
**Security and resilience — Community
resilience — Guidelines for planning
the involvement of spontaneous
volunteers**

*Sécurité et résilience — Résilience des communautés — Lignes
directrices pour la planification de la participation des bénévoles
spontanés*

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

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For an explanation on the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 292, *Security and resilience*.

Introduction

This document provides guidance on the involvement of spontaneous volunteers in the response to, and recovery from, incidents and events. A spontaneous volunteer (SV) is an individual who is not affiliated with existing incident response organizations but who is motivated to contribute unpaid work during and following incidents.

SVs might have expressed their interest in volunteering before or during an incident and might therefore be called upon to participate depending on the incident's needs and their specific skills. SVs can volunteer as individuals or as groups, they can arrive at the incident to volunteer in person or contribute remotely, and they can be self-deployed professionals (e.g. retired emergency responders), digital volunteers, or any other skilled or unskilled members of the public.

Spontaneous offers of help during and following incidents are a growing phenomenon. While many people are willing to join a voluntary organization, they are now also likely to make short-term offers to assist without committing to an individual agency. In addition, as a result of media attention, the widespread use of social media and the desire to help those in need, an increasing number of SVs are coming forward in all regions of the world.

SVs can provide a significant resource of timely labour, skills and abilities to enhance the capacity of incident response organizations, provide valuable local knowledge and personalize the response and recovery in an area by members of its local community. However, in large numbers, SVs can overwhelm incident response organizations, interfere with operations and create additional risks. SVs who provide relief outside of the official operations can put themselves in danger, as well as those they aim to help. It is important to understand and implement best practices for involving and mobilizing SVs, and the integration of SVs into response and recovery activities needs to be carefully managed.

This document provides guidance for the involvement of SVs in incident response and recovery, so that both official and unofficial resources are used effectively. It considers the preparatory measures for organizing the involvement of SVs in the different stages of an incident, including planning for the selection of SVs, safely involving SVs in an operational response, and continuing the involvement of SVs over the longer-term.

[Annex A](#) contains a checklist of tasks to plan SV involvement.

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Security and resilience — Community resilience — Guidelines for planning the involvement of spontaneous volunteers

1 Scope

This document provides guidelines for planning the involvement of spontaneous volunteers (SVs) in incident response and recovery. It is intended to help organizations to establish a plan to consider whether, how and when SVs can provide relief to a coordinated response and recovery for all identified hazards. It helps identify issues to ensure the plan is risk-based and can be shown to prioritize the safety of SVs, the public they seek to assist and incident response staff.

This document is intended for use by organizations with responsibility for, or involvement in, part or all of the planning for working with SVs. It is applicable to all types and sizes of organizations that are involved in the planning for, and management of, SVs (e.g. local, regional, and national governments, statutory bodies, international and non-governmental organizations, businesses and public and community groups).

The range of tasks performed by SVs can require only basic planning (e.g. for people who are first on the scene), or a plan that is more complex (e.g. for people who travel to the affected area to volunteer).

Coordinating the participation of volunteers who are affiliated to voluntary or professional organizations to provide relief is not within the scope of this document.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements 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.

ISO 22300, *Societal security — Terminology*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 22300 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <http://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1

spontaneous volunteer

SV

individual who is not affiliated with an existing incident response organization or voluntary organization but who, without extensive preplanning, offers support to the response to, and recovery from, an incident

Note 1 to entry: A spontaneous volunteer can also be referred to as a convergent volunteer, a walk-in volunteer, an occasional volunteer, an episodic volunteer, or a non-affiliated volunteer.

3.2 organization

person or group of people that has its own functions with responsibilities, authorities and relationships to achieve its objectives

Note 1 to entry: The concept of organization includes, but is not limited to, sole trader, company, corporation, firm, enterprise, authority, partnership, charity or institution, or part or combination thereof, whether incorporated or not, public or private.

