



---

S/2245/2024  
9 February 2024  
ENGLISH only

**NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT**

**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS  
FOR THE 2024–2025 INTERNATIONAL TRAINING CYCLE  
ON ASSISTANCE AND PROTECTION FOR WOMEN FIRST RESPONDERS**

1. The Technical Secretariat of the OPCW (the Secretariat) wishes to invite all States Parties to nominate representatives to participate in the international training cycle related to assistance and protection for women first responders under Article X of the Chemical Weapons Convention (the Convention), which will begin with an online introductory course on responding to incidents involving chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals.
2. The entire Assistance and Protection Branch training cycle will be jointly organised by the Government of Switzerland in collaboration with the Secretariat. It will provide training for up to 20 sponsored participants in the basics of assistance and protection with a focus on responding to incidents involving chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals.
3. The training cycle will be divided into the following components:
  - (a) an online foundation course, from 25 March to 19 April 2024;
  - (b) a hands-on basic course, from 1 to 5 July 2024, in Spiez, Switzerland;
  - (c) an online course on the Emergency Response Guidebook (ERG), the CAMEO (Computer-Aided Management of Emergency Operations) Chemicals database, and the Incident Command System (ICS), in 2024 (dates to be determined);
  - (d) a hands-on integrated advanced course and exercise in 2025 (dates to be determined), in Spiez, Switzerland; and
  - (e) a one-day follow-up webinar in 2025 (date to be determined).
4. The online foundation course will offer basic theoretical knowledge for all participants about the OPCW and the Convention, chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals, personal protective equipment and decontamination, and detection, identification, and monitoring. The Secretariat will select up to 25 participants to participate in the online foundation course; however, only 20 participants will ultimately be selected at the end of this course to continue with the remaining components of the training cycle. The selection will be based on demonstrated commitment to the training and the marks earned in the online foundation course.

5. The hands-on basic course will consist of a combination of theoretical lectures, demonstrations of equipment, and practical training sessions. By the end of the course, the participants will have basic knowledge of chemical warfare agents and their actions, protective equipment and its limitations, detection and decontamination equipment, and procedures. Only 20 selected participants from the previous training component will be sponsored to participate in this on-site training, which will take place in Spiez, Switzerland.
6. The next component of this training cycle is an online course covering the ERG, the CAMEO Chemicals database, and the ICS, and it will provide participants with the tools needed to manage chemical emergencies. This information will be put to use in the next component of the training cycle.
7. The hands-on integrated advanced course and exercise will deepen the knowledge obtained in the three previous components of the training cycle to enhance and further develop the chemical emergency response capabilities of States Parties. This hands-on training, which will explore different complex scenarios in combination with a final exercise, will be an opportunity to practice and confirm the knowledge and skills acquired during the training cycle. As stated above, participants in the hands-on course will be those who have completed the online course on the ERG, the CAMEO Chemicals database, and the ICS, in addition to the previous two components as part of the full training cycle. The hands-on component will take place on-site in Spiez, Switzerland.
8. Given the objectives of the training cycle, candidates will be carefully selected from the online introductory course and should have a background in the field of chemical emergency response. **Only applications from women applicants will be considered. States Parties and National Authorities are strongly encouraged to support and endorse the applications or nominations of suitable women candidates for this training cycle.** Preference will be given to officers from emergency response units from institutions involved in civilian defence. Participants should be physically fit and able to wear personal protective gear during the practical sessions of the course. Please note that a medical certificate may be required to attend the hands-on training components.
9. Participants should undertake the necessary steps to ensure their participation in the entire cycle by obtaining the required clearances from the relevant authorities based on the invitation letter issued by the Secretariat.
10. Endorsement by a candidate's respective National Authority is a prerequisite for consideration in the selection process. The endorsement process must be completed via Eventus, the OPCW event management system (<https://eventus.opcw.org/>), **no later than 29 February 2024.**
11. The Secretariat expects to be able to **sponsor a maximum of 20 participants** for the full training cycle. For sponsored participants, the Secretariat will cover the cost of travel, accommodation, airport transfers, medical insurance, and meals (lunch), and will provide a limited subsistence allowance to cover sundry expenses.

