United Nations
CASA
Coordinating Action on Small Arms

Project on International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS)

Agreement between the Government of Australia and UNDP Regarding Contribution to the Thematic Trust Fund for Crisis Prevention and Recovery in support of the ISACS Project

AusAID Agreement No. 50018

FINAL REPORT

Geneva, 17 February 2011

Dear Ms. Davies,

In accordance with the terms of Article 5.2(c) of the above-mentioned contribution agreement supporting the development of International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS), please find herewith a final report summarizing project activities and impact of activities, as well as provisional financial data.

Annexed to the report are the findings and recommendations of a workshop held in Geneva on 15-16 November 2010 entitled, "Shaping, Fine-Tuning and Finalising International Small Arms Control Standards," which will guide the further development of the ISACS project.

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of UNDP and on behalf of UN CASA, to thank AusAID most sincerely for your support of the United Nations' initiative to develop International Small Arms Control Standards. I look forward to the possibility of continuing our collaboration.

Sincerely,

Dr. Patrick Mc Carthy
ISACS Coordinator
Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery
United Nations Development Programme

CASA Project on International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS)
Room S.161, Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Phone +41 22 917 2387 | Fax +41 22 917 0034 | Email coordinator@un-casa-isacs.org
www.un-casa-isacs.org
CTED | DESA | DPA | DPI | DPKO | ICAO | OCHA | OHCHR | OSRSG/CAAC | OSAA | OSAPG | UNDP
UNEP | UN-HABITAT | UNHCR | UNICEF | UNIDIR | UNIFEM | UNMAS | UNODA | UNODC | WHO

United Nations
CASA
Coordinating Action on Small Arms

Project on International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS)

Agreement between the Government of Australia and UNDP Regarding Contribution to the Thematic Trust Fund for Crisis Prevention and Recovery in support of the ISACS Project

AusAID Agreement No. 50018

PART 1 – NARRATIVE REPORT

1   Introduction

The Government of Australia and UNDP signed a contribution agreement in May 2009 for the amount of AUD 150,000.00 in support of Phase 1 of the United Nations inter-agency initiative to develop International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS). This narrative report summarizes the activities carried out by the ISACS project, and describes the impact of these activities, up until the end of Phase 1 of the project on 30 September 2010.

2   Background

2.1   United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) mechanism

UNDP plays a leading role in the United Nations' *Coordinating Action on Small Arms* (CASA) mechanism, which strives to improve the UN's ability to work as one in delivering effective policy, programming and advice to Member States on curbing the uncontrolled proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons. Established by Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 1998 with the task of coordinating the small arms work of the UN System, CASA today unites 22 UN bodies active in policymaking, programming and practice related to small arms and light weapons control (see Table 1).

2.2   CASA's initiative to develop International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS)

In July 2008, at the suggestion of UNDP, CASA launched an ambitious initiative to develop a set of International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) along the lines of the standards the UN has already developed in the areas of mine action (International Mine Action Standards)[1] and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants (Integrated DDR Standards).[2] The initiative is overseen by a CASA Working Group on ISACS, co-Chaired by UNDP and UNODA.

---

[1] IMAS: www.mineactionstandards.org
[2] IDDRS: www.unddr.org

Table 1 – UN CASA Partners

CTED	United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DPA	Department of Political Affairs
DPI	Department of Public Information
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSRSG/CAAC	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict
OSAA	Office of the Special Advisor on Africa
OSAPG	Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDIR	United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNMAS	United Nation Mine Action Service
UNODA	United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WHO	World Health Organization

2.3 Purpose and framework of ISACS

The purpose of ISACS is to enhance the effectiveness of small arms policy and programming across the UN system, and by other stakeholders, by providing clear and comprehensive guidance to practitioners and policymakers on a wide range of small arms and light weapons controls issues (Table 2 presents a working outline of ISACS).

ISACS are being developed within the framework created by the three existing global agreements on small arms, namely the

- UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons In All Its Aspects (UN Programme of Action); the

- International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (International Tracing Instrument); and the

- UN Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UN Firearms Protocol).

ISACS will also build upon norms, standards, best practices and model regulations that have been developed at the regional and sub-regional levels.

