who will be responsible for the day to day management of the manufacturing facility (responsible person);
- h) proof of the identity of the responsible person, including
  - 1) name,
  - 2) physical address, and
  - 3) recent photograph;

### **5.7 Particulars of a manufacturing licence**

The following information should be included in a licence to operate as a manufacturer:

- a) name of the manufacturer;
- b) corporate status and place of registration of the manufacturer, if a legal person;
- c) date of issuance of the licence;
- d) date of expiration of the licence;
- e) licensed activity or activities, including types of weapons and/or ammunition that may be produced; and
- f) name of the licensing authority.

The following information may also be included in a licence to operate as a manufacturer:

- g) photograph of the licensee;
- h) signature of the licensee;
- i) physical address of the manufacturing facility;
- j) any restrictions that may apply to the licence, in accordance with Clause 6; and
- k) any conditions that may apply to the licence, in accordance with Clause 7.



## 5.8 Licence renewal

A manufacturer may apply to renew a manufacturing licence before the term of the licence expires (see Clause 6.2).

The decision of the licensing authority on whether or not to renew a licence should be based on

- a) the manufacturer's compliance with the terms of its existing licence;
- b) changes in the circumstances of the manufacturer since the previous application, including changes to any of the elements contained in Clause 5.6; and
- c) changes to licensing laws and administrative procedures that may have come into effect since the manufacturer obtained its existing licence.

When denying an application to renew a manufacturing licence, the licensing authority should inform the applicant in writing of the grounds for denial. The applicant should have the opportunity of appealing the decision of the licensing authority by providing additional information relevant to the grounds for denial.

## 5.9 Licence suspension and revocation

### 5.9.1 General

A licensing authority may suspend or revoke a manufacturing licence before it expires.

### 5.9.2 Suspension

If the licensing authority has reasonable grounds to believe that one or more conditions of a manufacturing licence has been violated, it shall conduct an investigation in order to establish the facts.

Depending on the nature and seriousness of the circumstances, the licensing authority may

- a) suspend the manufacturing licence while conducting the investigation, thus requiring the manufacturer to suspend production; or
- b) conduct the investigation while allowing the manufacturer to continue production under the close supervision of the licensing authority.

If the licensing authority decides to suspend a manufacturing licence, it should do so for the shortest possible time needed to conduct its investigation, after which the licence should either be revoked or the suspension lifted.

### 5.9.3 Revocation

Conditions under which a manufacturing licence should be revoked include

- a) cessation of business by the licensee (e.g. through bankruptcy, dissolution of the corporate entity, etc.);
- b) conviction of the licence holder of a crime;
- c) violation of one or more conditions of the manufacturing licence;
- d) changes in circumstances that result in the licensee no longer meeting the criteria set out in Clause 5.5; or
- e) provision of false, misleading or incomplete information on a licence application.

## **6 Licensing restrictions**

### **6.1 General**

Licensing authorities may impose restrictions on manufacturing licences, including in the following areas:

### **6.2 Term of licence**

A licence to manufacture small arms, light weapons, their parts, components or ammunition shall be valid for a limited time only, i.e. they shall have an expiration date.

The period of validity of a manufacturing licence should not exceed 5 years.

### **6.3 Types of weapons and ammunition**

The manufacturing licence shall specify the types of weapons and/or ammunition that may be produced (see Clause 5.7).

The licensing authority may impose additional restrictions (e.g. in the form of closer supervision, stricter reporting requirements, etc.) on licences to produce certain sensitive types of weapons or ammunition, e.g. weapons designed exclusively for use by armed forces, weapons whose possession by civilians is prohibited by domestic law, etc.

### **6.4 Sale and transfer**

A manufacturing licence may include restrictions on whom a manufacturer is authorized to sell or transfer weapons and/or ammunition to.

**EXAMPLE** A licence may restrict a manufacturer to only selling weapons to armed forces of the State; or to only exporting weapons.

### **6.5 Activities**

A manufacturing licence may include restrictions on the activities a manufacturer may engage in.

**EXAMPLE** Manufacturers may be prohibited from reactivating weapons that have been deactivated, or from converting weapons from one form or state into another, e.g. from semi-automatic to automatic action.

### **6.6 Location of manufacturing**

A licence should only authorize a manufacturer to carry out manufacturing activities at the premises specified in the licence, which shall be assessed by the licensing authority during the course of licence application process, in accordance with Clause 5.5.2.

### **6.7 Non-transferability**

A manufacturing licence shall not be transferable from the licensee to another person, whether natural or legal, without the written authorization of the licensing authority.

When considering an application to transfer a manufacturing licence, the licensing authority should assess the eligibility of the person, whether natural or legal, to whom the licence is to be transferred according to the criteria set out in Clause 5.5.

## 7 Licensing conditions

### 7.1 General

The continued validity of a manufacturing licence should be subject to the manufacturer's sustained compliance with certain conditions, including the following:

### 7.2 Marking at the time of manufacture

Manufacturers shall mark small arms and light weapons, their pressure-bearing parts and components and/or ammunition that they manufacture in accordance with ISACS 05.30, *Marking and recordkeeping*.

