



CORPS NA hÉIREANN

— COMMUNITY · PREPAREDNESS · SERVICE —

Discipline in Character. Strength in Community. Service to Éire.

FOUNDATION TRAINING HANDBOOK

Discipline · Action · Service · Preparedness · Community

Ní neart go cur le chéile

There is no strength without unity

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FOR OFFICIAL USE WITHIN CORPS NA hÉIREANN · ÉIRE

ONE CORPS. ONE PURPOSE. ONE ÉIRE.

Table of Contents

Section 1: Foreword from Headquarters.....	3
Section 2: History, Purpose, and Organisation of Corps na hÉireann.....	4
Section 3: Core Values and Organisational Ethos.....	7
Section 4: Code of Conduct.....	8
Section 5: Uniform Standards and Appearance.....	10
Section 6: Discipline and Professional Behaviour.....	18
Section 7: Physical Fitness Standards.....	19
Section 8: Leadership Principles.....	21
Section 9: Teamwork and Communication.....	22
Section 10: Community Service and Volunteerism.....	23
Section 11: First Aid and Emergency Preparedness — FROG Level 3.....	24
Section 12: Outdoor Skills and Navigation.....	26
Section 13: Personal Development and Character Building.....	27
Section 14: Christian Values and Service to Others.....	28
Section 15: Foundation Training Programme.....	29
Section 16: Graduation Requirements.....	32
Section 17: Awards, Recognition, and Progression.....	33
Section 18: Oath of Service — Mionn Seirbhíse.....	36
Section 19: Closing Remarks.....	37

Section 1: Foreword from Headquarters

To every man and woman who opens these pages:

You are holding in your hands more than a training manual. You are holding a declaration of intent — a statement that you have chosen to be counted among those who serve rather than those who stand aside, who build rather than those who lament, and who lead by the quiet, enduring power of example.

Corps na hÉireann was established not as an answer to the problems of our age, but as a commitment to the values that have always been the bedrock of a decent, cohesive, and resilient society. We believe that Ireland's greatest strength lies in the character of her people — in neighbours who look out for one another, in young men and women who refuse mediocrity, in communities that take pride in their common spaces and common purpose.

This handbook is the result of careful thought, hard-won experience, and a deep respect for the traditions of service organisations the world over. It draws on the best of military discipline, the warmth of the scout tradition, the responsiveness of emergency services, and the moral seriousness of faith-inspired civic life. It is practical, demanding, and honest. It will ask more of you than you may expect.

We make no apology for that.

You will be asked to keep your body strong, your mind sharp, your conduct irreproachable, and your heart open to the needs of those around you. You will be asked to lead when it would be easier to follow, to speak honestly when silence would be more comfortable, and to serve when personal convenience pulls you elsewhere. In return, you will receive something that cannot be bought or conferred by any institution: the quiet self-knowledge of a person who has tried their best.

The Foundation Programme contained within these pages is the beginning of something, not an end. The graduation parade is a threshold, not a destination. The habits of discipline, fitness, service, and faith formed during training are habits for life.

Ireland has always produced remarkable people in unremarkable circumstances. Corps na hÉireann exists to create the conditions in which that tradition continues.

“Whatever you are, be a good one.” — Abraham Lincoln

Ar aghaidh linn le chéile. Together, forward.

The National Director, Corps na hÉireann

Section 2: History, Purpose, and Organisation of Corps na hÉireann

2.1 Origins

Corps na hÉireann — the Corps of Ireland — was founded by a gathering of community leaders, educators, chaplains, retired service personnel, and concerned citizens who shared a common conviction: that the civic fabric of Irish society requires active, organised, and principled stewardship.

The founders drew inspiration from a long lineage of Irish service traditions — from the earliest Gaelic athletic clubs and temperance societies to Civil Defence, the Order of Malta, and the voluntary fire and rescue brigades that have for generations staffed Ireland's communities. They also drew on the discipline of the armed forces, the fellowship of the scouting movement, and the moral clarity of Christian service organisations worldwide.

2.2 Mission Statement

OFFICIAL MISSION STATEMENT

Corps na hÉireann exists to develop men and women of strong character, physical fitness, practical competence, and selfless service; to strengthen communities across the island of Ireland; and to honour the best of Ireland's civic, cultural, and Christian heritage through disciplined, lawful, and compassionate action.

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2.3 Organisational Overview

Corps na hÉireann is structured at five levels — from National Leadership through to individual Members. Each level has clear roles and responsibilities, and each level exists to support the one below it.

2.4 National Leadership

The National Leadership team sets vision, strategy, and national standards, and provides support and direction to all four regions.

National Director	Overall leadership and strategic direction of Corps na hÉireann.
Deputy National Director	Supports the National Director and ensures coordination across all regions.
National Training Director	Leads training standards, programmes, and instructor development.
National Operations Director	Oversees preparedness, operations, and event support nationally.
National Community Service Director	Leads national service initiatives and outreach programmes.
National Administration Director	Manages administration, finance, and compliance.

2.5 The Four Command Regions

Each region is led by a Regional Director and team who oversee all Local Units within their region. The four regions cover the full island of Ireland.

Northern Region	Eastern Region	Southern Region	Western Region
Regional Director	Regional Director	Regional Director	Regional Director
Deputy Regional Director	Deputy Regional Director	Deputy Regional Director	Deputy Regional Director
Regional Officers	Regional Officers	Regional Officers	Regional Officers

2.6 32 Local Units — One in Each County

The Local Unit is the heart of Corps na hÉireann. There is one Unit for each county across the island. Each Unit serves its county community directly — recruiting, training, deploying, and supporting members at the local level.

01 Carlow	07 Galway	13 Limerick	19 Offaly	25 Wexford	31 Tyrone
02 Cavan	08 Kerry	14 Longford	20 Roscommon	26 Wicklow	32 Fermanagh
03 Clare	09 Kildare	15 Louth	21 Sligo	27 Derry	
04 Cork	10 Kilkenny	16 Mayo	22 Tipperary	28 Antrim	
05 Donegal	11 Laois	17 Meath	23 Waterford	29 Down	
06 Dublin	12 Leitrim	18 Monaghan	24 Westmeath	30 Armagh	

2.7 Teams Within Each Local Unit

Local Units are subdivided into Teams — the primary working group for all training and service activities. Teams typically consist of six to twelve members and are led by a Team Leader. Teams train together, serve together, and are the building block of section cohesion.

