IRELAND'S IMPLEMENTATION OF CCW PROTOCOL V
ARTICLE 4 RECORDING

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Thank you Mr Coordinator

Thank you for the opportunity to make this presentation on Ireland's implementation of CCW Protocol V with respect to Article 4 on Recording and on the employment of the recording mechanism adopted by the Irish Defence Forces.

Ireland is a relatively small state with a small armed forces and with small inventories of munitions and delivery systems. However in addition to the small size of inventories, small states like Ireland tend to be short of the resources necessary to arrange for the implementation of instruments such as Protocol V. I hope that this presentation will help other small states to engage with and overcome the challenges which implementation of these instruments entail.

Today coordinator, as requested I will be focusing on Ireland's implementation of Article 4 of the Protocol. Article 4 addresses the recording, retaining and transmission of information concerning explosive remnants of war created during armed conflict.

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Paragraph 1 of Article 4 obliges parties to an armed conflict to record and retain information on the use of explosive ordnance or the abandonment of explosive ordnance.
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Paragraph 2 requires parties to an armed conflict to make available, information on the use of explosive ordnance that would be of assistance to the parties now in control of the affected area in conducting risk education and clearance activities.
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Paragraph 3 refers high contracting parties to Part 1 of the technical annex which outlines suggested best practice in the recording and storage and release of information.
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To this end, armed forces of states party to the convention are obliged in Article 11 to ‘issue appropriate instructions and operating procedures and that its personnel receive training consistent with the relevant provisions of this Protocol’.
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Protocol V entered into force for Ireland in May 2007. Ireland is not an ERW affected country. Therefore compliance with many aspects of Protocol V is relatively straightforward.
In order to ensure full compliance with Article 4 of Protocol V and with the best practices contained therein the Irish Defence Forces established a Working Group in late 2008. This Working Group issued an interim report in June 2009 which addressed Protocol V in a comprehensive manner and made a number of recommendations. In this presentation I will focus on the issues relating to Article 4 of the Protocol but I will also refer to the
training which is required by an armed force, in order to ensure that they can comply with the recording obligations.

The Irish Defence Forces apply very stringent measures in the use, and control of all items of explosive ordnance, for which there is an acute awareness in Ireland given our recent history. Nevertheless there was no universally applicable system for recording the use of ordnance across all corps, services and delivery systems. In accordance with most other countries Ireland trains its armed forces to engage in armed conflict and therefore in order to comply with Article 4 it was deemed essential to develop and implement such a system to ensure that knowledge and awareness of the system was disseminated to all levels of command. It was clear that all junior leaders in combat and combat support units would be required to have a knowledge of the requirement to record as far as feasible the use of all explosive ordnance. Ireland also deploys units to international peace support operations which are equipped with a wide variety of weapons systems that deliver explosive ordnance.

The working group recommended a draft recording template which was trailed in one brigade in 2010. In light of this trial, the system was adjusted and finalized and launched in December 2010 to all formation operational staffs. The system went live on 01st January 2011.

In devising a recording template it was decided to extend the scope of the template beyond that strictly demanded by CCW Protocol V. It was also decided that the use of all live explosive ordnance, by the Defence Forces in training, on exercises, and live firing conducted for testing purposes would be recorded using the electronic template and reporting system. This decision was taken to ensure that all commanders were familiar with and inculcated in the requirement and process of recording and retaining information on the use of explosive ordnance. This would then ensure that there would be throughout the organisation a culture of recording and compliance with Protocol V during armed conflict or during armed action taken in the course of Peace Keeping / Peace Enforcing Missions under a UN mandate.

It was also decided to include landmines, other specialist engineer munitions and explosive systems for mine breaching operations all of which are already captured by the ‘other devices’ categories within AP II.

Although Ireland maintains a modest inventory of delivery systems, these cover, in common with similarly sized states a reasonably broad range of systems and associated munition types.

This is a representative sample of delivery systems and it is not comprehensive.

Therefore even a small state can possess a wide variety of delivery systems and munition types which, presents a considerable challenge to the attempt to devise a universally
applicable recording template. Clearly there will be criteria in the template that will not be applicable to all munitions. Therefore the template is quite large and although the information is included in a single electronic document, for ease of viewing, I will deal with it here in three separate segments.

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Along the top of the template are basic identifying details such as formation, unit, date and time. At the bottom there is a button which gives access to detailed instructions on completion of the template. This attached guide will assist the user as he or she attempts to enter information.

The first segment is largely concerned with details of the location of the delivery system allowing for both GPS and map reference data.

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There is the option to record that information using GPS Latitude and Longitude information or local Map information.

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The second segment of the template records the characteristics of the intended target as seen from the firing point and the type of explosive ordnance used. That is the distance and direction to the target.

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Finally the third segment records the details of the mean point of impact of the ordnance, the number of rounds delivered and the assessment of the dispersion of the ordnance as seen by the firer, if relevant.

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The next phase of compliance with Article 4 regards transmission of information. At present the electronic form is forwarded by email through the operational chain of command. All records of explosive ordnance used by Defence Force units are forwarded to the Joint Operations Centre Director in Defence Forces HQ. There are just 6 formations, not including reserve forces, in the Defence Forces and one additional category covers overseas units. The number of units deployed overseas varies from time to time.