2.4 Expected benefits of ISACS

The main benefits of ISACS will be to

- enable the United Nations to "deliver as one" on policy and programming;
- improve the design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects and programmes by all stakeholders;
- help to disseminate knowledge and effective practices globally;
- establish an agreed level of performance within the global small arms community of practice and establishing a common vocabulary;
- assist in the identification of capacity-building needs and evaluating the effectiveness of assistance programmes;
- create a set of benchmarks against which to measure the implementation of global small arms commitments; and
- provide a basis for the development of national small arms control standards.

3 Results achieved during Phase 1

ISACS reached the end of their first phase of development on 30 September 2010. During Phase 1, the ISACS project achieved the following results:

- **Launch of the ISACS initiative** at the 3rd Biennial Meeting of States on the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (United Nations, New York, July 2008).

- **Appointment of a full-time ISACS Coordinator** (September 2008). The ISACS Coordinator is appointed, administered and managed by UNDP, is hosted by UNODA and works for all UN CASA Agencies.

- **Announcement by the UN Secretary-General** of the ISACS initiative, and subsequent updates to UN Member States, in his 2008 report on small arms to the Security Council[3] and in his 2008[4], 2009[5] and 2010[6] reports on small arms to the General Assembly.

- **Workshop 1: Broad-based consultation** to determine the scope and content of ISACS involving CASA partners, governments, international and regional organizations, civil society and the small arms industry (Geneva, 24-25 November 2008).

- **Resource Mobilization**: Financial support received from the governments of Australia, Canada, Ireland, Norway and Switzerland, and from CASA partners UNDP, UNODA, UNICEF and CTED.

- **Engagement of consultants:** Engagement, management and evaluation of 25 expert consultants to assist with the drafting, review and revision of ISACS modules.

---

[3] S/2008/258 of 17 April 2008, paragraph 59.
[4] A/63/261 of 11 August 2008, paragraph 31.
[5] A/64/173 of 27 July 2009, paragraph 12.
[6] A/65/153 of 20 July 2010, paragraph 35.

- **Creation of an *Expert Reference Group*** – comprising almost 50 specialists from all sectors of the small arms community of practice and from all regions of the world – to provide critical feedback on draft ISACS modules.

- **Workshop 2: Launch of the drafting phase**. ISACS consultants present first draft outlines of their respective modules and receive initial feedback from the Expert Reference Group (Geneva, 15-16 July 2009).

- **Creation of an online, collaborative workspace** enabling the transparent review and revision of draft ISACS modules by all stakeholders in the ISACS project.

- **Drafting, review and revision of 21 ISACS modules** (see Table 2 for details).

- **Progress updates and outreach** to UN Member States and other stakeholders.[7]

- **Launch of a first set of draft ISACS modules** at the 4th Biennial Meeting of States on the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (United Nations, New York, June 2010).

3.1 Progress in drafting ISACS modules

Table 2 presents the working outline of ISACS, as revised by CASA at its 60th meeting (9 March 2010), as well as progress made on drafting individual modules by the end of Phase 1 of the project (30 September 2010).

The revision of the original working outline involves some minor textual changes to the titles of existing modules; the integration of the module providing an "Overview of global, regional and sub-regional frameworks relating to SALW control" into module 01.10, "Guide to the application of ISACS"; and the addition of two new modules – module 02.20, "Small arms and light weapons control in the context of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration" and module 02.30, "Small arms and light weapons control in the context of Security Sector Reform."

4 Preview of Phase 2 and beyond

On 1 October 2010, the ISACS project moved into its second phase, which involves subjecting draft ISACS modules to a second round of intensive review by an expanded Expert Reference Group, which now includes more than 200 small arms specialists from more than 80 organization and governments worldwide. Phase 2 of the project was launched by an expert workshop on "Shaping, Fine-Tuning and Finalizing International Small Arms Control Standards," held in Geneva on 15-16 November 2010. The culmination of Phase 2 will be the adoption of ISACS by the Principals of CASA Partners, foreseen at the end of 2011. This will be followed by an intensive one-year rollout of ISACS and subsequently by sustained support for the standards in the form of training in their use and application; their regular review, revision and updating; and supplementing them with additional standards modules as the need arises.