2.8 Local Unit Roles and Responsibilities

Each Local Unit has a standard set of officer roles ensuring all areas of Unit function are covered:

Unit Leader	Overall leadership of the Local Unit.
Deputy Unit Leader	Supports the Unit Leader. Deputises when required.
Training Officer	Plans and delivers training. Ensures standards are maintained.
Community Service Officer	Organises and coordinates service projects.
Welfare Officer	Supports member wellbeing and care.
Logistics Officer	Manages equipment, resources, and supplies.
Administration Officer	Manages records, communications, and administration.

2.9 Membership Progression — 10 Ranks

Corps na hÉireann uses a ten-rank membership progression. Each rank reflects genuine growth in competence, commitment, and responsibility. Promotion is earned — never automatic.

#	Rank	Description
1	Candidate	New applicant undergoing induction and basic training.
2	Volunteer	Completed basic training and committed to the values.
3	Senior Volunteer	Demonstrates reliability, skill, and active involvement.
4	Steward	Takes responsibility for others and supports the section.
5	Senior Steward	Leads by example. Mentors and develops members.
6	Instructor	Qualified to deliver training in one or more disciplines.
7	Senior Instructor	Leads training programmes and instructor development.
8	Unit Leader	Leads a Local Unit. Responsible for people, training, and service.
9	Regional Leader	Leads one of the four regions. Supports and develops units.
10	National Leader	Serves on National Leadership. Shapes the future of the Corps.

2.10 The Values That Guide Us

These six values are the moral foundation of everything Corps na hÉireann does. They are displayed at the base of every Unit training area as a daily reminder of who we are and what we stand for.

FAITH	We trust in God and live by Christian principles.
INTEGRITY	We do what is right, even when no one is watching.
DISCIPLINE	We train our minds and bodies to be ready for service.
SERVICE	We serve our communities and support those in need.
EXCELLENCE	We strive for the highest standards in all that we do.
COMMUNITY	We are stronger together. One Corps, one purpose, one Éire.

ONE CORPS. ONE PURPOSE. ONE ÉIRE.

2.11 What Corps na hÉireann Is Not

ORGANISATIONAL BOUNDARIES — STRICTLY OBSERVED

- NOT a political organisation. No endorsement of any party or candidate, ever.
- NOT a paramilitary body. No weapons of any kind in a Corps context.
- NOT a vigilante or law-enforcement body. Members have only ordinary civilian authority.
- NOT a secret society. All activities are transparent, lawful, and open to public scrutiny.

Any member who misrepresents the organisation in any of the above capacities shall be subject to immediate suspension and formal disciplinary review.

Section 3: Core Values and Organisational Ethos

Corps na hÉireann is anchored by six core values — the same values displayed at the base of the organisational structure. These are not aspirations or slogans. They are daily commitments that apply equally to the newest Candidate and the most senior National Leader.

FAITH — Creideamh

We trust in God and live by Christian principles. Our service flows from the conviction that every human being is made in the image of God and is therefore deserving of dignity and love.

INTEGRITY — Ionracas

We do what is right, even when no one is watching. A member's word is their bond. Honesty in all dealings — with superiors, peers, and those in our care — is non-negotiable.

DISCIPLINE — Smacht

We train our minds and bodies to be ready for service. Discipline is the bridge between intention and accomplishment — expressed in fitness, punctuality, uniform standards, and the quiet refusal to accept second-best from oneself.

SERVICE — Seirbhís

We serve our communities and support those in need. We exist to give, not to receive. The purpose of all our training and organisation is to place capable and ready people at the disposal of their communities.

EXCELLENCE — Feabhas

We strive for the highest standards in all that we do. Excellence is a habit, not an event. We do not seek mediocrity and we do not accept it from ourselves.

COMMUNITY — Pobal

We are stronger together. One Corps, one purpose, one Éire. Our strength is collective — built in sections, units, regions, and the bonds forged in shared challenge and shared service.

3.1 The Corps Ethos in Daily Practice

Behaviour	Why It Matters
Arrive 10 minutes early — always	Respects others' time; signals commitment over convenience.
Complete every task fully	Excellence is a habit built by a thousand small completions.
Speak well of the Corps in public	Every member is an ambassador of the organisation's character.
Look after struggling members	Service begins within the section, not only in the community.
Leave every space tidier than found	Stewardship of shared spaces reflects personal discipline.
Refuse to gossip or undermine	Cohesion is the team's greatest asset — protect it always.

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit." — Aristotle

Section 4: Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct is the practical instrument of the Corps' values. It governs member behaviour at all times when acting in a Corps capacity, and — in matters of serious public conduct — at all other times as well.

4.1 General Standards

Every member shall:

1. Conduct themselves with honesty, courtesy, and restraint in all dealings with the public, other organisations, and fellow members.
2. Obey all lawful directions given by a superior in the Corps chain of command, and raise any concerns through proper channels rather than by unilateral refusal.
3. Maintain their uniform, personal appearance, and equipment to the standards prescribed in Section 5.
4. Attend all scheduled training and service activities unless prevented by genuine prior commitments or ill-health, with advance notification given wherever possible.
5. Refrain from conduct likely to bring the Corps into disrepute, whether in uniform or otherwise in a public setting.
6. Uphold and respect Irish law at all times. Membership confers no special authority, immunity, or licence.

4.2 Prohibited Conduct

ZERO TOLERANCE — THESE BEHAVIOURS RESULT IN IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION AND REVIEW

- Dishonesty of any kind, including false statements or falsified training records.
- Behaviour likely to cause physical or psychological harm to any person.
- Use of the Corps name, uniform, or authority for personal gain.
- Association with extremist, terrorist, or unlawful organisations.
- Public intoxication while in uniform.
- Any form of harassment or discrimination on any grounds.
- Misappropriation of Corps funds, equipment, or resources.
- Conduct that deliberately contradicts the ethos of Corps na hÉireann.