4 Preparatory measures

4.1 General

This clause describes the general aspects to be resolved before involving SVs in response and recovery activities. These general aspects are to:

- assign responsibility to lead, manage and coordinate SVs (see 4.2);
- understand the motivations of SVs (see 4.3);
- clarify issues of liability (see 4.4).

An organization may implement all clauses of this document, or only some clauses. Partial implementation of this document will still improve the organization's performance when involving SVs.

4.2 Assigning responsibility to lead, manage and coordinate SVs

The agency in charge of incident response and recovery should designate an organization (identified in this document as "the organization") to take responsibility for leading, managing and coordinating SVs.

4.3 Understanding the motivations of SVs

When planning how to deal with SVs, the organization should:

- understand the motivations of SVs (e.g. meeting new friends; relieving their anxiety about the incident by taking control of their life back through volunteering);
- collect information on the motivation of SVs throughout their involvement (e.g. during the registration process, debriefings, via social media or during conversations);
- recognize that SVs may volunteer for only part of the emergency until their motivation dwindles or personal aims have been satisfied;
- collect information on those who offered to volunteer but were not accepted by the response organizations;
- use this information when accepting, leading, managing and coordinating SVs.

The organization should consider that SVs may want to:

- help communities to recover and enhance resilience;
- build community participation;
- support existing activities where the demand for help exceeds official capacity;
- deliver new activities that are not part of emergency plans.

4.4 Clarifying issues of liability

The organization should:

- clarify pre-conditions for the involvement of SVs regarding insurance and liability;
- confirm the responsibility for the health and safety of SVs;
- identify tasks that SVs may be asked to perform but that carry a personal liability for the SV (e.g. if SVs do not follow official instructions).

5 Planning for the involvement of SVs

5.1 General

The organization should develop a plan for involving SVs. The plan should consider the effort, resource and information required, and provide guidance on how to:

- define the relationship with SVs (see [5.2](#));
- understand the concerns of stakeholders (see [5.3](#));
- identify risks associated with tasks that are suitable for SVs (see [5.4](#));
- reduce risks associated with tasks that are suitable for SVs (see [5.5](#));
- select SVs (see [5.6](#));
- coordinate SVs (see [5.7](#));
- set expectations of SVs (see [5.8](#));
- monitor the tasks performed by SVs (see [5.9](#));
- identify needs for training or instruction (see [5.10](#));
- recognize and reward SVs (see [5.11](#)).

5.2 Defining the relationship with SVs

The organization should:

- evaluate the need to engage SVs for different types of emergencies;
- plan for the type of relationships to be established with SVs (e.g. assess the risk associated with the relationship, identify how they can be made more effective);
- consider the ways in which SVs can be managed and integrated into the response and recovery;
- recognize that the nature of the relationship to SVs may change during an incident, as well as across different incidents (e.g. SVs are often first on the scene providing immediate support but may leave soon afterwards);

[Table 1](#) identifies working relationships to be used to determine if and how to integrate SVs into the official response and recovery.

Table 1 — Types of relationships and activities between SVs and official responders

Types of SVs	SV reliance on the organization	Management and procedures	SV purpose	SV decision making	Tasking
SVs working for official responders, i.e. providing additional resources such as local knowledge or manpower	SVs have high reliance on the organization. SVs are viewed as being a resource to official responders	Provided by the official responders, e.g. monitoring tasks, dispute resolution, training	Extend capability and capacity of official responders with additional resource; complement existing work structures	Very low	Done by official responders according to the need; low-skilled tasks; tasks should meet SVs expectations
SVs as autonomous workers operating side-by-side with official responders	SVs have medium reliance on the organization. SVs are dependent on official responders to work side-by-side	Provided by the official responders, e.g. monitoring of tasks, dispute resolution, training	Expand capacity of official responders	SVs are autonomous decision makers on delivering allocated tasks	Done by the SV, coordinated with official responders
SVs working independently of official responders	SVs have low reliance on the organization. SVs have little engagement with official responders	SVs form groups with their own management structure and procedures	Perform tasks not done by official responders	SVs are autonomous decision makers	Done by the SV

With respect to SVs working independently of official responders, the organization should:

- designate a point of contact to facilitate liaison among these SVs;
- provide support to increase the effectiveness of these SVs (e.g. official responders assisting to resolve disputes within or across groups of SVs that work independently).