12. The Secretariat will seek the most economical options when making travel arrangements for sponsored participants. Sponsored participants are encouraged to use the tickets provided by the Secretariat. Participants are expected to arrive in the host country for the on-site components of the training cycle no earlier than one day before the beginning of the component and to depart no later than one day after the completion of the component. The Secretariat will not cover expenses unrelated to the course or that result from unauthorised changes to travel arrangements. Once the Secretariat has purchased their tickets, sponsored participants will be responsible for ensuring they participate in the course. In case of any unforeseen circumstances, participants should immediately contact the focal points responsible for the course.
13. Courses will be conducted in **English**; therefore, participants are required to have a good working knowledge of written and spoken English. No interpretation services will be provided during any of the components of the training cycle.
14. Participants are requested to obtain all necessary visas (including transit visas) before traveling to the host country. Further details regarding logistics and the final programme will be issued to participants at a later stage.
15. Interested States Parties are invited to submit nominations making sure to provide all of the requested contact details, as well as photocopies of the personal identification pages of the candidate's valid passport, **no later than 1 March 2024**. Within 14 days after the submission deadline, only selected participants will be contacted.
16. The provisional programmes for the training cycle are included as the Annexes to this Note, and further details will be issued at a later date. Any questions may be addressed to Mr Loïc Luyeye (Tel.: +31 70 416 3471; Email: [loic.luyeye@opcw.org](mailto:loic.luyeye@opcw.org)), and Ms Toko Okazaki (Email: [toko.okazaki@opcw.org](mailto:toko.okazaki@opcw.org)), the focal points for this training cycle with the Assistance and Protection Branch of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division of the Secretariat.

#### Annexes:

- Annex 1: Online Foundation Course, 25 March – 19 April 2024: Provisional Programme
- Annex 2: Basic Course on Response to Incidents Involving Chemical Warfare Agents and Toxic Industrial Chemicals, Spiez, Switzerland, 1 – 5 July 2024: Provisional Programme
- Annex 3: Online Course on the Emergency Response Guidebook, the CAMEO (Computer-Aided Management of Emergency Operations) Chemicals Database, and the Incident Command System, 2024 (Dates to Be Determined): Provisional Programme
- Annex 4: Integrated Advanced Course and Exercise on Response to Incidents Involving Chemical Warfare Agents and Toxic Industrial Chemicals, Spiez, Switzerland, 2025 (Dates to Be Confirmed): Provisional Programme

**Annex 1**

**ONLINE FOUNDATION COURSE  
25 MARCH – 19 APRIL 2024**

**PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME**

<b>Chapter 1 – The Chemical Weapons Convention</b>
1.1. Historical review 1.2. The Chemical Weapons Convention 1.3. The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) 1.4. Article X of the Convention
<b>Chapter 2 – Introduction to chemical agents</b>
2.1. Chemical weapons 2.2. Chemical warfare agents 2.3. Exposure to chemical warfare agents 2.4. Toxic industrial chemicals
<b>Chapter 3 – Introduction to personal protective equipment (PPE)</b>
3.1. Chemical protection suits 3.2. Respiratory protection 3.3. OPCW protection levels
<b>Chapter 4 – Introduction to decontamination</b>
4.1. Decontamination overview 4.2. Decontamination stations and corridors 4.3. Decontamination processes 4.4. Decontamination systems
<b>Chapter 5 – Introduction to detection and identification</b>
5.1. Recognition 5.2. Detection 5.3. Identification

## Annex 2

**BASIC COURSE ON RESPONSE TO INCIDENTS INVOLVING CHEMICAL  
WARFARE AGENTS AND TOXIC INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS  
SPIEZ, SWITZERLAND**