4.3 Social Media Standards

- Do not post content that could embarrass the Corps or contradict its values.
- Do not share internal Corps communications or operational details publicly.
- Clearly distinguish personal opinion from Corps positions in all public statements.
- Do not engage in online disputes while presenting as a Corps member.

The test: would you be comfortable showing this post to your Unit Leader? If no — do not post it.

4.4 Disciplinary Procedure

Stage	Procedure
1 — Verbal Counselling	Team or Unit Leader addresses the matter informally. No formal record

	unless repeated.
2 — Formal Warning	Written notice issued, placed on member's file. Member has right to respond in writing.
3 — Suspension	Member suspended pending formal review board hearing.
4 — Discharge	Following review board finding. Member has right of appeal to Regional Leader.
Emergency Suspension	Unit Leader may suspend immediately for serious misconduct, pending Stage 3.

Section 5: Uniform Standards and Appearance

A uniform is more than clothing. It is a public declaration of purpose and a personal commitment to the standards of the organisation it represents. Corps na hÉireann issues two uniforms: the Field Training Uniform, worn during all training and service activities; and the Formal Service Uniform, issued on graduation as a reward for completing the Foundation Programme. Both are worn with pride, maintained with care, and presented to the highest standard at all times.

5.1 Fees, Costs, and What Is Included

FOUNDATION TRAINING PROGRAMME — FEES AND INCLUSIONS

FOUNDATION TRAINING FEE: EUR 1,000 (one-off, paid on enrolment as a Candidate). This single fee applies whether a Candidate undertakes the 2-Week Intensive Track or the Part-Time Weekend Track described in Section 5.1a — the cost to the member is identical regardless of pathway.

THIS FEE COVERS EVERYTHING:

- All tuition, instruction, and training materials across the full programme.
- All course qualifications delivered during the Foundation Programme, including FROG Level 3 First Response certification.
- Full accommodation and catering for all residential elements of the programme — see 5.1a for what is residential under each track.
- One full issue of the Field Training Uniform (olive/black) on enrolment.
- One full issue of the Formal Service Uniform (all-black) on successful graduation.

THERE ARE NO HIDDEN COSTS. The EUR 1,000 covers everything listed above, on either track. Members who do not complete the programme are not entitled to a refund of the Formal Service Uniform or graduation-related costs.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE: EUR 100 per year (due on the anniversary of graduation)

THE ANNUAL FEE IS USED SOLELY FOR THE ORGANISATION:

- Unit operational costs (training ground maintenance, equipment upkeep).
- Insurance cover for all members.
- National coordination and Headquarters operations.
- Community service activity support costs.
- No portion of membership fees is paid as salary or personal benefit to any individual.

Corps na hÉireann is a non-profit civic organisation. All fees are transparently accounted for and available for review by members at the Annual Unit Review.

5.1a Two Tracks to the Same Standard

Corps na hÉireann recognises that not every Candidate can commit two consecutive weeks away from work and family. The Foundation Programme is therefore delivered through two tracks, both leading to the identical standard, the identical qualifications, and the identical Volunteer rank on graduation. Track allocation is made by the Unit Training Officer based on candidate circumstances, class availability, and instructor scheduling — Candidates should discuss their preference with their Unit at enrolment, but the final allocation rests with the Unit.

Track A — 2-Week Intensive

The Intensive Track delivers the full Foundation Programme — all 20 training sessions — over two consecutive residential weeks, run at a higher daily tempo than the Part-Time Track. Candidates live on site for the duration, with accommodation and all meals provided throughout as part of the EUR 1,000 fee. This track suits Candidates who can take two weeks away from ordinary commitments and who prefer a shorter, fully immersive course.

Track B — Part-Time Weekend

The Part-Time Track delivers the same syllabus and the same total training hours across a series of training weekends, scheduled by the Unit according to class availability and instructor capacity. Candidates travel to and from training each session and are not accommodated overnight except where a session specifically requires it — such as the navigation and bivouac exercise — in which case accommodation and catering are provided for that residential weekend only. This track suits Candidates balancing work, family, or other commitments who cannot take two consecutive weeks away.

Delivery	Two consecutive weeks, full-time, residential throughout. All 20 sessions delivered at a higher daily tempo (two sessions per day).
Accommodation	Provided for the full two weeks.
Catering	All meals provided throughout.
Best suited to	Candidates able to take two weeks away from work/family.

Track A — 2-Week Intensive

Delivery	Training weekends scheduled across the programme, per Unit availability.
Accommodation	Provided only for residential weekends (e.g. the navigation/bivouac exercise).
Catering	Provided during all scheduled sessions; full board on residential weekends.
Best suited to	Candidates balancing work, family, or other ongoing commitments.

Track B — Part-Time Weekend

Both tracks cover the same 20 training sessions, the same fitness and assessment standards, the same FROG Level 3 first aid qualification, and conclude with the same Graduation Parade and promotion to Volunteer. The fee is EUR 1,000 either way. Speak to your Unit Training Officer about which track has availability and suits your circumstances.

5.2 The Field Training Uniform

The Field Training Uniform is issued on enrolment and worn throughout all Foundation Training sessions, outdoor activities, loaded marches, navigation exercises, and community service deployments. It is designed for practicality, durability, and ease of movement in Irish outdoor conditions.