5.3 Understanding the concerns of stakeholders

The organization should:

- determine the concerns of stakeholders (e.g. official responders, elected officials, citizens potentially in need of assistance) regarding the involvement of SVs in response and recovery operations;
- respond to these concerns in order for them to make informed decisions regarding the involvement of SVs and determining the suitability of SVs for the tasks to be performed;

5.4 Identifying risks associated with tasks that are suitable for SVs

The organization should:

- identify which tasks, if any, may benefit from the support of SVs;
- develop and implement processes for risk assessment of those tasks, including potential risks to the SVs, the persons affected by the incident, other official responders and the reputation of the organizations involved, as well as other risks;
- review risk assessments periodically with the objective of further reducing risks;
- establish a process to continually assess the risks of additional tasks that are identified during an incident;
- develop an inventory of approved response and recovery tasks suitable to be performed by SVs.

The organization should identify the potential reputational risks posed by the involvement of SVs including:

- breaches of confidentiality by releasing sensitive information;
- misrepresentation of the organization to the public or media;
- misuse of private information on citizens obtained by SVs;
- reports of incidents causing harm to SVs or those they helped;
- release of misleading information.

5.5 Reducing risks associated with tasks that are suitable for SVs

The organization should reduce risks to SVs by including information in the plan on:

- developing a selection and induction process to choose SVs who are willing to follow direction from incident responders;
- preparing and distributing information on a code of conduct for SVs, including risk reduction and safety (e.g. through briefings/debriefings);
- confirming the understanding of SVs of the risk associated with tasks and the importance of working safely;
- determining where SVs could perform tasks that require specialist skills or training;
- assigning tasks to SVs appropriate to their level of competence;
- providing SVs with the appropriate personal protective equipment and resources to safely perform an assigned task;
- adopting suitable work practices for SVs (e.g. providing work processes for typical tasks, supervising SVs, restricting SVs work to daylight hours, removing SVs when danger is identified and requiring them to work in groups, such as with trained community response teams or other voluntary bodies);
- identify ways to control SVs who are unaware of, or act in ways that ignore, the risk;
- matching SV capability with the demands of the task to ensure individuals are working within their capabilities;
- procedures for declining offers of help from SVs if the risk to SVs is too high;
- when tasks that SVs are asked to perform carry a personal liability for the SV (e.g. if SVs do not follow official instruction);
- limiting the sharing of confidential information with SVs.

The organization should also perform risk assessments for tasks being conducted independently by members of the public who are working without being registered as SVs.

5.6 Selecting SVs

The organization should:

- put a strategy in place to make the best use of the SVs that are selected;
- develop and implement a structured approach for screening, accepting, inducting and training SVs to conduct assigned tasks;
- accept SVs for the tasks for which they are suited;

- develop and implement a process to verify an SV's experience, skills, qualifications, credentials and training;
- consider SVs who can leverage local knowledge and resources helping official responders unfamiliar with the area to identify the location of vulnerable persons, as well as the existence of social networks such as recognized clubs and societies that can be relied on to identify other trustworthy SVs;
- determine whether and how to engage with potential SVs in advance of an incident (e.g. pre-credentialing skills);
- identify existing networks of people who may have the skills and knowledge required;
- decide how it will reject the offer of support from those who have not been selected as an SV;
- put in place safeguarding procedures that recognize that some people who present themselves as SVs may have the aim of conducting malicious acts (e.g. conduct background checks, provide additional close supervision by qualified staff).

5.7 Coordinating SVs

5.7.1 General

The organization should include information on coordinating SVs to reduce the time it takes to deploy SVs (when appropriate) following their offer of help. The plan for coordinating SVs should include:

- identifying coordination mechanisms (see [5.7.2](#));
- the process for registering SVs (see [5.7.3](#));
- providing identification to SVs (see [5.7.4](#));
- communicating with SVs (see [5.7.5](#)).

