

Disaster Auxiliary Corps



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

REVISED 10/2002

“Striving to Better Prepare the BVI for Disasters”

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KEY:

CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
DAC	Disaster Auxiliary Corps
DDM	Department of Disaster Management
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
NEAC	National Emergency Advisory Council
NEOC	National Emergency Operations Centre
OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VHF	Very High Frequency

**DISASTER AUXILIARY CORPS (DAC)
GOVERNING PRINCIPLES**

NAME

The name of the organization shall be the "Disaster Auxiliary Corps" (DAC)

PURPOSE

The Disaster Auxiliary Corps, referred to as DAC, was established on September 8, 1995 to assist the Department of Disaster Management in fulfilling its mandate of providing disaster management services to the people of the British Virgin Islands.

The group consists of young people between the ages of 18 – 35 years. To become fully trained and prepared to assist the DDM, members undergo a training programme.

DAC is a nonprofit organization, which is staffed by volunteers and is activated through the DDM. Members of DAC serve as an additional source of Disaster Response Personnel.

OBJECTIVES

The main objective of DAC is to train and organize volunteers to assist in disaster management activities, in particular, in the performance of immediate post disaster relief and rehabilitation activities and informing individuals, volunteers and community groups regarding disaster preparedness in general.

The principal objectives of DAC shall be:

1. To seek to minimize loss of life and property in the BVI should a major disaster strike.
2. To seek to promote Disaster Management in the BVI
3. To be ready to assist the DDM in every situation
4. To be involved in all areas of disaster training, both internal and external (overseas)

5. To train and organize volunteers to assist in disaster preparedness activities and in the performance of immediate post disaster relief and rehabilitation activities;
6. To inform volunteers regarding disasters and disaster management in general;
7. To improve team spirit, leadership qualities, and communication skills among persons in the community;
8. To create a medium through which the awareness of young people as it relates to disaster preparedness is raised by educating and encouraging them to disseminate information and knowledge among their peers;
9. To be in constant contact with the DDM and to carry out procedures laid down by the DDM, design and implement an annual work programme, coordinate training programmes in disasters for schools, non-government organizations, etc, community assistance, and community training.

OUTPUTS

The outputs of the Corps are as follows:

1. A group of fully trained disaster managers;
2. A group of young people to assist in the preparation and distribution of informative literature on hazards within their community and to provide assistance in the areas of response and recovery;
3. Newsletter published annually reporting on the Corps' progress;
4. A more aware group of young people about natural disasters capable of influencing their friends and families of the need to take precautionary actions;

ROLE OF DAC IN THE NATIONAL DISASTER PLAN

Preparedness

- Provide members to sit on NEAC sub-committees as required;
- Provide support services to NEOC;
- Assist with the distribution of public information and educational material;
- Assist District/Community Emergency Committees;
- Assist the DDM with evacuation of disaster victims and aged persons.

Response & Recovery

- Provide messenger/runner, logistics support services to NEOC;

- Assist with the distribution of public information and educational material;
- Assist Zonal Committees;
- Assist the NEOC with evacuation of disaster victims and aged persons;
- Serve as shelter managers, radio operators, first responders as required

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Disaster Auxiliary Corps is to support the DDM in its mission of providing disaster management services in the BVI. (See appendix I)

SLOGAN

“Striving to better prepare the BVI for disasters”

AUTHORITY

The Director, Disaster Management has the command, control and direction of DAC but may delegate such powers as he considers fit to a member of the DDM staff appointed by him as Liaison Officer of DAC.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The membership of the Corps shall hold elections once per year within the first month of any year, to elect the following officers to form the Executive Committee of the Corps:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary/Treasurer
- Ex-Officio Member

Where a member of the Executive Committee ceases to be a member, the President may convene a meeting for the purpose of electing another member to replace that member's unexpired period in office. In the interim, the Executive Committee may appoint a member to the post for a maximum period of two months on a temporary basis.

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

President

The President shall:

- Supervise the general administration of the DAC
- Summon meetings of the Executive Committee and General Body in conjunction with the Secretary
- Preside over all meetings of the Executive Committee and General Body

- Be empowered, after consultation with the Executive Committee, to chair, administer and attend meetings of any sub-committee
- In cases of emergencies be authorized to make statements on behalf of the DAC. Otherwise, consultation must be made with at least one other member.
- Liaise with local and regional agencies when necessary
- Nominate officers to represent the DAC at meetings, seminars, workshops or similar events.

