On 8 and 9 November 2012, the ICRC hosted a meeting of experts on the implementation of Protocol V, focussing on Article 4 on the recording, retention and transmission of information. Subsequently, the ICRC drafted the following recommended best practices for implementation, based on the discussions held during the meeting.

1. In implementing Article 4 of Protocol V, States should record and retain information on the full range of explosive ordnance used by their armed forces including all calibres of exploding ammunition, grenades and other infantry weapons. However, it is recognized that the type and detail of the information recorded may vary depending on the type of explosive ordnance and the situation in which it is being used. Under the Protocol, States must record information "to the maximum extent possible and as far as practicable".

2. The provisions of Article 4 and Part 1 of the Technical Annex should be formalized in an instrument, order or instruction, legally binding on the armed forces under the authority of the minister for defence, armed forces chief or equivalent office.

3. The provisions of Article 4 and Part 1 of the Technical Annex should be incorporated into military doctrine, manuals and standard operating procedures, and consolidated and maintained through military education, training and field exercises. The incorporation and reinforcement of the recording, retention and release of information in accordance with Article 4 in peacetime training and exercises is an important measure to ensure armed forces are able to discharge their Article 4 obligations in situations of armed conflict and peacekeeping activities.

4. In addition to formalizing the provisions of Article 4 in a binding instrument at the national level and incorporating them into military doctrine, States' armed forces should seek to establish and maintain an institutional "culture of recording" that includes the recording of information in accordance with Article 4 and Part 1 of the Technical Annex.

5. The implementation of Article 4 should involve all services and branches that use explosive ordnance. This would normally include, at a minimum, the involvement of military engineers, ordnance, artillery, armoured forces, infantry, special forces, air combat forces and naval combat forces.

6. When transmitting ERW information to clearance organizations, States should aim to quickly release time-critical safety related information such as information about delayed fusing, self-destruction mechanisms and anti-handling devices.

7. Interested States and clearance organizations should establish a forum for the discussion and development of an appropriate open information architecture, geographic information system (GIS) electronic file format and associated metadata standards for the rapid and effective transmission of ERW information from armed forces to clearance organizations.

International Committee of the Red Cross
Geneva, 11 April 2013