

## FACT SHEET

### INTERNATIONAL SMALL ARMS CONTROL STANDARDS

*The International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) provide practical guidance on establishing effective national controls over the full lifecycle of small arms and light weapons, thereby reducing the risk of their falling into the hands of criminals, armed groups, terrorists and others who would misuse them.*



#### Initiative to develop ISACS

The initiative to develop ISACS came from UN agencies that participate in the United Nations internal mechanism to coordinate action on small arms, ammunition and the arms trade (CASA). UN Member States often call upon these agencies to provide advice and support on issues related to small arms and light weapons control — including legislative, programmatic and operational issues. CASA partners decided that the best way to ensure that the United Nations as a whole consistently delivers high-quality advice and support in response to such requests was to develop international standards on small arms and light weapons control, similar to the standards the UN developed in the areas of mine action (International Mine Action Standards – IMAS) and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (Integrated DDR Standards – IDDRS).

#### Framework & foundation

ISACS translate into practice the objectives of key global agreements and international law aiming to prevent the illicit trade, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, namely:

**“Existing standards such as [...] the International Small Arms Control Standards should be fully utilized in arms and ammunition stockpile management practices.”**

Ban Ki-moon  
Secretary-General of the United Nations

- the UN Programme of Action against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons;
- the International Tracing Instrument;
- the Firearms Protocol supplementing the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime; and
- the Arms Trade Treaty.

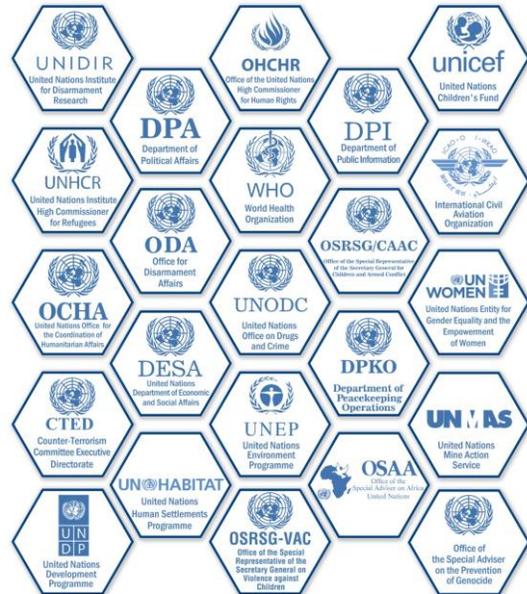
ISACS are based on best practice guidelines, model regulations and legislation, codes of conduct and standard operating procedures that have been developed at regional and sub-regional levels.

#### Development process

UNODA and UNDP co-chair the ISACS initiative and lead the standards development process. In addition to drawing upon expertise from within the United Nations system, CASA collaborates with leading experts worldwide to develop and maintain ISACS. Governments, international and regional organizations, civil society and the private sector volunteer specialists to serve on the ISACS Expert Reference Group, which reviews each draft standard.

## Content of ISACS

ISACS comprise 24 individual standards divided into six collections or ‘series’. Individual standards provide guidance on: operational issues (e.g. stockpile management, marking, recordkeeping, tracing, collection and destruction); legislative and regulatory controls (e.g. national regulation of manufacture, international transfer and end-use); programme management (e.g. design and implementation of national action plans, community safety programmes and awareness-raising campaigns); and special considerations relating to women, gender, children, adolescents and youth. ISACS and the UN’s International Ammunition Technical Guidelines are mutually reinforcing and are cross-referenced where appropriate.



CASA Partners

## The ISACS Assessment Tool

The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) has developed a software tool that allows States to conduct self-assessments of their national SALW controls based on ISACS. ISACS-based self-assessments help States to identify and prioritize areas that are in need of further strengthening and assist in the design, monitoring and evaluation of SALW control initiatives. For further details, see <http://www.smallarmsstandards.org/tools/>.

## How are ISACS being used?

The United Nations and its partners are using and promoting ISACS in **more than 100 countries** in order to assist States in areas as varied as stockpile management, marking and recordkeeping, regulating private security companies and assessing floating armouries. For more details on who is using the standards and for what purposes, see <http://www.smallarmsstandards.org/isacs-in-the-world.html>.

## ISACS and the Sustainable Development Goals

ISACS contribute directly to the implementation of SDG Goal 16 to promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies, specifically Target 16.1 to “significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere” and Target 16.4 to “significantly reduce illicit [...] arms flows.” How do the standards achieve this? See our theory of change at [www.smallarmsstandards.org/isacs-and-the-sdgs.html](http://www.smallarmsstandards.org/isacs-and-the-sdgs.html).