Vice President

The vice President shall:

- Assist the President in the performance of his/her duties
- Assist in the capacity of President in cases of his/her absence
- In the event of a vacancy arising in the office of the President, assume the duties and responsibilities of the President
- Perform such other duties as may be determined by the executive committee from time to time.
- Liaise with local and regional agencies at the request of the President
- Be responsible in conjunction with the President and other members of the Executive Committee for all literature and public appearance of the DAC
- Organize social functions of the Corps

Secretary/Treasurer

The Secretary/Treasurer shall:

- Keep accurate records of the minutes and proceedings of all meetings of the Executive Committee and General Body and see that all documents and record of the Corps are kept in proper order.
- Attend to all correspondence of the Corps at the direction of the President and/or the Executive Committee.
- Be responsible in conjunction with the President for the preparation of all meetings of the Executive Committee and General Body including the circulation of notification and agenda of meetings
- Act generally on behalf of the President with the consent of the Executive Committee and perform other duties as may be determined by the General Body
- Create a filing systems for the Corps information
- Manage the day-to-day accounts of the Corps in particular, payment of dues, accounts set up, collection and payment of bills etc.

Ex-Officio

The Ex-Officio shall:

- Be responsible for establishing and maintaining a working link between the DDM and the Corps

SUB COMMITTEES

- The President, in consultation with the General Body shall appoint various sub-committees for carrying out the business of the Corps as the need arises.
- Recommendations from any Sub committee must be brought to the General Body for discussion and ratification.
- There shall be a minimum of three members on any Sub Committee.

DISSOLUTION OF EXISTING BODY

The Executive Body shall dissolve on the 31st day of December of each year. The Ex-Officio Member at the 1st meeting of the New Year will conduct elections for the new Executive Body.

MEMBERSHIP

1. The membership of the Corps shall not exceed twenty-five (25) persons (not including those members on leave)
2. A member of the Corps shall be between the ages of 18 – 35. A person not meeting this requirement may still be eligible, if that person is accepted by a majority votes of the members present at the meeting
3. Members unable to attend a meeting for any reason, must contact an Executive Committee member before the meeting with an apology
4. If a member misses four (4) consecutive meetings, without a valid reason, they could be dropped from the membership and would have to re-apply in writing for membership.
5. Members on study leave are exempt from items three (3) and four (4) during the time that he/she is on leave.
6. The President or any other member of the Executive Committee shall be removed from the elected post by two thirds (2/3) of the membership if he/she violates the governing principles.
7. Prospective members may come before the Executive Committee for an interview, but the interview is not necessary to gain membership.
8. Prospective members are not allowed to attend meetings, unless otherwise invited.
9. A member can only hold one post within the Executive Committee.

OTHER

1. The President in consultation with members may invite anyone to attend a DAC meeting
2. The Executive Committee and General Body shall take its decisions by a majority vote unless otherwise set out in the Governing Principles.
3. If the President resigns or is removed from office, the Vice President become the Interim President, until an election can be held for the post of President.
4. A member can be nominated for a post without being at the said meeting but must be present on Election Day.

Membership of the Disaster Auxiliary Corps shall be voluntary and limited to able-bodied residents of the British Virgin Islands. The characteristics for eligibility are as follows:

- Physical Fitness
- Good Time Management
- Leadership Quality
- Community Spirit
- Commitment
- Acquired Skills
- Emotional Stability
- Strong interest to serve the community
- The ability to communicate effectively
- Ordinary member must be between the age of 18 and 35

CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP

Five categories of membership exist within the Disaster Auxiliary Corps. They are:

1. Ordinary Member- Any member aged 18 – 35 years old
2. Student Member - (High School) – Any member from 4th Form, who is still attending high school, Boys/Girls Scouts etc. Parental consent is required before such membership is approved, and these members must maintain good grades in school. (College) – Any existing member of DAC who request leave to pursue studies abroad.
3. Associate Member – Any member who is an affiliated disaster response organization, e.g. USAID, FEMA, OFDA, etc.
4. Ex-Officio Member – A member of the DDM Staff who will serve as the link between DDM and DAC.
5. Honorary Member – Retired member who with exceptional service. It will be at the discretion of the Executive Body to decide up such members once they have passed the age of being an ordinary member.

MANAGEMENT /MEETINGS

- The Corps shall meet once per quarter, however the president may otherwise call meetings. Extraordinary meetings may be called by the President at the request of a minimum of five (5) members.
- A quorum shall consist of nine (9) members: two (2) of whom must be members of the Executive Committee and one (1) of whom must be the President, Vice President or other member appointed to act as President.
- In the absence of the President, responsible for generally coordination and conduction meetings, the Vice President should chair and in the event that both are absent it should be for the President to appoint a suitable member to chair.
- The president has the authority to remover another member from the meeting if they are being disrespectful and disruptive.