5.7.2 Identifying coordination mechanisms

The organization should identify:

- a contact point for SVs to liaise with the organization;
- resources and technologies to be used to coordinate SVs;
- existing management structures (e.g. local government) currently providing engagement opportunities for SVs and how this should be facilitated;
- how and where to direct SVs with particular skills or services;
- the actions to activate the SV coordination structure quickly to keep up with the demand created by SVs as they present themselves;
- ways to reduce the frustration of SVs when waiting to be assigned tasks to avoid them conducting relief tasks without the support of official responders;
- ways in which SVs may work with agencies or groups of responders (e.g. in community response teams that are not part of official operations);
- the potential role of official responders in resolving disputes that prevent SVs from being productive, especially those who are working independently from official responders.

5.7.3 Process for registering SVs

The organization should register the contact details for SVs at each location. The registration process may record additional information, including:

- personal data including contact details such as a phone number, email address and next of kin;
- the reasons for volunteering;
- their availability and time constraints (e.g. days/hours);
- the tasks the SV believes matches their skills, experience, training or qualifications and whether these credentials can be confirmed during the incident;
- their experience as an SV;
- basic SV training or advanced SV training completed for specialist roles;
- the availability of the personal protective equipment needed;
- the outcome (i.e. whether the offer of volunteering was accepted or declined, and why);
- the successful completion of induction, and the task instruction and training received.

The organization should use a secure records management system to retain information.

5.7.4 Providing identification to SVs

The organization should determine:

- if it is important to identify SVs to official responders, the public and other stakeholders;
- whether to provide identification to SVs who assist their operations;
- what type of identification to provide to SVs (e.g. an identification card, branded t-shirt or high visibility jacket).

NOTE Identification can strengthen the commitment of SVs by developing a shared identity with other SVs, and engender confidence in members of the public. Identifying SVs can increase their sense of power while conducting their tasks. It is important the organization ensures that SVs do not develop a feeling of invincibility, and that they are not encouraged to overstretch their capability.

5.7.5 Communicating with SVs

5.7.5.1 Identifying the principles of communicating with SVs

The organization should establish principles of communication to guide whether, how, what and when to communicate with SVs before, during and after they volunteer. The communication principles should include:

- the nature and frequency of the information communicated to SVs;
- the need to use language that SVs can easily understand;
- processes to brief, task and debrief SVs at the start and finish of each shift;
- the channels through which to communicate with SVs and the frequency of updates (e.g. verbal briefings, paper-based updates, radio communications, websites, social media, a formal computer system, text message, mobile applications);
- social aspects (e.g. gender, ethnicity, culture);
- information access control policy and mechanisms.

The organization should determine:

- if communication channels with SVs should be two-way, considering the pressure on information processing systems that official responders already run during incidents;
- if official responders should help SVs to communicate with one another;
- whether to communicate with groups of SVs that volunteered in past incidents (e.g. to ask if they are mobilizing);
- the stages in which communication may be needed, such as the need to communicate:
 - when SVs first offer their help, why the style of leadership is command and control;
 - when the participation of SVs is not possible or not needed, and the reasons for this;
 - when an emergency occurs, general issues on the goals and priorities, as well as other information at the time of emergency (e.g. evacuation instructions);
 - during the response and recovery, information about the incident and regular updates of the number of people that have received help and how many still need support;
 - before they end their spontaneous volunteering, how they may continue to volunteer.

Regarding the use of social media, the organization should determine:

- if there should be an official “branded” social media presence to inform the local community, taking account of the public’s expectations of receiving information via social media;
- if it is desirable to engage early with citizens who establish popular social media channels relating to the incident (e.g. to communicate official information);
- if the organization will monitor or analyse social media for trends in conversations (e.g. to identify shortfalls in response);
- whether traditional media monitors and transmits information from social media;
- the potential to virtually coordinate SV activities.