---

[7] Including to the UN General Assembly's First Committee; the Conference of Parties to the UN Firearms Protocol; the 4th Biennial Meeting of States on the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms; the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE); the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL); the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and numerous international small arms workshops and symposia.

Table 2 – Working outline of ISACS (and Phase 1 drafting progress)

Series	Module	1. First draft by Consultant	2. Reviewed by Expert Reference Group	3. Revised by Consultant	4. Edited by Coordinator	5. Reviewed by CASA Working Group	6. Cleared by CASA as 'consultation draft'	7. Second round of consultations	8. Revised by Coordinator (& Consultant)	9. Reviewed by CASA	10. Finalized by Coordinator	11. Formally adopted by CASA Principals
01 Introduction to ISACS	01.10 Guide to the application of ISACS	[8]										
	01.20 Glossary of terms, definitions and abbreviations	√	√	√	√	√	√	√				
02 SALW control in context	02.10 SALW control in the context of preventing armed violence	√	√	√								
	02.20 SALW control in the context of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration	[9]										
	02.30 SALW control in the context of Security Sector Reform[10]	√	√	√								
03 Legislative & regulatory	03.10 National controls over the manufacture of SALW	√	√	√	√	√	√	√				
	03.20 National controls over the international transfer of SALW	√	√	√	√							
	03.21 National controls over the end-user and end-use of internationally transferred SALW	√	√	√								
	03.30 National controls over the access of civilians to SALW	√	√	√								
	03.40 National coordinating mechanisms on SALW control	√	√	√	√	√	√	√				
	03.50 International legal cooperation, criminal offences and investigations	[11]										
04 Design & management	04.10 Designing and implementing National Action Plans	√	√	√								
	04.20 Designing and implementing community safety programming	√	√	√								
	04.30 Raising awareness of the need for SALW control	√	√	√	√	√	√	√				
	04.40 Monitoring, evaluation and reporting	√	√	√								
05 Operational support	05.10 Conducting SALW surveys	√	√	√	√	√	√	√				
	05.20 Stockpile management: Weapons	√	√	√	√	√	√	√				
	05.21 Stockpile management: Ammunition	[12]										
	05.30 Marking and recordkeeping	√	√	√	√	√	√	√				
	05.31 Tracing illicit small arms and light weapons	√	√	√	√	√	√	√				
	05.40 Collection	√	√	√								
	05.50 Destruction: Weapons	√	√	√	√	√	√	√				
	05.51 Destruction: Ammunition	√	√	√	[13]							
	05.60 Border controls and law enforcement cooperation	√	√	√	√							
06 Crosscutting issues	06.10 Gender and small arms and light weapons	√	√	√	√	√	√	√				
	06.20 Children, Youth and small arms and light weapons	√	√	√								

---

[8] To be drafted last.

[9] New module added by CASA to the working outline of ISACS at its 54th meeting (2 September 2009).

[10] New module added by CASA to the working outline of ISACS at its 54th meeting (2 September 2009).

[11] New module added by CASA to the working outline of ISACS at its 54th meeting (2 September 2009).

[12] Work on this module will await completion of the UN process to develop technical guidelines on conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus, as mandated by A/RES/63/61 of 12 January 2009.

[13] Completion of this module will await completion of the UN process to develop technical guidelines on conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus, as mandated by A/RES/63/61 of 12 January 2009.

Annex

Findings & Recommendations of the Workshop
"Shaping, Fine-Tuning and Finalising International Small Arms Control Standards"
Geneva, 15-16 November 2010

1   The standard-setting process

1.1   The role of CASA

International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) are being developed on the initiative of the United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) mechanism as a means to coordinate policymaking, programming and practice on small arms control across all CASA partner organisations. CASA has invited a broad and diverse group of technical, policy and legal experts from outside of the UN system to contribute to the standard-setting process in order to ensure that ISACS will be a high-quality product and that they will be relevant and useful to the global small arms community of practice. The ultimate responsibility for the content of ISACS rests with CASA.