In addition, manufacturers should be required to develop measures against the removal or alteration of markings applied by them at the time of manufacture.

### 7.3 Recordkeeping by manufacturers

Manufacturers shall maintain records of all small arms, light weapons, their parts, components and/or ammunition that they manufacture in accordance with ISACS 05.30, *Marking and recordkeeping*.

In addition, manufacturers should maintain records of the specialized machinery they use in the manufacture of

- a) frames and receivers of small arms and light weapons;
- b) pressure-bearing components of small arms and light weapons – e.g. barrel, bolt, cylinder, slide, breech block); and
- c) ammunition for small arms and light weapons.

EXAMPLE Examples of such specialized equipment include lathes, drilling and rifling machines, and bullet assembly machines.

Records held by manufacturers that are going out of business shall be transferred to and maintained by the National Authority on small arms and light weapons (see ISACS 03.40) or, where one does not yet exist, by the designated competent authority of the State.

### 7.4 Responding to tracing requests

Manufacturers shall respond promptly to tracing requests directed to them by their national focal point on tracing small arms and light weapons or other competent authority of the State. As a general guide, manufacturers should provide the information requested within 7 days of the request being received.

NOTE Further guidance on tracing can be found in ISACS 05.31, *Tracing illicit small arms and light weapons*.

### 7.5 Secure storage

Manufacturers shall store all small arms, light weapons, their parts, components and/or ammunition that they manufacture in accordance with ISACS 05.20, *Stockpile management: Weapons*.

In addition, manufacturers shall securely store

- a) specialized machinery used in the manufacture of small arms, light weapons, their parts, components and ammunition (e.g. lathes, drilling and rifling machines, bullet assembly machines, etc.), as well as their technical documentation; and

- b) any defective small arms, light weapons, their parts, components or ammunition that they may produce, pending their destruction.

Manufacturers shall permit, and shall cooperate fully with, inspections carried out by the licensing authority (or such other body as may be designated by it) of the licensee's facilities, particularly in respect to the safe and secure storage of weapons and ammunition.

## **7.6 Notification and reporting**

Manufacturers shall notify the licensing authority as soon as possible – and in any case within 7 days – of

- a) discovery of theft, loss or unintentional destruction of weapons or ammunition stored at the manufacturer's premises; or
- b) a change of address.

Manufacturers may also be required to report on their activities and/or to submit records kept in accordance with Clause 7.3 to the licensing authority for verification at regular, specified intervals.

## **7.7 Employees**

Manufacturers should ensure that all employees who have access to completed, manufactured weapons or ammunition are eligible to hold a licence to possess a small arm under the relevant national law.

# **8 Enforcement powers**

## **8.1 Inspection**

In order to deter, detect and disrupt illicit manufacturing of weapons or ammunition, the licensing authority should conduct inspections of manufacturing facilities and records in order to verify their compliance with the conditions of their licence and with relevant national legislation.

Such inspections should take place on an irregular basis and with the minimum provision of notice as may be required by law.

## **8.2 Permanent confiscation**

Small arms, light weapons, their parts, components or ammunition that have been illicitly manufactured shall be permanently confiscated by the relevant national authority.

**NOTE** The criminal procedure provisions that are necessary to implement confiscation orders would generally be set out in separate legislation such as a Proceeds of Crime Act and would not be included within a Firearms Act.

## **8.3 Temporary seizure**

Small arms, light weapons, their parts, components or ammunition that are suspected of having been illicitly manufactured may be seized temporarily by the relevant national authority in order to conduct an investigation into the suspected illicit nature of the items.

Temporary seizure may be warranted if

- a) a manufacturing licence is suspended, revoked or cancelled, or if it expires;
- b) the holder of a manufacturing licence is convicted of an offence set out in Clause 9.1; or

- c) the licensing authority has grounds to believe that an offence, as set out in Clause 9.1, has been or is about to be committed and that the items to be seized are either evidence of this or are themselves the subject matter of the offence involved;

Seized items that are found not to have been illicitly manufactured shall be promptly returned to their owner. In such cases, reasonable compensation should be paid if the seizure resulted in a financial loss to the owner.

Seized items that are found to have been illicitly manufactured shall be confiscated in accordance with Clause 8.2.

#### **8.4 Disposal**

Small arms, light weapons, their parts, components or ammunition that have been illicitly manufactured shall be promptly disposed of, preferably through destruction in accordance with ISACS 05.50, *Destruction: Weapons*, and IATG 10.10, *Demilitarization and Destruction of Conventional Ammunition*.

A method of disposal other than destruction may be used, provided that,

- a) the weapons are first marked and recorded in accordance with ISACS 05.30, *Marking and recordkeeping*; and
- b) the following details are in addition recorded:
- 1) date of disposal,
  - 2) method of disposal, and
  - 3) details of the recipient.