5.7.5.2 Developing a communications plan

The organization should formalize the principles of communication and implement them in a communications plan that reflects different stages of the incident to:

- ensure that the style of communication is suitable for engaging with SVs;
- determine whether and how a public request for SVs is to be made;
- provide clear information to potential SVs about the nature of the request by having a single source of information to communicate:
 - where, when and how SVs can offer help;
 - the types of tasks for which SVs are needed;
 - the resources that SVs should bring with them;
 - the support that official responders will offer SVs;
 - the benefits and risks of being an SV;
 - where more information can be obtained about becoming an SV;
 - issues regarding SV liability and insurance;

- the benefits of working with the official operations thereby reducing the duplication of effort.

The organization should determine the information that official responders can provide to groups of SVs who work independently of official responders. This information should:

- include the benefits of developing a “plan on a page” to help SVs to organize, and how to do this;
- provide a resource for SVs to share experiences and learn from each other;
- list contact details of official responders in case SVs need support;
- provide a means of monitoring the experience of SVs through two-way communication;
- increase SV commitment and motivation.

5.8 Setting expectations of SVs

The organization should determine its expectations for the roles of SVs in alignment with the nature of the task and provide information on:

- the types of tasks that SVs are being asked to support;
- the supplies and equipment that SVs are expected to bring with them;
- the supplies and equipment that will be provided to SVs when they volunteer;
- the on-going support that SVs can expect during and after their involvement;
- the availability of rest centre facilities such as health, food and washing facilities;
- the stress of volunteering, how SVs should care for themselves and how to access psycho-social support services during and after their volunteering, if required;
- the ongoing risks associated with tasks;
- processes for reimbursement of expenses that SVs will be entitled to, and how to make a claim.

5.9 Monitoring the tasks performed by SVs

The organization should:

- provide appropriate monitoring and supervision of SVs to reduce the level of risk associated with their tasks, and increase the satisfaction of both SVs and the recipients of assistance;
- establish appropriate levels of supervision by official responders (e.g. team leaders and coworkers) to minimize the extent to which SVs work alone;
- use a record keeping process, such as sign in and sign out forms for each shift, to monitor where SVs are working and for how long;
- identify other forms of monitoring, such as having SVs work within other local structures that are known and trusted by official responders.

5.10 Identifying needs for training or instruction

The organization should:

- consult official responders, other stakeholders and SVs with respect to the training and instruction needed;
- provide training for official responders and other stakeholders who are unfamiliar with ways to engage SVs to ensure that their contribution is effective.

Training for official responders and other stakeholders should include:

- information on the different roles of SVs, paid staff and other types of volunteers, and their differing motivations, aims and skill levels;
- alternative management styles with the potential to maximize the productivity of SVs;
- ways to assist SVs in achieving operational objectives and personal aims when volunteering;
- how the information available from registration, tasking, monitoring and feedback processes can enhance the contribution of SVs to response and recovery;
- the importance of setting a good example for SVs by requiring staff and others to use protective equipment consistently and correctly and to follow proper procedure;
- the need to communicate simply and without jargon.

Training for SVs should include:

- instructions to increase their effectiveness and reduce risks, including instruction on frequently encountered hazards for different types of incidents;
- instruction on specific and specialist roles assigned to an individual SV (e.g. safe handling procedures for assigned tasks);
- the proper use of equipment provided by official responders;
- communication radio procedures and etiquette;
- tasks or activities not to be performed by SVs.

NOTE 1 Both on-the-job learning and training refresher courses can be appropriate to update SV skills when there is a gap in time between the training and the opportunity to apply the training content.

NOTE 2 Basic tasks can require a very brief instruction on how to do the task safely, while complex tasks can require more training to address the associated hazards and determine the point at which training is most appropriately offered. Options include training SVs before they are accepted, before they begin their volunteering, during their volunteering, or after the incident.

5.11 Recognizing and rewarding SVs

The organization should determine whether and how SVs will be recognized for their involvement (e.g. being thanked as part of the debriefing process or given additional recognition and rewards).

