PRE-DEPLOYMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

Working and living conditions in the field vary from one deployment to another. Depending on the circumstances, disaster response personnel may work without many of the comforts, support networks and basic infrastructure to which we are accustomed. The following questions may not be true for every deployment, but are meant as a guide to help in assessing your readiness to deploy.

Overall

- How willing am I to adapt to new and possibly uncomfortable situations?
- Am I resilient and flexible in most situations?

Personal

On out-of-area deployments, you will be away from friends and family for extended periods (usually up to 3 weeks), possibly with minimal contact.

- Can I put my personal life 'on hold' to deploy?
- Am I prepared to have minimal contact with family and friends for extended durations?
- Do my family and friends support my decision to deploy? How would their concerns impact my ability to focus on my deployment?
- What is my personal motivation for deploying? Does the deployment mean a welcome escape from having to deal with ongoing problems at home?

Health and Wellness

Deployment environments are often demanding and can be stressful.

- Am I mentally, physically, and emotionally well enough to cope with a highly stressful environment and possibly poor living conditions?
- How will I maintain healthy eating, exercise, and sleep habits, as much as possible?
- Do I recognize signs of stress in myself, and have effective and healthy strategies to cope?
- Do I have healthy self-esteem and a solid sense of self?
- What do I need to consider in light of any pre-existing health/medical/dietary issues?

Living Situation

Living situations vary depending on the context – you might find yourself in isolated accommodations or living in close quarters with a number of other people. In addition, you may be without the comforts to which you are accustomed.

- Can I live in shared accommodation in close quarters with others?
- How prepared am I to have limited or no access to internet or phone service?
- How will I adapt my daily routines to situations where my movements are restricted (ie curfews, travel)? Am I prepared to follow rules and regulations on deployment?

PRE-DEPLOYMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

Professional

Consider the professional impact of deploying. In particular, disaster response personnel may be required to deploy on short notice.

- Can I put my professional life 'on hold' on short notice?
- Does my employer support my decision? Are my colleagues willing to make adjustments to their workload to accommodate my absence?
- Will the deployment result in financial hardship?
- If self-employed or a student, what other contingency plans must I put into place?

Disaster work context

Disaster response personnel must respect and adapt to different cultures and work styles. They face unfamiliar situations, ambiguous information and may be required to work long hours.

- Do I feel I have the required training and experience to feel competent to deploy for this assignment?
- How comfortable am I working in a multi-cultural environment and adapting to different cultures and work styles? Can I work/live with people whose heritage, values, beliefs etc. are different from my own?
- Can I stay focused on the tasks at hand when faced with many other unmet and compelling needs? How will I deal with possible moral and ethical challenges?
- Am I comfortable working independently as well as part of a team?
- Am I able to support other team members during stressful times?
- Do I have the ability to work long hours on a continual basis, if required? Am I able to adapt quickly to fast-paced, changing, and sometimes chaotic environments?

Deploying with the Red Cross

All disaster response personnel must commit to the Fundamental Principles and understand that while on assignment they are a representative of the Red Cross 24-hours a day.

- Do I have a solid understanding of the Fundamental Principles, particularly neutrality and impartiality, and their practical application in the field?
- Do I have personal, religious, or political beliefs that might conflict with these principles?
- Can I put my personal beliefs aside and assume the Fundamental Principles as my own at all times while on deployment?

It is important that you are *deployment ready* for assignment – mentally, physically and emotionally . This is so that you can take care of yourself, your peers as well as to safeguard the operation you are being assigned to. Saying no to this assignment does not mean you will not be called upon for the next one.