

7.3 ERU Human resources, ERU equipment and financial responsibilities

7.3.1 ERU Human resources

When a NS chooses to hold an ERU of any type, they commit to having specialist personnel available to deploy within 24 to 48 hours at any time. This commitment implies that they will recruit, train, and roster a pool of specialists large enough to support four rotations of the ERU they hold.

For example, if a NS holds a Relief ERU, they must have a pool of at least 16 to 24 delegates ready to deploy, as each one-month rotation will need a team of four to six specialists. If a NS holds a Referral Hospital ERU, this can mean up to 80 delegates. This is why joint deployments are commonplace for some ERUs, and some NS support ERU-holding PNS by training and maintaining a pool of delegates to complete the resources of the lead NS.

For example, the Macedonian RC does not maintain a Basic Healthcare ERU, but they do train staff to join deployments led by the Canadian, German, Finnish, Norwegian, French or Japanese RC as needed. The British Red Cross previously deployed health practitioners in support of the Finnish Health ERUs deployed in Bangladesh.

7.3.1.1 Recruiting an ERU

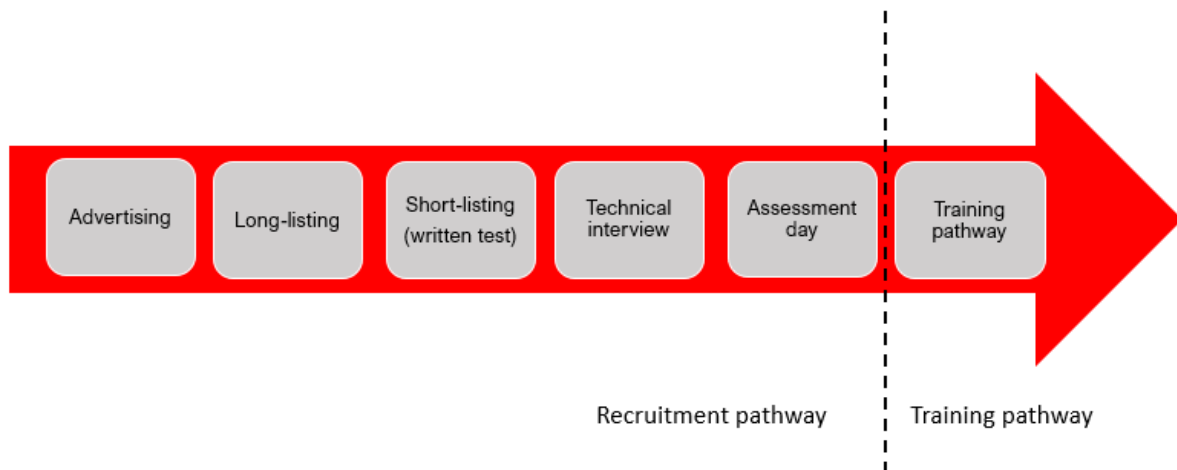
Recruiting ERU personnel is different from hiring staff, as ERU delegates will not be employed by the recruiting NS unless they are already a staff member. Instead, they will be trained and asked to volunteer for periods of time where they can be on standby for deployment within 24 to 48 hours after the ERU is called for by the surge desk at the IFRC.

ERU delegates only join the staff of a NS when they deploy, and they are usually not paid salaries until then, although they can be paid retainers for the time they are on call. When deployed, the deploying NS seconds the ERU delegates to the IFRC.

Recruiting for an ERU is also challenging because a successful recruitment relies on finding a rare mix of skills and experience:

- Adequate technical skills including being adaptable to an emergency context
- Relevant international experience
- Adequate soft skills or core competencies, including working effectively as a team, but also independently enough to deal with split deployments (for example, where the team may be spread across several locations).
- Availability to complete a long training pathway (usually several weeks long, spread over an entire year)
- Ability to remain on call for several months per year, and to deploy at short notice for one month at a time

Recruiting for an ERU is usually done jointly between a technical ERU manager and HR colleagues. In BRC, this is a member of the logistics team (usually the logistics manager), a member from the ESTA team and the international rosters and registers coordinator in HR. It requires careful planning and constant communication with internal stakeholders. Typically, the recruitment of ERU roster delegates takes several months and is split as below:



The recruitment for ERU members is separated into two different stages: recruitment and training. It is important to note that candidates are only considered ERU members after they successfully “pass” the training pathway, which consists of both classroom training and simulation exercises.