6 Longer-term issues

6.1 General

The organization should consider ways to keep SVs involved in long-term recovery activities and capitalize on the hidden resilience offered by SVs. This clause details how to:

- assess the impact of SVs;
- understand how to engage SVs in the longer-term recovery;
- encourage SVs to pursue organized volunteering roles;
- evaluate and continually improve SV involvement procedures.

6.2 Assessing the impact of SVs

The organization should:

- document the number of work hours provided by SVs during the response and recovery;
- use the information to quantify the economic value of the SV contribution and evaluate the involvement and impact of SVs;
- estimate and communicate the value of the time of SVs to calculate the cost/benefit of the involvement of SVs in relief operations;
- identify examples of the impact of SVs in accomplishing its work plans to assess the impact of the work of SVs.

6.3 Understanding how to engage SVs in the longer-term recovery

The organization should:

- consider the longer-term roles that SVs can have in the on-going recovery to ensure continuity after official responders have left and communicate these to SVs;
- communicate to SVs before leaving the response and recovery;
- identify the resources that will remain after the official recovery phase has ended, and the continuing roles available to SVs;
- determine the role for SVs in providing longer-term support to those affected by the incident, such as helping to re-establish community groups.

6.4 Encouraging SVs to pursue organized volunteering roles

The organization should consider:

- ways to encourage SVs to join voluntary organizations aligned to the tasks performed an SV;
- how to support SVs to establish volunteer groups that could operate independently of established organizations;
- promoting SV participation in exercises and training;
- the need to respect that some SVs are not interested in a longer-term volunteering commitment.

6.5 Evaluating and continually improving SV involvement procedures

The organization should evaluate and update its plan for working with SVs following an exercise or an actual incident. This should:

- review SVs involvement in the response and recovery;
- consult SVs, official responders, incident response organizations and other stakeholders;
- consider the need for an external evaluation by independent experts;
- identify other sources of information, such as published reports, research projects, government studies, and lessons learned;
- evaluate how SV involvement has changed from incident to incident;
- share results of the evaluation with stakeholders;

- identify ways to improve the plan and the involvement of SVs in the response and recovery and update the plan accordingly;
- make the evaluation results public, if appropriate, such as through its website.

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Annex A (informative)

Checklist of tasks to plan SV involvement

The checklist of tasks in [Table A.1](#) can be used by the organization to monitor its planning for involving SVs. The checklist is based on the clauses of this document, and the row numbers correspond to the clauses.

The use of this checklist should be done in two stages:

- Stage 1: the organization should decide the level of performance it aims to achieve on each task;
- Stage 2: the organization should rate its progress in fulfilling each task.

Performance should be rated on a five-point scale, as follows:

- 1 = We have made no meaningful progress;
- 2 = We are approaching a satisfactory standard;
- 3 = We deliver to a satisfactory standard;
- 4 = We have exceeded a satisfactory standard;
- 5 = We are an example of best practice.

The difference between the Stage 1 and 2 assessments indicates where effort is required to meet the organization's desired level of performance.

[Table A.1](#) should record the justification for the assessments and the actions to be implemented to strengthen performance, and acts as an audit trail for when it is reviewed. Once the actions resulting from these priorities have been implemented, [Table A.1](#) can be used again to assess progress and identify new priorities.

Table A.1 — Checklist of tasks to plan SV involvement and justification for assessment

Tasks related to clauses in this document	Performance					Justification for assessment	Action to strengthen performance (by who and when should the action be delivered)	Not relevant to our organization
	1	2	3	4	5			
4 Preparatory measures								
4.2 We assign responsibility to an organization to lead, manage and coordinate SVs								
4.3 We understand SVs' motivations including, collecting information from SVs and those whose offers were not accepted, altruistic and personal motivations, as well as their aims from being an SV								
4.4 We have clarified issues of liability, insurance and responsibility for health and safety								
5 Planning for the involvement of SVs								