Field Training Uniform — olive upper, black lower, dark green beret

Olive Quarter-Zip Combat Shirt	Olive green long-sleeve combat/tactical shirt with quarter-zip collar. Worn tucked or untucked as ordered. Sleeve pocket on left forearm. No civilian shirts or non-Corps olive tops are permitted.
Black Combat Trousers	Black tactical/cargo trousers with reinforced knees and multiple utility pockets. Worn with a straight, clean drape over the boot. No jeans or civilian trousers permitted.
Black Belt	Black webbing or rigger belt with plain black buckle. Worn through all trouser loops, straight and centred.
Black Combat Boots	Durable black lace-up combat/hiking boots with ankle support. Must be clean and serviceable at all times.
Dark Green Beret	Dark green beret with Gold Harp Badge, worn correctly formed at all times when outdoors during Corps activities.
CNE Shoulder Patch	The Corps na hÉireann round patch worn on the left upper sleeve, on the sleeve patch tab/velcro panel. Must be flat and correctly positioned.
Hi-Vis Tabard	Corps-branded hi-vis tabard worn OVER the field uniform during all public-facing service activities, roadside duties, and emergency support. Not worn during field training exercises.

FIELD UNIFORM DETAILS — AS PER CORPS STANDARD

BERET: Dark green with Gold Harp Badge. Worn correctly formed outdoors — two fingers above left eye, excess pulled and draped right. **SHIRT:** Olive quarter-zip; open at collar during PT only, zipped otherwise. **TROUSERS:** Black tactical/cargo, clean, no rips. **BELT:** Black webbing, plain buckle. **BOOTS:** Black combat/hiking, clean and serviceable. **SHOULDER PATCH:** CNÉ round patch, left

sleeve, flat and straight. COLOUR SCHEME: Olive upper, black lower, dark green beret. Gold insignia throughout.

5.3 The Formal Service Uniform — Issued on Graduation

The Formal Service Uniform is issued to every member who successfully completes the Foundation Training Programme. It is presented at the Graduation Parade as part of the ceremony marking promotion to Volunteer. It is earned — not merely purchased.

The Formal Uniform is worn at all public parades, ceremonial events, formal community service appearances, and any occasion where the Corps is representing itself publicly in an official capacity.



Formal Service Uniform — all-black with gold insignia, dark green beret

All-Black Fleece Zip Jacket	All-black fleece zip jacket, high collar. The primary formal service garment. Worn zipped fully to the chin at all parades, ceremonial events, and public duties. Clean, lint-free, and free of pilling at all times. No civilian fleeces permitted.
Black Service Trousers	All-black straight-cut trousers — not cargo. Clean and pressed for all formal duties. No jeans or non-Corps trousers permitted.
Black Leather Boots	All-black leather boots, polished to parade standard (mirror-bright) for all formal events.
Dark Green Beret	Dark green beret, correctly formed. Gold Harp Beret Badge centred two fingers above the left eye. Excess material pulled and draped neatly to the right.
Gold Harp Beret Badge	Gold Irish harp badge. Polished before every parade. Harp faces right (as worn). No tarnish or damage permitted.
Name Slide	Gold lettering on black backing. Surname in Irish — e.g. “Ó MAOLÁIN”. Worn on the left breast above the zip pocket. Issued by Unit Administration Officer.
CNÉ Breast Harp / Lapel Pin	Gold harp insignia worn on the left breast, above the name slide. Polished at all times. Must be correctly and securely pinned.
CNÉ Shoulder Patch	Corps na hÉireann round patch on the left upper sleeve. Sewn flat and straight — not velcroed or pinned for formal wear. Inspect stitching regularly.

FORMAL UNIFORM DETAILS — AS PER CORPS STANDARD

BERET: Dark green. Gold Harp Badge centred two fingers above left eye, correctly formed, excess draped right. JACKET: All-black fleece zip, zipped fully to chin on all formal duties, clean and lint-free. NAME SLIDE: Gold lettering on black backing, surname in Irish, left breast. BREAST HARP: Gold CNÉ lapel pin, left breast above name slide, polished. SHOULDER PATCH: CNÉ round patch, left upper sleeve, sewn flat. TROUSERS: All-black, straight-cut, clean and pressed. BOOTS: All-black leather, mirror-bright for parade standard. COLOUR SCHEME: All-black uniform body with dark green beret and gold insignia.

5.4 Uniform Summary — When to Wear What

Occasion	Uniform Required
Foundation Training sessions (all)	Field Training Uniform (olive/black)
Loaded marches and navigation exercises	Field Training Uniform (olive/black)
Community service deployments	Field Training Uniform + Hi-Vis Tabard
Emergency support activities	Field Training Uniform + Hi-Vis Tabard
Overnight bivouac and field exercises	Field Training Uniform (olive/black)
Public parades and ceremonial events	Formal Service Uniform (all-black)
Formal community appearances	Formal Service Uniform (all-black)
Graduation Parade	Formal Service Uniform (all-black) — issued that day
PT sessions (indoor/track)	Field Training Uniform or Corps PT kit as ordered

5.5 Appearance Standards — Both Uniforms

- Hair: Clean, neat, and conservatively styled. Off the collar for all formal duties. Facial hair permitted if fully grown and well-maintained — no stubble.
- Hands: Clean, nails trimmed. No rings other than a plain wedding band during field activities.
- Posture: Upright and alert at all times in uniform. Slouching, hands in pockets, and casual lounging whilst in uniform are not acceptable.
- Beret: Correctly formed before wearing. Never worn crushed, unformed, or at an incorrect angle.
- Jacket (formal): Zipped fully to the chin at all formal events and parades.
- Shirt (field): Quarter-zip may be opened at the collar during PT only.