Once recruited, ERU members are made “deployment-ready” by:

- Having their personal details pre-recorded in the HR department’s systems: contact details, bank details, health records and criminal records (where applicable).
- Regular check-ins with HR, especially during the months when they are on standby.
- Maintaining updated records of their professional experience.

The National Society sponsoring an ERU covers salaries, benefits, insurance and travel costs of personnel during training and operations. It is also responsible for putting the team together, as well as making sure it has the necessary skills and experience. Each member must adhere to the International Federation’s code of conduct.

BRC maintains two Logistics ERUs and one MSM ERU, which means that the minimum size of the ERU pools should be 16 to 24 logisticians and 16 to 24 MSM delegates.

7.3.1.2 Training ERU personnel

Once the recruitment phase is completed, the training pathway begins. In BRC, training is a two or three-phase process.

IMPACT

Introduction to the Red Cross Movement and humanitarian coordination mechanisms

Foundation

Introduction to emergency operations and the IFRC Disaster Response mechanisms

Technical/Specialist

Simulation exercise, run in teams, in field-like conditions

IMPACT and Foundation can either be delivered together or separately. In between each of these formal, face-to-face training phases, independent, at-home training modules must also be completed.

For more detailed information, see the latest version of the BRC ERU candidate guide, which is attached to the advertisement for ERU membership and sent to all applicants to help them understand the recruitment process.

The requirement is currently for all candidates to follow the training pathway in person, but this may change in the future with the use of remote/online training.



ERU Candidate
Guide 2019-2020-co

7.3.1.3 Maintaining an active roster

Once candidates enter the ERU, they are added to a roster. Each ERU technical manager engages differently with their respective rosters through the international rosters and registers coordinator in the HR team. Regular touchpoints are:

- Request for availability. The MSM ERU manager goes to the pool of members once a year, while the Logistics ERU manager asks for availability on the 15th of each month for M+2 (for example, on 15 January, roster members are asked to come forward to be on standby on 1 March).
- Updating the roster members' details: CV, medical and criminal records (as applicable), to ensure they are deployment-ready during the months they have offered to be on standby.

- Sharing training opportunities, from within the BRC, from the IFRC or the wider humanitarian community, that can be useful to develop roster members' competencies. These are sent by the international rosters and registers coordinator, upon request of the ERU manager.
- Refresher conferences and masterclasses. At least once a year, the MSM and logistics communities get together (separately) for either a refresher course, a conference or a masterclass. These events are organised by the ERU managers and their L&D business partner.
- Inviting roster members to facilitate trainings or share their deployment experience. Roster members can be invited to participate in parts of the ERU pathway, particularly to share their deployment experiences or support simulation exercises.
- Quarterly calls with roster members, with follow-up newsletter sent to all members.

At any of the above touchpoints, it is important to reconsider the roster members' competencies, and to capture any changes on the roster. Members' competencies should be registered on a mapping matrix, maintained by the ERU manager and the international rosters and registers coordinator. The current matrix can be requested from the Logs team.

Note: Members can request to be put on hold, or they can be put on hold by decision of the ERU technical managers, based on lack of competencies or commitment. In order to become active again, they must usually complete all or part of the ERU training pathway or attend a refresher conference.

7.3.2 ERU equipment

When a NS offers to sponsor an ERU, they commit to having a team of experts on standby for rapid deployment, as well as a standard, specialised kit ready to support the team in fulfilling their mission. For more details about the content of the ERU kits, see Sections 7.2.3.1 and 6.2.3.2.

The sponsoring NS agrees to procure, store and maintain the kit, and to participate in the development of the standard kit composition as relevant, through feeding back on the appropriateness of kit following deployments.