## **9 Offences and sanctions**

### **9.1 Criminal offences**

The following activities shall be established as criminal offences under domestic law;

- a) manufacture of a complete small arm or light weapon without a valid licence or authorization granted by a competent authority of the State;
- b) manufacture of a frame or receiver of a small arm or light weapon without a valid licence or authorization granted by a competent authority of the State;
- c) manufacture of ammunition for a small arm or light weapon without a valid licence or authorization granted by a competent authority of the State (with the exception of non-commercial reloading of ammunition – e.g. by hunters and sport shooters – where permitted by domestic law);
- d) manufacture of small arms, light weapons or their ammunition, using illicitly trafficked or acquired parts or components;
- e) any attempt to commit the offences set out under a) to d) above;

**NOTE** In light of the fact that a number of steps involved in manufacturing small arms, light weapons, their frames, receivers and ammunition are not specific to weapons or ammunition (i.e. the machinery, tools and equipment may also be used in the production of other items), proof of an “attempt to manufacture” shall go beyond the mere possession of non-specialist machinery, tools and equipment.

## **ISACS 03.10:2014(E)V1.0**

- f) failure to mark small arms or light weapons at the time of manufacture, in accordance with Clause 7.2;
- g) participation as an accomplice in any of the offences set out under a) to d) above;
- h) organizing, directing, aiding, abetting, facilitating or counseling the commission of any of the offences set out under a) to d) above

The following activities should be established as criminal offences under domestic law:

- i) manufacture of a pressure-bearing part or component of a small arm or light weapon (see Clause 5.3.2) without a licence or authorization granted by a competent authority of the State;
- j) failure to mark a pressure-bearing part or component of a small arm or light weapon at the time of manufacture in accordance with Clause 7.2; and
- k) failure to mark ammunition at the time of manufacture, in accordance with Clause 7.2.

### **9.2 Penalties for violations**

Appropriate civil, administrative or criminal penalties should be established for offences outlined under Clause 9.1.

Such penalties may consist of fines (for minor and administrative offences) and/or imprisonment (for more serious and criminal offences). Such penalties may be contained in national legislation on manufacturing or, in the case of criminal penalties, in the Criminal Code of the State.

## Bibliography

### United Nations

1. UNDP. *How to Guide: Small Arms and Light Weapons Legislation*. Geneva: Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, United Nations Development Programme, 2008.
2. UNODC. *Legislative Guide for the Implementation of the Protocol Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Crime*. Vienna: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

### Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations

3. League of Arab States. *Arab Model Law on Weapons, Ammunitions, Explosives and Hazardous Material*.
4. OAS. *Model Legislation and Commentaries for Strengthening Controls at Export Points*.
5. OAS. *Model Legislation and Commentaries on Legislative Measures to Establish Criminal Offenses in Relation to the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and other Related Materials*.
6. OAS. *Model Legislation on the Marking and Tracing of Firearms*.
7. OSCE. *Best Practice Guide on National Controls over Manufacture of Small Arms and Light Weapons*. FSC. GAL/43/03/Rev. 3. Vienna: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 19 September 2003.
8. RECSA. *Best Practice Guidelines for the Implementation of the Nairobi Declaration and the Nairobi Protocol on Small Arms and Light Weapons*. Nairobi: Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons, 2005.
9. SARPCCO. *Standard Operating Procedures for the implementation of the SADC Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunition and other related materials*. Harare: Interpol Sub-regional Bureau for Southern Africa / Secretariat of the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (SARPCCO), 2008.
10. SEESAC. RMDS/G 03.40 (Guideline), *Marking and Tracing of SALW*. 4th ed. Belgrade: South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, 20 July 2006.
11. Wassenaar Arrangement. *Best Practice Guidelines for Exports of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)*.
12. Wassenaar Arrangement. *Best Practices for Implementing Intangible Transfer of Technology Controls*.

### Additional Sources

13. CROWLEY, M., ISBISTER, R. and MEEK, S. *Building Comprehensive Controls on Manufacturing, Transfer and End Use*. London: Biting the Bullet, 2001.
14. FLORQUIN, N. and BERMAN, E. (eds.) *Armed and Aimless: Armed Groups, Guns, and Human Security in the ECOWAS Region*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

15. LUMPE, L. (ed.) *Running Guns: The Global Black Market in Small Arms*. Oslo: PRIO/NISAT, 2000.
16. PERSI PAOLI, G. *Comparative Analysis of Post-Manufacture Marking Instruments and Practices for Small Arms and Light Weapons*. Geneva: UNIDIR, 2009.
17. SMALL ARMS SURVEY. *Small Arms Survey 2003: Development Denied*. Geneva: Oxford University Press, 2003.
18. WFSA. *Draft Report of the Informal Workshop on "Firearms Marking: Model Standards and Common Serial Number Codes," Sardinia, Italy; 22-24 June 2000*. Rome: World Forum on the Future of Sports Shooting Activities, 2000.
19. WFSA. *Preliminary Report of the Workshop on "Technical and Manufacturing Aspects of Firearms Marking in the Context of UN Regulation Efforts," Brescia, Italy; 30 September – 1 October 1999*. Rome: World Forum on the Future of Sports Shooting Activities, 1999.







International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) Inter-Agency Support Unit  
support@smallarmsstandards.org | www.smallarmsstandards.org