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The operational staffs in Formation Headquarters consolidate reports from the units in the field essentially from its combat and combat support units, in this case, infantry, artillery, cavalry and engineer units.
This example of a returned Protocol V reporting template for live firing completing by a Defence Forces unit in keeping with our Protocol V training policy was forwarded by the Irish battalion which is currently serving in Lebanon as part of the UNIFIL force. This example is live firing conducted for the purpose of test firing and zeroing weapons on a range in Lebanon. Such reports are required to be submitted, as I mentioned earlier, for all use of explosive ordnance by Defence Force units within Ireland. Of course the return of Protocol V relevant information in the event of a real life engagement by this overseas unit, would be completed and forwarded to Ireland in the exact same manner as this parallel Protocol V recording mechanism which exists for the purpose of Protocol familiarization and training.

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Training of Defence Forces personnel is not only limited to the obligation on commanders to ensure that all live firing, is reported using the recording template. Training establishments within our Military College have been directed to include instruction on the use of the template and the reporting procedure within their training syllabi for all career courses. This training can take the form of command post exercises and exercises without troops where commanders at the lowest appropriate level are encouraged to complete the template in accordance with fictitious engagement scenarios. The following is an example of such a training scenario.

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Assume that there is a Defence Forces, company sized position, deployed in a remote and isolated position and therefore vulnerable to attack. This could be for example a UN mandated force deployed somewhere in Africa.

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If an incident involving the release of ordnance by Irish troops were to occur on such a mission then the unit commander would have the responsibility to record and report the relevant information in a timely manner.

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In this slide the unidentified hostile force is represented by the red diagonal shapes seen here on the slide. Should the Armed Elements approach and subsequently fire on the Peace Keeping position, the Peace Keeping troops would then be justified in engaging the opposition with defensive fires.

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A typical small to medium sized unit such as this would be likely to respond with small arms and Heavy Machine Gun. However in addition to this it is likely that the response would involve vehicle mounted and dismounted crew served weapons. These would include direct fire antitank weapons, grenade launchers and the employment of indirect fires in the form of mortars.

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In the aftermath of a short engagement the unit commander and his operations staff would complete the Protocol V reporting template. In this example the information would be relative simple. You can see from the slide that fires originated from only three static
positions. This simplifies matters greatly. The obligations on the commander would be more onerous if the fire originated with vehicle mounted systems whilst employed in a maneuver capacity. Here, two of the locations are Defensive positions on the Western side of the compound with a third mortar pit located centrally within the camp. In this example, a number of different weapons systems are fired from each perimeter post. Also, each weapon system engaged multiple targets as the enemy force moved position. In addition the friendly forces mortars engaged in-depth enemy positions.

The resultant protocol V template when completed would look this.

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The volume of entries here depends on the number of firing positions. From each firing position, a new entry is required when the weapon system acquires a new target. This initial portion of the spread sheet is straightforward and involves a lot copy and paste.

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This next section of the spread sheet requires more attention as this relates to the important target details and the ammunition types employed. All of this information can be completed retrospectively with relative ease, provided the soldier with responsibility for each weapon system can be debriefed in a reasonable timeframe.

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On this slide you can see the remaining information which relates to the impact area and also the very important remarks column. We encourage our soldiers to populate this column with as much information as possible. This information would be of significant value for any subsequent area clearance operation. Such as, over shot rounds, the incidence of blinds, ordnance impacts into soft ground, poorly performing ammunition batches, unusual dispersion patterns etc.

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Although this system went live for all Defence Forces units on 01 January 2011, work is by no means complete. The system is been monitored and revised on a continuous basis.

The lessons learned so far are as follows. The options for recording information on the template should not be unduly restrictive. Although drop down menus which contain many options are useful in that they prompt the user and assist him in up loading the correct information, scope must also be available to allow for the insertion of data that differs from existing weapon and ammunition types. The spread sheet must be future proofed by allowing the user to bypass a list of options, and insert new information.

Also, the format for Latitude and Longitude must be flexible to reflect the different formats which will be in use with different missions and various units. For example, the first template produced restricted input to the degrees minutes seconds format only. This alone is not sufficient.

As mentioned already, training of members of the Defence Forces in the use of Protocol V reporting can encompass both dry and live training scenarios however we are of the opinion that it is correct to impose the obligation on commanders, that they must complete the template when ever they fire live ammunition. This has the disadvantage that the use of the Protocol V reporting template in these scenarios involves the input of
only limited information. This is because live fire training occurs in only a small number of locations with which the commanders and users can become familiar. Also there is generally a small number of weapons systems employed at any one time in this training environment due to range safety restrictions. Not with standing this, live fire training represents the upper end of military training and therefore, what a commander does under these demanding conditions are the drills which he is most likely to implement in a real world engagement.

Finally, it is clear from our initial year of using this reporting mechanism that class room briefings alone are not sufficient to train personnel. Practical, hands on tutorials are essential if soldiers and officers are to be capable of using the template. This training should be directed at a broad range of personnel including those at the lowest appropriate level of command.

That concludes my presentation. Thank you for your attention. I will be happy to answer any question which you may have now or at a later point.