5.6 Pre-Parade Inspection Checklist

FORMAL UNIFORM — PRE-PARADE INSPECTION (COMPLETE BEFORE EVERY PUBLIC APPEARANCE)

- Beret correctly formed — excess draped neatly to the right
- Gold Harp Beret Badge polished, centred two fingers above left eye
- Jacket clean, lint-free, zipped fully to the chin
- Gold breast harp polished and correctly positioned (left breast)
- Name slide fitted — left breast, surname in Irish, gold lettering
- CNÉ shoulder patch on left upper sleeve — flat, straight, sewn edges
- Trousers clean and pressed — clean drape over boot
- Boots polished to mirror-bright parade standard
- Hair neat and within regulations
- No personal items visible or bulging in pockets
- Hands clean, nails trimmed, no visible jewellery
- Hi-vis tabard available if service activity follows parade
- Overall bearing: upright, alert, representing the Corps with pride

5.7 Uniform Maintenance

- **Field Uniform:** Wash the combat shirt and trousers after each use. Inspect the shoulder patch regularly — re-stitch any lifting edges immediately. Report damaged items to the Logistics Officer.
- **Formal Jacket:** Lint-roll before every formal appearance. Wash as needed. A pillled or dirty fleece is not acceptable in public. The standard is immaculate.
- **Boots (Formal):** Polish after every use. Begin polishing the night before any parade. Mirror-bright standard requires multiple coats — do not leave it to the morning.
- **Gold Insignia:** Polish the beret badge, breast harp, and any other gold items before every parade. Tarnished badges reflect poorly on the individual and on the Corps.
- **Name Slide:** Keep clean and legible. Report damaged or illegible slides to the Unit Administration Officer immediately for replacement.
- **No modifications:** Do not add, remove, or alter any element of either uniform without written authorisation from the Unit Leader.

5.8 The Meaning of the Uniform

When you put on the Corps uniform — whether the olive field kit for a Saturday morning march or the all-black formal jacket for a public parade — you are making a statement. You are saying that you belong to something larger than yourself, that you have met a standard, and that you are here to serve.

The Field Uniform says: I am ready to work. The Formal Uniform says: I have earned the right to represent this organisation. Both demand the same thing of the person wearing them: that they carry themselves with the discipline, pride, and humility that the gold harp on their beret requires.

“Dress well. It is a form of good manners.” — Tom Ford

Section 6: Discipline and Professional Behaviour

6.1 Understanding Discipline

Discipline is often misunderstood as punishment or restriction. In the Corps tradition, discipline is liberation — the freedom that comes from mastery of oneself. A disciplined person is not constrained by rules; they are freed from the tyranny of impulse, laziness, and inconsistency.

You cannot be relied upon by others if you cannot first rely upon yourself. You cannot lead others if you first cannot lead yourself. This is not philosophy — it is operational fact.

“Discipline is the soul of an army. It makes small numbers formidable; procures success to the weak and esteem to all.” — George Washington

6.2 Practical Disciplines of Corps Life

Punctuality

Corps na hÉireann operates on a simple principle: to be on time is to be late. Members are expected to arrive at least ten minutes before the scheduled start of any parade, training session, or service commitment. Habitual lateness is addressed through the disciplinary process beginning at Stage 1 counselling.

Attention and Listening

When an instructor or superior is addressing members: eyes on the speaker; no side conversations; no mobile phone use; body language that signals attention. Failure to listen during briefings causes errors that cost time and, in emergencies, can endanger lives.

Following Instructions

A direct and lawful instruction from a superior is to be carried out promptly and without unnecessary argument. If a member believes an instruction is in error, carry it out (unless clearly unlawful), then raise the concern through proper channels afterwards.

Initiative Within Boundaries

Discipline is not the death of initiative. Once a task is assigned, members are expected to show creativity and good judgement in its execution. What discipline does not permit is the unilateral abandonment of assignments or action that undermines group cohesion.

6.3 Case Study: The Discipline of Small Things

CASE STUDY — SECTION BRAVO'S TURNAROUND

SITUATION: Section Bravo had consistently poor performance in service deployments. Turnout was low, tasks were incomplete, uniform standards were slipping.

ANALYSIS: The root problem was not motivation — it was habit. Members arrived at different times, started tasks without briefing, and departed individually before completion.

INTERVENTION: Three rules were instituted: (1) All members arrive 15 minutes early for every activity. (2) No task begins until the whole section is briefed and understands their role. (3) Section stays together until all tasks are complete.

OUTCOME: Within six weeks, Section Bravo had the highest completion rate in the Unit. Members reported feeling MORE motivated — not less.

LESSON: You cannot be disciplined in important moments if you are undisciplined in unimportant ones. The small things are the system.

Section 7: Physical Fitness Standards

Corps na hÉireann is a service organisation. Service requires capability. Capability requires fitness. The commitment to physical fitness is not vanity or competition — it is practical preparation for the demands of community service, outdoor activity, emergency response, and sustained effective effort.

“Take care of your body. It’s the only place you have to live.” — Jim Rohn

7.1 Fitness Assessment Standards

Assessment	Minimum Standard (Adult)
1.5 Mile Run	Under 15 minutes (all ages); sub-13 minutes target for under-40.
Press-Ups (2 minutes)	20 minimum; 35 target for under-40.
Sit-Ups (2 minutes)	25 minimum; 40 target for under-40.
Loaded March	5km with 10kg load in under 70 minutes.
Swimming	100m unaided, or water safety awareness demonstrated.
Flexibility	Touch toes from standing; no gross mobility limitations.

7.2 Foundation Training Fitness Programme

The fitness programme below is delivered across both training tracks. On the Intensive Track, all sessions below fall within two consecutive residential weeks, run at roughly double the daily tempo of the Part-Time Track. On the Part-Time Track, the same sessions and progressions are delivered across the scheduled training weekends in the same sequence, so that fitness progression remains consistent regardless of pathway.

Stage 1 — Baseline Establishment

- Session A: Baseline 1.5-mile run — record time and effort level (1-10).
- Session B: Baseline press-ups and sit-ups (max in 2 min each) — record all results.
- Session C: 3km march with 5kg — record time; note any discomfort or kit issues.
- Session D: 5km group walk/easy jog, no load — team pace, conversation, cohesion.

Stage 2 — Building Foundations

- Session A: 3km steady run. Aim to finish feeling you could continue.
- Session B: Circuit — 4 rounds: 15 press-ups, 20 sit-ups, 20 squats, 30-sec plank. 60-sec rest.
- Session C: 4km march with 7kg. Focus on posture, breathing, steady pace.
- Session D: Team navigation exercise — 6km on foot with map and compass.