**1 – 5 JULY 2024**

**PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>		
<b>Sunday, 30 June 2024</b>			
Arrival of the OPCW team and participants, transfer to accommodation			
<b>Monday, 1 July 2024</b>			
09:00 – 09:15	Logistical and administrative information on the course		
09:15 – 10:00	Opening ceremony		
10:00 – 10:20	Group photo		
10:20 – 11:00	Presentation: OPCW		
11:00 – 11:30	Presentation: Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention in Switzerland		
11:30 – 11:45	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>		
11:45 – 12:30	Presentation: Threats of chemical attacks by non-State actors		
12:30 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>		
13:30 – 14:30	Presentation: Characteristics of chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals		
14:30 – 14:45	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>		
14:45 – 15:30	Presentation: Medical treatment for chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals		
15:30 – 16:30	Presentation: Emergency management – general overview and guidelines		
16:30	Transfer to accommodation		
<b>Tuesday, 2 July 2024</b>			
09:00 – 10:00	Presentation: Respiratory protection: gas masks, filters, and self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA)		
10:00 – 11:00	Presentation: Personal protective equipment (PPE) – Chemical suits and levels of chemical protection		
11:00 – 11:15	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>		
11:15 – 12:45	Group 1 practical session with PPE: Donning and doffing level C	Group 2 practical session with PPE: Donning and doffing level B	Group 3 practical session with PPE: Donning and doffing level A
12:45 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>		
14:00 – 15:30	Group 2 practical session with PPE: Donning and doffing level C	Group 3 practical session with PPE: Donning and doffing level B	Group 1 practical session with PPE: Donning and doffing level A
15:30 – 15:45	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>		
15:45 – 17:15	Group 3 practical session with PPE: Donning and doffing level C	Group 1 practical session with PPE: Donning and doffing level B	Group 2 practical session with PPE: Donning and doffing level A
17:15	Transfer to accommodation		

<b>Wednesday, 3 July 2024</b>		
09:00 – 11:00	Presentation: Principles of decontamination – Methods and techniques – Roles and responsibilities – Tools and equipment	
11:00 – 11:15	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>	
11:15 – 12:30	Presentation: Recognition and detection of chemicals – Detection and identification techniques – Equipment and devices	
12:30 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>	
14:00 – 15:30	Group 1 practical session: Dry and wet decontamination	Group 2 practical session: Recognition, detection, and identification
15:30 – 16:00	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>	
16:00 – 17:30	Group 2 practical session: Dry and wet decontamination	Group 1 practical session: Recognition, detection, and identification
17:30	Transfer to accommodation	
<b>Thursday, 4 July 2024</b>		
09:00 – 10:00	Presentation: Introduction to the Incident Command System (ICS) for chemical emergencies	
10:00 – 11:00	Presentation: Health and safety during chemical emergencies	
11:00 – 11:15	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>	
11:15 – 12:30	Briefing pre-exercises	
12:30 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>	
13:30 – 15:00	Group 1 practical session: Practical field exercise I	Group 2 practical session: Practical field exercise II
15:00 – 15:30	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>	
15:30 – 18:00	Group 2 practical session: Practical field exercise I	Group 1 practical session: Practical field exercise II
18:00	Transfer to accommodation	
<b>Friday, 5 July 2024</b>		
09:30 – 11:30	Joint field exercise	
11:30 – 12:00	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>	
12:00 – 12:15	Discussion on knowledge acquired and course evaluation	
12:15 – 12:30	Closing ceremony	
12:30 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>	
13:30	Transfer to accommodation	
<b>Saturday, 6 July 2024</b>		
Departure of participants		

**Annex 3****ONLINE COURSE ON THE EMERGENCY RESPONSE GUIDEBOOK, THE CAMEO  
(COMPUTER-AIDED MANAGEMENT OF EMERGENCY OPERATIONS)  
CHEMICALS DATABASE, AND THE INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM****2024 (DATES TO BE DETERMINED)****PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME**

<b>Chapter 1 – Technical aspects of attending to emergencies involving toxic chemicals</b>
1.1. Physical and chemical properties of substances 1.2. Toxicological values applied to the management of emergencies involving chemicals 1.3. Dispersion of contaminants in the environment after an event involving chemicals 1.4. Safety distances and planning zones
<b>Chapter 2 – Emergency Response Guidebook (ERG)</b>
2.1. Introduction 2.2. The yellow pages 2.3. The blue pages 2.4. Operational guides (the orange pages) 2.5. The green pages
<b>Chapter 3 – CAMEO Chemicals database</b>
3.1. Overview 3.2. Searching chemicals 3.3. Searching chemicals by name 3.4. Searching chemicals by United Nations (UN) number 3.5. Chemical reactivity
<b>Chapter 4 – The Incident Command System (ICS)</b>
4.1. Introduction 4.2. Characteristics and principles of the ICS 4.3. Roles and responsibilities 4.4. ICS structure 4.5. Facilities and resources 4.6. Command