POWERS

- The Executive Body shall have overall responsibility for the day-to-day administration of the Corps and for implementing its Work Programme in conjunction with the DDM.
- Every member of DAC has all the powers, authorities and immunities and shall perform all the duties that a member of the DDM has and performs and to which a member of the DDM is subject, as the case requires.
- An identification card signed by the Director, Disaster Management, and Chairman of the National Emergency Advisory Council (NEAC), in a form approved by them shall be issued to every member of the Auxiliary Corps, after a three-month probationary period.
- Upon completion of training, a certificate signed by the DIRECTOR, DISASTER MANAGEMENT and the Chairman of the NEAC, in a form approved by them shall be issued to Auxiliary Corps members stating that members are now qualified in all basic areas of disaster management. And the certificate shall be as an official appointment.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Conduct of Members of the Corps

- All DAC members shall discharge the duties of the Disaster Auxiliary Corps as stated in section four "Duties for DAC Members", and any other related duties that the Director, Disaster Management may call upon them to discharge.
- In the discharge of his or her duties, DAC members shall be courteous and polite both to other DAC members and to the public.
- The President of DAC must report any act by a DAC member that is considered to be likely to bring the Disaster Auxiliary Corps into disrepute to the Director, Disaster Management.

REPORTING FOR DUTY

- Any member may be required by the Director, Disaster Management to report to duty on any public holiday, in an emergency, or once a disaster is upon hand.
- DAC members are to report in full uniform, i.e., ID card, jacket, vest coat, T-shirt, cap, along with all necessary equipment, i.e., VHF radio, manuals, etc.
- Members failing to report to duty equipped and without uniform will be reprimanded accordingly.
- In the event of a disaster, DAC will be required to work on shifts, which will be decided upon by the President of DAC, or the Director, Disaster Management.

ABSENCE FROM THE TERRITORY

- Any member leaving the Territory should notify the secretary of DAC or the Director, Disaster Management. A contact number should be given in case there is a need to reach them.

PUBLICATION OF OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

- No DAC member may, without the written approval of the DIRECTOR, DISASTER MANAGEMENT make public or communicate to the Press or to unauthorized individuals any documents, papers or information which may come into his or her possession in his or her official capacity, or make private copies of any such document or papers. Every DAC member is required to exercise care and diligence to prevent unauthorized access to or disclosures of such documents and information.

ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS

- DAC members are prohibited from receiving valuable presents (other than ordinary gifts from friends) whether in the shape of money, goods, services, or other personal benefits, and for giving such presents.

MISCONDUCT

- A DAC member will be liable to disciplinary action for any misconduct including general misconduct to the prejudice of discipline or the improper administration of DAC business and contravention of specific rules and regulations.

TERMINATION OF APPOINTMENT

- A member of the Auxiliary Corps may resign his or her appointment at any time by giving notice of no less than one month in writing to the President of DAC.
- The Director, Disaster Management after consultation with the President of DAC, may with the approval of the Chairman, NEAC, terminate the appointment of a member of DAC whose service is no longer required. In which event he shall give notice thereof in writing to the members of the Auxiliary Corps.
- Any member in default of payment of dues for three (3) consecutive months will be issued a termination of membership warning, then a termination letter.
- Any member who misses three (3) or more consecutive meetings without a legitimate excuse, will be issued a termination of membership notice.
- Every member of DAC shall within one week of his or her resignation or of receipt of the notice of termination of his or her appointment, deliver up to the Director, Disaster Management his or her certificate of identity, identification card, and any type of uniform, equipment and accoutrements that were supplied to him or her.
- If a member who has been terminated from DAC wishes to return, he or she can only re-apply one year after his or her termination. The approval of his or her application will be

subject to the approval of the DIRECTOR, DISASTER MANAGEMENT, Chairman NEAC, and the Executive Body.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE

- Any member of DAC requiring leave from the Corps, i.e., Personal, Maternity, Study Leave, etc, shall be required to fill out the Disaster Auxiliary Corps Application for Leave Form. The Executive Body shall grant approval for leave.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

- New members of DAC shall be placed on a three-month probationary period. At the end of this period, the Executive Body will evaluate the member's performance. If successful, an identification card and other accoutrements shall be issued to the member. Letters will also be sent to the member's employers informing them of their employee's participation in DAC. If unsuccessful, an appropriate letter will be issued.