Stage 3 — Progression

- Session A: 4km run + Mid-Programme fitness assessment immediately after.
- Session B: Circuit — 5 rounds: 20 press-ups, 25 sit-ups, 25 squats, 10 burpees, 45-sec plank.
- Session C: 6km march with 10kg. Introduce hill section if terrain allows.
- Session D: Search-and-rescue simulation — physically demanding team exercise.

Stage 4 — Peak Load

- Session A: 5km run, best consistent pace.
- Session B: Circuit — 6 rounds; add pull-ups or inverted rows if available.

- Session C: 8km march with 12kg. Full kit inspection on completion.
- Session D: Full-day field exercise — PT, navigation, first aid, and service task combined.

Stage 5 — Taper and Assessment

- Session A: Easy 3km recovery run.
- Session B: Light circuit — 3 rounds only; focus on form and relaxation.
- Session C: Final fitness assessment — 1.5-mile timed run, press-ups, sit-ups, loaded march.
- Session D: Graduation preparation and ceremonial drill practice.

7.3 Injury Prevention

- Warm up (5+ min dynamic movement) before every session; cool down (5+ min static stretch) after.
- Do not train through acute pain. Report injury to your Team Leader.
- Sleep 7–9 hours nightly during training. Rest is part of the programme.
- Hydrate: minimum 2 litres daily; more on training and march days.
- Eat regular, balanced meals. Avoid highly processed foods during the programme.

Section 8: Leadership Principles

Leadership in Corps na hÉireann is not a rank or a title. It is a practice — a daily commitment to the welfare of others and the accomplishment of the mission. Every Corps member, from Candidate to National Leader, is expected to develop leadership capacity.

“Leadership is not about being in charge. It is about taking care of those in your charge.” — Simon Sinek

8.1 The Five Principles of Corps Leadership

Principle 1: Lead from the Front

A Corps leader never asks of others what they are not willing to do themselves. Get your hands dirty. March at the front. Be first to arrive and last to leave.

Principle 2: Know Your People

Know each member's strengths, vulnerabilities, motivations, and challenges. This knowledge is earned through presence and genuine interest. When you know your people, you can place them where they will succeed and support them where they struggle.

Principle 3: Communicate Clearly and Honestly

Ambiguous instructions and withheld information are primary causes of poor performance. Give clear, concise, complete briefings. Receive feedback honestly. Tell your team the truth, even when it is inconvenient.

Principle 4: Make Decisions

Paralysis and endless deferral are failures of leadership. Make the best decision available, execute it with commitment, and adjust based on results. A wrong decision courageously corrected is usually superior to no decision at all.

Principle 5: Develop Others

The measure of a leader is not what they accomplish themselves — it is what they enable others to accomplish. The highest leadership function is developing leadership capacity in others. A Unit Leader whose goal is to produce the next generation of Unit Leaders is fulfilling the deepest purpose of their role.

8.2 Leadership Exercise: The Bridge Problem

LEADERSHIP EXERCISE — THE BRIDGE PROBLEM

SCENARIO: Section deployed to flood relief. A narrow bridge takes 3 people at a time. 12 people to evacuate: 4 elderly, 3 children, 3 adults with heavy equipment, 2 able-bodied. Water is rising. Section has rope, 2 stretchers, 20 minutes.

STUDENT LEADER MUST: (1) Assess the situation aloud — 2 minutes. (2) Issue orders to the section — 1 minute. (3) Execute the evacuation — 10 minutes. (4) Debrief what worked and what did not — 5 minutes.

ASSESSED ON: Clarity of orders, use of resources, care for vulnerable people, composure under time pressure, willingness to decide with incomplete information.

Section 9: Teamwork and Communication

9.1 Building Team Cohesion

Team cohesion is built slowly and broken quickly. These practices build it:

- Shared physical challenge: Groups that endure difficulty together bond. The weekly march is as much a cohesion exercise as a fitness one.
- Shared success: Celebrate team achievements together, even briefly.
- Honest feedback: Teams that give and receive constructive feedback freely are more resilient.
- Social time: Eat together after training. Informal connection sustains formal cohesion.

9.2 The SMEAC Briefing Format

SMEAC — STANDARD OPERATIONAL BRIEFING FORMAT

S — SITUATION: What is happening? What is the context? “We have been asked to support the County Council at the River Road flood barrier.”

M — MISSION: What exactly are we doing? “Our team will reinforce the sandbag barrier between Bridge Street and Mill Lane.”

E — EXECUTION: How? Who does what? “Team 1 (Aoife, Conor): sandbag placement. Team 2 (Niamh, Fionn): material supply.”

A — ADMIN: Resources, timings, logistics. “200 sandbags available. Start 09:00. Finish by 13:00 or when barrier is complete.”

C — COMMAND: Who is in charge? How do we communicate? “I am in charge. Report any issues to me immediately. Phones on silent.”

9.3 Conflict Resolution

7. Address it early — do not allow resentment to fester into a serious grievance.
8. Address it privately first — attempt to resolve bilaterally before involving the Team Leader.
9. Focus on the behaviour, not the person — say what was done and its effect.
10. Seek to understand before seeking to be understood — listen fully first.
11. Escalate appropriately — Team Leader mediates; Unit Leader if that fails.

Section 10: Community Service and Volunteerism

Community service is not a demonstration of Corps activity — it is the reason Corps na hÉireann exists. Everything we build in terms of discipline, fitness, leadership, and teamwork is ultimately in service of this purpose: placing capable, reliable, and willing people at the disposal of the communities they love.

“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” — Mahatma Gandhi

10.1 Service Activity Categories

Category	Examples
Environmental	Coastal and river clean-ups, tidy towns support, tree planting, trail maintenance.
Social Care	Visiting elderly residents, befriending isolated community members, meals delivery.
Emergency Support	Flood response, snow clearance, missing persons search (in support of AGS or Mountain Rescue).
Youth	After-school mentoring, school road safety programmes, camp facilitation.
Heritage	Graveyard restoration, historical trail marking, oral history recording.
Event Support	Community event stewarding, first aid provision, crowd management support.