1.2   Consensus in the standard-setting process

The ISACS project is adhering as closely as possible to the model of standard setting employed by the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO). According to ISO, a standard is a

> "document, established by consensus and approved by a recognized body, that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context" (ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2:2004)

ISO recognises, however, that "Consensus need not imply unanimity" (ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004). The ISACS project has made clear from the outset that, given the diversity of perspectives in the Expert Reference Group (ERG), it is to be expected that some feedback received from different members of the ERG may be either be mutually incompatible or not fully compatible with established policies and principles of the UN and its CASA partners. The ISACS project will take into account the opinions of all members of the ERG and will make every effort to resolve fundamental differences of opinion between them. Nevertheless, there may still be occasions where it is not possible to reflect certain feedback in a revised version of an ISACS module. Although this approach may not preserve unanimity in all cases, it is fully compatible with the overarching goal of achieving consensus on ISACS.

1.3   Additional step in the review process

During the Phase 1 development of ISACS modules, members of the Expert Reference Group should be given an additional opportunity to submit comments after a module has been edited and before it is submitted to CASA for clearance to advance to the Phase 2 consultation. Where needed, this process could be facilitated by small group discussions (e.g. teleconferences or webinars).

1.4   Contextualising standards

Each ISACS module should contain a clause at the beginning of the document specifying how the module fits within the framework created by the three multilateral agreements on small arms and light weapons. If a module does not fit within this framework, this should be made explicit.

2   Synergies between ISACS and other small arms-related processes

2.1   Providing technical inputs and receiving useful feedback

The development of ISACS is not taking place in a vacuum. While ISACS works within the framework of existing global norms and tries to provide practical guidance on their implementation, ISACS modules, even in advanced draft form, could contribute useful technical inputs to other small arms-related processes, such as the Open-Ended Meeting of Governmental Experts (MGE) on the UN Programme of Action in May 2011 and preparations for negotiations on an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in 2012. At the same time, the ISACS project would benefit greatly from feedback received on draft modules as a result of their being discussed in such fora.

2.2   Informal approach

The *way* in which ISACS modules are made available to other processes would be critical to determining their usefulness. Making them available in an informal manner and with appropriate caveats regarding their draft nature could help ensure that they are received in the spirit in which they would be offered; i.e. as informal technical inputs, developed by a diverse group of experts, that can stimulate discussion and provide valuable food-for-thought. Draft ISACS modules should never be presented in a manner that could be interpreted as pre-empting or pre-judging the outcome of multilateral discussions or negotiations.

2.3   International ammunition technical guidelines

The ISACS project has paused work on modules related to SALW ammunition, due to the fact that a separate UN process, mandated by the General Assembly, is developing International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG), which will be more detailed than international standards. Once the IATG are in place, CASA will need to decide whether to develop international standards derived from them or, alternatively, to make direct reference to the IATG, where appropriate, in ISACS modules.

2.4   2nd Programme of Action Review Conference

By the time of the 2nd Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action in 2012, the first edition of ISACS will have been finalised and adopted by UN CASA partners and will be in the process of being rolled out. The Review Conference will provide a valuable opportunity to advertise the existence of ISACS to UN Member States and to explain how the standards can support the implementation of the UN Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument.

3   Dealing with different 'types' of ISACS modules

3.1   Nature of guidance

Broadly speaking, ISACS comprise three different types of modules: contextual (series 2), technical (series 3, 4 and 5) and crosscutting (series 6). All modules share the goal, however, of providing guidance to practitioners and policymakers, even though the nature of this guidance – more of less technical; specific or more general – will depend on the type of module in question.

3.2   Integration of cross-cutting issues

The integration of crosscutting issues (gender, children and youth) into all relevant ISACS modules is a priority of the ISACS project. This integration should take place as modules are reviewed and revised and should not wait until the end of the ISACS development process. It is an important responsibility of the Expert Reference Group, as set out in its Terms of Reference, to ensure that such integration takes place. To facilitate this, a focus groups cross-cutting issues should be created within the Expert Reference Group and should be given special responsibility for ensuring appropriate integration of these issues across all modules. Membership of the focus group should be open to all interested members of the Expert Reference Group.