At the BRC, the content of both ERU kits are procured mostly through framework agreements, by the LOGE and with the approval of the global response manager. After a kit has been deployed, its replenishment must be approved by the global response manager, as well as any changes to the kit proposed following kit feedback (see Section 7.5). The items received are kitted into modules (the MSM kit has 38 modules in total, split into eight families, while the logistics ERU has 14 modules, split into seven families) and stored at the international warehouse in Bulwick.

Some of the kits' contents, such as vehicles and cold-weather-specific equipment, is common to both ERUs – these are called the 'shared modules' and can be deployed with either ERU kit. These items are tracked separately to the kit lists, in a "shared modules" list.

The warehouse officer is responsible for ensuring the safety and maintenance of the entire ERU equipment. This includes vehicles, generators, all electric appliances, and safety equipment such as fire extinguishers.

The value of the ERU kits is managed as an investment, where BRC funds the purchases until the kit is charged to an emergency operation. Until then, the value of the kit sits on a balance

sheet that captures additions, write-offs and disposals to the kit while it is in stock. For more details on this procedure, refer to the [ERU kit standard operating procedure](#) and the [balance sheet guidance note](#) held by the logistics team.

7.3.3 Financial commitments

All the costs associated with maintaining an ERU's preparedness outside of a response operation are covered by the sponsoring NS. This includes storage costs and maintenance costs for the kit, but also retainers for on-call delegates and training costs. The storage and maintenance costs are budgeted for by the logistics team, and funds become part of the logistics framework, while retainer costs fall under the HR budget and training costs under the L&D budget.

When the decision is made to deploy one of the BRC's ERUs, the cost of deployment is covered by the BRC, as a pledge to the IFRC-led operation. The decision to apply later for back-funding from the IFRC appeal is made depending on funds available from the BRC.

During the deployment, operational costs can be charged to the IFRC, while running costs must be covered by the BRC.

- Operational costs: costs related to any activity listed on the IFRC appeal. For example, where the appeal includes construction of latrines, all costs associated with their construction (materials, manpower, etc) will be covered by the funds raised against the IFRC appeal.
- Running costs: costs related to having the MSM ERU deployed into the operation. For example, the cost of food and accommodation for the ERU delegates.

The below table lists the most common types of expenditure of an ERU deployment and indicates whether they are operational costs, running costs or something else:

What	Operational	Running	Something else
Warehouse rental (storage of relief items or kit)	X		
Storage space rental for delegates' personal equipment		X	
Custom clearance of relief items	X		
Custom clearance of ERU kit		X	
Printer cartridges for office		X	
Transport of shelter materials	X		
Driver for ERU staff		X	
Water tanks for operational response	X		
Water tanks for delegates' use		X	
Warehouse security staff	X		
Translator for field work	X		
Translator accompanying delegate to local health facility		X	
Vehicle for transporting ERU staff		X	
Hotel for head of logistics visiting from BRC UK office			Restricted appeal funds
Mobile phone delegates		X	
Volunteer costs	X		
Desks for ERU		X	

Flipchart for training	X		
Safe		X	
Photocopier		X	
Vehicle for transporting volunteers	X		
Laundry for team leader			Per diem
Breakfast for delegates			Per diem
Accommodation for delegates		X	

In summary, the breakdown of costs is usually as below:

Phase	Associated costs	Costs covered by	Comments
Preparedness	Procurement Storage Maintenance Insurance	BRC logistics	
	Delegate costs (retainers, health checks, etc)	BRC HR	
	Training	BRC L&D	
Decision to deploy	Shipping costs Travel costs Salaries Per diem	Dedicated BRC project code	Can be recharged to IFRC appeal (ad hoc and with prior approval from IFRC)
Deployment	Operational costs	IFRC appeal	
	Running costs (including per diem)	Dedicated BRC project code	
Return	Shipping back to UK or other storage location Inspection costs	Dedicated BRC project code	ERU equipment is not supposed to be shipped back to the UK
Evaluation	Post-deployment evaluation	Dedicated BRC project code	Evaluation can be commissioned or done with internal resources