## Annex 4

**INTEGRATED ADVANCED COURSE AND EXERCISE ON RESPONSE  
TO INCIDENTS INVOLVING CHEMICAL WARFARE AGENTS  
AND TOXIC INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS  
SPIEZ, SWITZERLAND**

**2025 (DATES TO BE CONFIRMED)**

**PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>
<b>TBC 2025</b>	
Arrival of the OPCW team and participants, transfer to accommodation	
<b>Day 1</b>	
08:30 – 08:45	Transfer to course venue
08:45 – 09:00	Accreditation
09:00 – 09:10	Logistical and administrative information on the course
09:10 – 09:45	Opening ceremony
09:45 – 10:00	Group photo
10:00 – 10:30	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
10:30 – 11:15	Presentation: Swiss National Authority for the Chemical Weapons Convention
11:15 – 12:00	Presentation: The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)
12:00 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>
13:30 – 14:30	Presentation: Safety in responding to hazardous materials
14:30 – 15:30	Lecture: Incident control techniques
15:30 – 16:00	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
16:00 – 17:00	Presentation: Rescue operations in critical scenarios
17:00	Transfer to accommodation
<b>Day 2</b>	
08:00 – 08:45	Transfer to the course venue
09:00 – 09:30	Reception/welcome
09:30 – 10:00	Presentation: Use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
10:00 – 11:00	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
	Medical records and check-up with the Swiss staff
	Distribution of PPE
11:00 – 11:15	Transfer to training area
11:15 – 12:45	Practical session: Group 1 – Exercise with protection level A, dexterity circuit-leak control
	Practical Session: Group 2 –Victim rescue exercise
12:45 – 13:00	<i>Break – Conclusions</i>
13:00 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00 – 14:30	Physical conditioning for field exercises
14:30 – 15:45	Practical session: Group 1 – Victim rescue exercise
	Practical session: Group 2 – Exercise with protection level A, dexterity circuit-leak control
15:45 – 16:15	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
16:15 – 17:00	Practical session: Circuit dexterity training – Groups 1 and 2
17:00 – 17:30	Conclusions
17:30	Transfer to accommodation



<b>Day 3</b>	
08:00 – 09:00	Transfer to the course venue
09:00 – 10:00	Presentation: Swiss Armed Forces
10:00 – 10:15	Transfer to training area
10:15 – 11:15	Practical Session: Group 1 – Tactical medicine and antidotes
	Practical Session: Group 2 – Masks and filters
11:15 – 11:45	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
11:45 – 13:00	Practical Session: Group 1 – Masks and filters
	Practical Session: Group 2 – Tactical medicine and antidotes
13:00 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00 – 14:45	Presentation: Sampling and collection of evidence
14:45 – 15:30	Presentation: Strategy, tactics, and operations for interventions in critical scenarios
15:30 – 16:00	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
16:00 – 17:00	Practical session: Critical scenario exercise – single group
17:00 – 17:30	Conclusions
17:30	Transfer to accommodation
<b>Day 4</b>	
12:15 – 13:00	Transfer to the course venue
13:00 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00 – 15:00	Presentation: Strategy, tactics, and operations in case of an attack with chemical dispersion devices
15:00 – 16:00	Practical session: Incident action plan – All participants and instructors
16:00 – 17:00	Practical session: Exercise development
17:00 – 17:30	Conclusions
17:30 – 18:00	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
18:00 – 18:30	Presentation: Strategy, tactics, and operations in the event of a technological incident
18:30 – 19:00	Practical session: Incident action plan – All participants and instructors
19:00 – 21:30	Practical session: Night exercise development
21:30 – 22:00	Conclusions
22:00	Transfer to accommodation
<b>Day 5</b>	
08:45 – 09:30	Transfer to the course venue
09:30 – 10:30	Presentation of the practical sessions
10:30 – 11:00	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
11:00 – 12:00	Presentation: Strategy, tactics, and operations in hostage situations and the use of chemical dispersion devices
12:00 – 13:00	<i>Lunch</i>
13:00 – 14:00	Practical session: Incident action plan – All participants and instructors
14:00 – 15:00	Practical session: Exercise development
15:00 – 15:30	<i>Break</i>
15:30 – 16:00	Conclusions
16:00	Transfer to accommodation