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**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](http://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](http://www.iso.org/patents)).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

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](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

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

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## 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.