DUES OF DAC

- Members of the Auxiliary Corps are obligated to pay monthly dues. The monies should be paid at the monthly meetings directly to the Treasurer. Members are required to pay dues while on vacation, but are exempted from doing so when on leave.
- A total of 50 cents at a compounding rate will be charged to each month's dues that are late.

Dues will be charged accordingly:

▪ Student Members	-	\$2.00
▪ Members & Ex-Officio Members	-	\$5.00
▪ Associate & Honorary Members	-	Contribution

- The purpose of the collection of Dues is to purchase uniforms, ID badges, accoutrements or for civic projects. Any member in default of payment of dues for three (3) consecutive months will in the first instance, be issued a warning letter, then a termination of membership letter.
- Payment of dues shall take place 5 to 10 minutes before the General Meeting commences.

TRAINING

- Training shall fall under the Training Committee and shall be headed by the Vice President of the Corps. The Training Committee shall be responsible for the setting up of training exercises and for selecting suitable candidates within the Corps to attend training activities.

- To become fully trained and prepare to assist, Corps members must go through a disaster management training programme. The training programme will be conducted through workshops, which will be hosted by the Office of Disaster Preparedness in conjunction with the aid of solicited groups such as the Red Cross, the BVI Fire and Rescue Services, VISAR, the Royal Virgin Islands Police Force or any other trained professionals in emergency operations. Members will also undergo training in the use of Radio Telecommunications Equipment.
- Basic training will be of the following emergency management areas, but is not limited to:
 - VHF Radio Operations
 - Disaster Programme Management
 - Search and Rescue
 - Shelter Management
 - Basic Life Support and CPR
 - Overall Disaster Preparedness
- The group will be involved in simulation exercises conducted by the DDM as part of its work programme; as participants and observers. Members will also assist the district/community to plan and implement simulation exercises.
- Training classes would be conducted frequently over a period of three months. Upon completion of successful training, certificates will be awarded to participants. In addition, the members would be awarded T-shirts, caps and an emergency personnel jacket to be worn during simulation exercises or when on duty during a disaster.

EQUIPMENT

- The Director, Disaster Management may, with the approval of the Deputy Governor, provide/issue such equipment and accoutrements for the use of members of DAC as he considers necessary for the proper discharge of their duties. The said equipment and accoutrements shall be returned to the Director, Disaster Management at such time and place as he may direct. Such equipment shall include but is not limited to:
 - Grab bags
 - VHF Radio
 - First Aid Kits
 - Beepers
 - Flashlights
 - Raincoats, boots, etc.

AMENDMENTS TO THE PRINCIPLES

Following the procedures below may amend the DAC Governing Principles:

1. The Executive Committee via the President may propose amendments to the principles by way of including the resolution on the agenda of a general meeting.
2. Members may propose amendments to the principles by submitting written recommendations (draft resolutions) to the President, prior to the next meeting or any other meeting convened for that purpose.
3. Amendments to the principles are to be voted on and accepted by a majority.
4. Amendments to the principles can only be made at a meeting with a minimum of two thirds of the membership present.

DISASTER AUXILIARY CORPS LOYALTY OATH

I _____ do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will be a loyal member of the Disaster Auxiliary Corps, abide by its constitution and rules and faithfully execute all assignments which I undertake to carry out, and will not knowingly do anything to bring discredit on the Corps or the Department of Disaster Management.

DAC MEMBER

Date

DIRECTOR, DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Date

OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT

I understand that I must not divulge any information gained by me as a result of my membership in the Disaster Auxiliary Corps to any unauthorized person orally or in writing without the previous sanction of the Director, Disaster Management. I understand also that these provisions apply not only during the period I have access to any secret information, but also after such period have expired.

I am fully aware of the serious consequences, which may follow any breach of these provisions.

DAC MEMBER

Date

DIRECTOR, DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Date

APPENDIX I

Mission Statement of the Department of Disaster Management

The overall mission of the Department of Disaster Management (DDM) is to seek to reduce loss of life and property within the Territory of the British Virgin Islands by ensuring that adequate preparedness measures and response mechanisms are established to counteract the impact of natural and manmade disasters.

The operational objectives or functions of the DDM to achieve this mission are:

- Formulate a comprehensive programme for Disaster Mitigation, Preparedness and Response.
- Reduce response time following major disasters.
- Design and implement a sustained programme of public education to sensitize the population to the threats they face and the need to be prepared.
- Coordinate all official and voluntary resources engaged in achieving the overall mission.