4   Ensuring harmonisation across modules

4.1   Definitions

ISACS module 01.20, *Glossary of terms, definitions and abbreviations*, which is being built from the bottom up as modules are edited and cleared for the Phase 2 consultation, should be made available on the Phase 2 online workspace in order to facilitate continuous review and discussion by the Expert Reference Group and to aid harmonisation of terminology across modules.

5   Production, translation, dissemination and promotion of ISACS

5.1   Roll-out goal

The overarching goal of the ISACS rollout strategy should be to make ISACS available in a usable format to those who need them and to provide practical support for their use and application.

5.2   Production challenges for 'living' documents

The fact that ISACS will be living documents, which should evolve and improve with use and time, presents particular challenges when it comes to deciding upon the best format(s) in which to produce them. An important consideration is this regard is cost. Once a standard is printed on paper (itself a costly process) or burned onto a CD-Rom, it ceases to be a living document. As modules are revised and updated, which is a central activity of any standard-setting process, they must be re-printed and re-disseminated, also at significant cost. Added to this is the risk that some users will fail to replace old modules with new ones, with the result that obsolete standards may remain in use.

5.3 Translation challenges for 'living' documents

Similar challenges present themselves when it comes to deciding upon whether, to what extent, or into which languages to translate ISACS. Here again, a central consideration is cost. Once finalized, ISACS will be a voluminous document that will be expensive to translate into one language, not to mention several. Being documents that rely on precise usage of technical terms, specialized (i.e. more expensive) translation services would be required, not to mention the additional cost of verifying the accuracy of the translation. As modules are revised and updated, new translations of the modified parts would be needed.

5.4 Production options

IMAS and IDDRS have taken slightly different approaches when it comes to producing their respective standards, with IMAS relying almost completely on a web-based platform and IDDRS, in addition to a web-based platform, also opting to produce hard copies of the full set of standards. Both approaches have their merits. A web-based platform is crucial since it provides the "source of reference" where all up-to-date standards modules are always available and from where hard copies of modules can be downloaded and printed on demand. Hard copies can be vital in places where electricity or internet access is unreliable or unavailable, but become obsolete when modules are updated. Other production options include CD-ROMs and USB drives, which are cheap to produce but which also become obsolete when modules are updated.

5.5 Translation options

IMAS and IDDRS are both voluminous documents and the question of translation has been an issue for both. IMAS has taken a decentralised approach to translation, allowing "unofficial" translations of standards modules and listing these, with appropriate caveats, on its website, while stressing that English is the only official version of the standards. IDDRS is focusing, first of all, on translating its Operational Guide, which helps users find their way through the IDDRS document, into French.

5.6 Dissemination options

The rollout phase of the ISACS project should have two main focus areas – raising awareness of the standards and building capacity for their application. On awareness raising, it will be important to have a clear idea of who the target audiences for ISACS are and to develop specific messages for each. On capacity building, it could be advantageous to cooperate with organisations that are already providing training related to small arms control in order to develop training materials that are compatible with ISACS.

6 Maximising the impact of the final consultation

200 experts from 79 organisations, representing all sectors of the small arms community of practice, are involved in the ISACS project as it embarks on the Phase 2 final consultation on all modules. Participants agreed that they would use their respective networks to encourage additional experts, in particular technical specialists and practitioners, to become involved in the Phase 2 consultation.

Agreement between the Government of Australia and UNDP Regarding Contribution to the Thematic Trust Fund for Crisis Prevention and Recovery in support of the ISACS Project

AusAID Agreement No. 50018

PART 2 – FINANCIAL REPORT

Project ID:	00070002
Project Title:	AVP Capacities Strengthened
Activity ID:	6
Fund:	26960

Contribution in AUD		150,000.00
Exchange rate		1.211
Contribution Received in USD		**123,864.57**
7% GMS		8,670.52
Programmable Amount		**115,194.05**
Expenditures in 2009		
Travel - Air Tickets	20,360.34	
Travel - DSA	7,500.00	
Service Contracts	9,385.71	
Sundry	6,279.02	
Subtotal		*43,525.07*
Expenditures in 2010		
Travel - Air Tickets, DSA	60,391.99	
Sundry	4,105.46	
Subtotal	*64,497.45*	*64,497.45*
Total Expenditures		**108,022.52**
Balance		**7,171.53**