



Cooperating to disarm

BRIEF ON REGIONAL PHYSICAL SECURITY & STOCKPILE MANAGEMENT(PSSM) TRAINING



Group photo of the Course participants, the instructors and dignitaries from Member States

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Great lakes and Horn of Africa have been characterized by conflicts fueled by the proliferation of illicit SALW, politics of exclusion, lack of Government security presence , cross border spill-over effects and economic and social vulnerability.

The illicit trafficking of SALW spans across multiple borders and jurisdictions therefore interventions have to be carried out using a cross border approach requiring a holistic lens to develop the capacities of actors in relevant state agencies in the region who are responsible for effective management of arms, explosives and ammunition and controlling their illicit trafficking.

RECSA Member States have acknowledged that they have a common enemy which is illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons and are working together under the framework of the Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control and Reduction of small arms and light weapons to address this issue.

The proliferation of illicit SALW in the RECSA region has called for cross-border cooperation among neighboring states which includes the sharing and exchange of information and harmonization of national laws on SALW to complement the international and regional frameworks on arms and weapons

The responsibility of managing and controlling the proliferation of arms lies with Governments. One of the ways to achieve this is by setting up systems and Standard Operating Procedures to be applied during the manufacturing of arms and weapons, enhancing safety during transport and transfer, to ensure the safe storage of state-owned weapons and ammunition, to prevent diversion as well as involving the communities within our borders.

Countries ought to have database systems where all the records and inventories concerning their arms and weapons is documented for accountability. The database should contain information on the weapons manufactured or procured by the government, records on the transfer of the weapons and arms to the various security agencies as the legal end users to the disposal or destruction of the weapon. Such records give an account for the tracing of weapons in case of theft and enhances counter-diversion.

It's against this background that the Regional Physical Security and Stockpile Management (PSSM) training was started in 2012 where it was being organized by MSAG and IPSTC. In March 2019, the programme was handed over to RECSA. Currently, the training programme is jointly organized by the Regional Centre on Small on Small Arms, International Peace Support Centre & Multinational Small Arms and Ammunition Group with funding from the Government of Austria. The training is held twice per year in Nairobi; March and October.

1.2 Why PSSM?

The main importance of PSSM is to curb illegal proliferation of arms, explosives and ammunitions and prevent unplanned explosions at munitions sites.

1.2.1 Physical Security

This involves;

- Safeguarding personnel and property operations
- Preventing unauthorized access
- Protecting against espionage, terrorism, sabotage , damage, misuse and theft

1.2.2 Stockpile Management

This involves;

- Procedures or activities necessary for safe and secure accounting storage, transport and handling of Small Arms and light weapons & Conventional Ammunition.

1.3 Objectives of the PSSM Training

The objectives of this training are;

- To develop the capacity of the participants to plan and execute PSSM interventions through introducing them to the best international standards, based on the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG) and the International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) which were released by the United Nations in 2012.
- To equip participants with knowledge and skills on how to apply simple and effective measures to manage and control weapons and ammunition, reducing the risk of diversion, theft and accidental/ unintentional explosions at ammunition sites.
- To emphasise on the importance of countering diversion of SALW & CA and ensure accountability from the time of manufacturing to the time they get to the legal end user



Participants of the March 2023 course during the training

2.0 PARTICIPANTS

The participants are drawn from selected RECSA Member States from the following departments ;

- Police
- Military
- Wildlife
- Any other LEAs personnel working in armouries



An instructor guiding course participants during the March 2023 Training

2.1 Selection Criteria

The participants are selected as per the criteria below;

- Age between 30-45 years
- The nominated candidate should have some prior experience in weapons/ammunition management/ EOD training skills
- The participant should be fluent in English since the training is held in English language
- For the military participants, they should hold the rank of 2nd lieutenant but not above the rank of Major
- For the Police Participants they should hold the rank of Assistant Inspector but not above Assistant Superintendent of Police
- Female participants are encouraged to attend this training
- The selected participants have to be available for future trainings because they could potentially be considered for further training as regional PSSM instructors if selected through an assessment.

3.0 ACHIEVEMENTS

- The Regional PSSM training started in the year 2012. Its celebrating 10 years anniversary this year.
- Since the inception of the programme at the regional level, 13 Senior Instructors, 28 instructors and 391 students have been trained.
- This training forum creates the opportunity to bring together a wealth of experiences from different member states, to enable sharing of ideas on how to solve problems and effectively apply the international best practices in the context of where the participants work.



Some of the female participants of the March 2023 course with the RECSA Executive Secretary

4.0 CHALLENGES

- Member states selecting participants who are above the recommended age. This is a challenge because retiring officers are not able to train junior officers
- Selecting participants who are not able to speak and understand English. This becomes a problem in class interactions because the training is undertaken purely in English.
- Selecting participants who work in other departments not related to stockpile storage facilities. This makes the course irrelevant to them.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- Member states to select participants between the ages of 30-45 years to enable them transfer the knowledge to junior officers in their working stations
- Member states to select participant conversant with English
- Nominated participants should have relevant knowledge of stockpile management or be working in stockpile management offices
- The officers trained in PSSM should be deployed in arrears where they can apply the knowledge acquired.
- Member states should be willing to release participants for further training as instructors whenever called upon.
- Nomination of more female participants in to the course by member states
- Inclusion of cross cutting issues in the course such as gender, natural resources management, environmental protection and preservation etc