10.2 Deployment Standards

- All members wear the Corps hi-vis tabard over field uniform during every public service deployment.
- Designate a Point of Contact (POC) to liaise with the requesting organisation at every deployment.
- Brief the whole team before beginning any task. Ensure everyone knows their role.
- Leave the area in better condition than you found it — including a final sweep on departure.
- Record all service hours accurately. Team Leaders maintain logs that feed into Unit records.

10.3 Subsidiarity — Build Capacity, Not Dependency

Effective community service empowers communities; it does not create dependency. Corps na hÉireann approaches service through the principle of Subsidiarity: assist at the lowest effective level, supporting what communities can do for themselves rather than replacing it. Our goal is always to build local capacity, not to become indispensable.

Section 11: First Aid and Emergency Preparedness — FROG Level 3

A Corps member who cannot give effective first aid is not fully prepared to serve their community. In any emergency, the difference between life and death often turns on whether a capable, calm person was present and willing to act in the first three minutes.

First aid training within the Foundation Programme is delivered to the standard of FROG Level 3 (First Response On the Ground) — a recognised and practical emergency response framework designed for individuals operating in austere or community environments where professional medical services may not be immediately available. Every Candidate receives a FROG Level 3 certificate of competency on successful completion of the Foundation Programme, as part of the EUR 1,000 training fee.

11.1 DR ABC — Emergency Response Protocol

DR ABC — FIRST RESPONDER PROTOCOL

D — DANGER: Ensure the scene is safe for you, bystanders, and the casualty. Never approach a scene that puts you at serious personal risk.

R — RESPONSE: “Hello — can you hear me? Open your eyes.” Gently tap both shoulders. If no response — shout for help.

A — AIRWAY: Tilt head back, lift chin. Check airway is clear.

B — BREATHING: Look, listen, feel — no more than 10 seconds. If not breathing normally — begin CPR immediately.

C — CPR: 30 compressions (5-6cm depth, 100-120/min) : 2 rescue breaths. Continue 30:2 until AED available or professional help arrives.

ALWAYS: Call 112 / 999 first — use speakerphone if alone.

11.2 Key First Aid Competencies — FROG Level 3 Syllabus

Emergency	Core Response
Cardiac Arrest	CPR (30:2) and AED use. Do not stop until professional help takes over.
Choking	Back blows and abdominal thrusts (adults/children); back blows + chest thrusts (infants).
Major Bleeding	Direct pressure, wound packing, tourniquet application (limbs only).
Burns	Cool running water 20 min; cover with non-stick dressing; hospital if significant.
Hypothermia	Remove from cold; insulate; gentle rewarming; hospital urgently.
Anaphylaxis	EpiPen immediately; call 999; lay flat with legs raised; second pen if available.
Stroke	FAST test: Face/Arm/Speech/Time — call 999 immediately, note time of onset.
Drowning	Water safety first; rescue breathing; CPR if no pulse; warm and dry.

11.3 The Community Emergency Go-Bag

Every Team maintains a ready-packed Go-Bag for rapid deployment. Minimum contents:

Item	Purpose
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FROG-standard first aid kit	Full trauma and medical response.
Hi-vis jackets (all team members)	Visibility and identification at scene.
Emergency foil blankets (x4)	Hypothermia prevention.
Torch and spare batteries	Lighting for night or confined space operations.
Power bank (phone charger)	Sustained communications on extended deployments.
Water (2 litres) and rations	Member welfare on extended operations.
Rope (10m) and cable ties	Securing, cordoning, improvised stretcher construction.
Waterproofed local map	Navigation when digital devices fail.

Section 12: Outdoor Skills and Navigation

Ireland's landscape — its mountains, bogs, coastlines, and forests — is both a national treasure and a practical operational environment. Corps members are expected to be confident and competent outdoors: not expert mountaineers, but reliably capable in the conditions they will encounter on Irish terrain.

12.1 Map Reading — Ordnance Survey Ireland 1:50,000

- Identify all standard map symbols: contours, heights, roads, tracks, buildings, water features, and vegetation.
- Read and give a six-figure grid reference accurately.
- Calculate distance using the scale bar. Each grid square = 1km x 1km.
- Identify terrain from contour patterns: ridge, valley, spur, re-entrant, saddle, summit.
- Orient the map to the ground using a compass or prominent features.

12.2 Compass Use

- Set and follow a bearing from map to ground, accounting for magnetic declination (~3° West in Ireland — check current figure).
- Take bearings from two known points to identify your own position (resection).
- Navigate by dead reckoning up to 2km in low visibility.
- Pace-count over measured distance to estimate distance travelled on a bearing.

12.3 Irish Weather and Safety

- Understand frontal systems and cloud types as weather indicators.
- Always consult Met Éireann before outdoor activities. Understand Status Yellow/Orange/Red warnings.
- Never underestimate Irish mountain weather. Conditions can deteriorate from benign to life-threatening within 30 minutes. Plan for the worst.

12.4 The Foundation Navigation Exercise

NAVIGATION EXERCISE — STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT

DISTANCE: 8 kilometres cross-country on OSi 1:50,000 terrain.

TIME ALLOWED: 3 hours 30 minutes.

CHECKPOINTS: 6 checkpoints — each with a control card to be stamped.

EQUIPMENT: Map, compass, emergency kit. NO GPS or smartphone navigation permitted.

TEAM: Minimum pairs — no solo navigation permitted.

PASS STANDARD: All 6 checkpoints recorded within time allowance.

ADVANCED: Complete in under 2 hours 45 minutes.

ASSESSED ON: Map reading accuracy, compass use, route choice (shortest vs. safest), teamwork under physical stress, decision-making when terrain differs from expectation.

This exercise forms the residential weekend referenced in Section 5.1a for Part-Time Track Candidates, who are accommodated overnight for this exercise specifically.

Section 13: Personal Development and Character Building

Corps na hÉireann is not merely a service organisation or a fitness programme. It is, at its deepest level, an invitation to become more fully the person you are capable of being. Every activity in the Foundation Programme — the early morning runs, the loaded marches, the service deployments, the leadership exercises — is in the service of this ultimate aim: the formation of character.

“Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, ambition inspired, and success achieved.” — Helen Keller

13.1 Daily Disciplines of Personal Development

Daily Practice	Purpose
Morning reflection (5 minutes)	Sets intention; prevents reactive and purposeless action throughout the day.
Physical exercise (minimum 20 min)	Maintains readiness; manages stress; builds mental toughness.
Reading (15-30 minutes)	Expands knowledge, vocabulary, and perspective.
Evening review (5 minutes)	Consolidates learning; identifies what to improve tomorrow.
One act of gratitude	Maintains psychological balance; sustains motivation through difficulty.
One act of service	Keeps purpose alive; prevents self-absorption.

13.2 SMART Goal Setting

SMART GOALS FRAMEWORK

S — SPECIFIC: Not “get fitter” but “run 5km in under 28 minutes.”

M — MEASURABLE: You must be able to determine clearly whether you achieved it.

A — ACHIEVABLE: Ambitious but genuinely within reach with consistent effort.

R — RELEVANT: Connected to your Corps development and personal values.

T — TIME-BOUND: A clear deadline — “by the end of Foundation Training.”

Team Leaders review member goals at mid-programme and provide honest feedback.

13.3 Mental Health and Resilience

- No member shall be mocked, dismissed, or penalised for acknowledging mental health difficulties.
- The Corps' Welfare Officer in each Unit is the first point of contact for member wellbeing.
- Physical activity, community connection, purpose, and faith are all evidence-based protective factors for mental health. The Corps programme is itself a positive mental health intervention.
- Silence is not strength. Every member is encouraged to talk to their Team Leader, Unit Welfare Officer, or chaplain when carrying something heavy.

Section 14: Christian Values and Service to Others

Corps na hÉireann is a Christian-inspired organisation. Its founding ethos, moral framework, and understanding of human dignity are drawn from the Christian tradition. This does not mean that Corps na hÉireann is a church, that membership requires formal religious practice, or that members of other faiths or of none are unwelcome. All are welcome — united by values, discipline, and commitment to service.

It means that the spirit of the Corps is shaped by the Christian tradition of service to the poor, care for the vulnerable, hospitality to the stranger, and the conviction that every human being deserves dignity and love.

“Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be.” — John 12:26

14.1 Christian Values in Practice

Value	In Practice
Dignity of the Person	Treat every person — however difficult — with unfailing courtesy and genuine care.
Care for the Vulnerable	Prioritise the elderly, ill, disabled, and isolated in all service planning.
Forgiveness & Reconciliation	Handle interpersonal conflict with generosity; seek resolution rather than victory.
Stewardship of Creation	Our outdoor and environmental activities reflect a Christian duty of care for the natural world.
Honesty	The Christian tradition demands truth-telling, even at personal cost.
Humility	Servant leadership is humble leadership. Those who must be praised for their service have not fully understood it.

14.2 The Corps Chaplaincy

Each Unit is encouraged to establish a relationship with a local chaplain. The chaplain is available for pastoral support, blessing at formal occasions, optional reflection at training weekends, and moral guidance for leaders. No member is ever compelled to engage with the chaplaincy. Our witness to faith is expressed through action — through the quality of our service and the integrity of our conduct.

Section 15: Foundation Training Programme

The Foundation Training Programme is the gateway to Volunteer rank in Corps na hÉireann. It introduces recruits to every dimension of Corps life across 20 structured sessions of demanding and purposeful activity. It does not require extraordinary ability — it requires consistency, effort, and the willingness to be stretched beyond comfort.

The programme is delivered through one of two tracks, set out in full in Section 5.1a: the 2-Week Intensive Track, in which all 20 sessions are delivered across two consecutive residential weeks at a higher daily tempo (two sessions per day); or the Part-Time Weekend Track, in which the same 20 sessions are delivered across a series of training weekends scheduled by the Unit according to availability. The content, standards, and assessments below apply identically to both tracks — only the calendar differs.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW — CNÉ FOUNDATION TRAINING

Delivery	Track A: 2 consecutive weeks, 10 sessions/week (two per day). Track B: training weekends per Unit schedule.
Total	20 sessions (approximately 80 hours of structured activity) on either track.
Location	Track A: residential training location throughout. Track B: Unit training ground and local outdoor areas; residential only for the bivouac/navigation weekend.
Uniform	Field uniform required from Session 1.
Assessment	Formal assessments at the programme mid-point and at the final session.
Entry Rank	Candidate.
Exit Rank	Volunteer (on successful graduation).
Award	Certificate of Foundation Training and FROG Level 3 First Response, Corps na hÉireann.

On Track A, the 20 sessions below run at double tempo — roughly two sessions per training day across two weeks rather than four sessions per week across five. Session content, order, and standards are unchanged; only the calendar is compressed.

15.1 Week One — Orientation, Discipline, and Teamwork

Theme: “Who We Are and Why” / “No One Gets There Alone”

Session	Content
1	Welcome parade. Uniform issue and inspection. Corps history, values, structure. Provisional Oath of Intent.
2	Baseline fitness assessment: 1.5-mile run, press-ups, sit-ups. Corps PT warm-up routine. Nutrition briefing.
3	Drill and Department: basic foot drill, saluting, marching in file. Uniform inspection. Code of conduct briefing.
4	5km team walk — no load. Team icebreakers. Map introduction. Team assignment and Team Leader briefing.
5	PT: 3km run + Strength Circuit Round 1. Recovery stretching.

6	Leadership Workshop: Five Principles. SMEAC briefing practice. Team problem-solving exercise.
7	First Aid Introduction: DR ABC, CPR, AED training. Small group practice scenarios.
8	Community Service Deployment: Half-day project. Full SMEAC brief by Team Leader. Individual feedback.
9	PT: 4km run + Mid-Programme fitness assessment. Personal development goal review.
10	Navigation: map reading to six-figure grid reference, compass bearings, pacing.

On Track A, Sessions 1–10 above are delivered across Week One (typically two sessions per training day, Monday to Friday). On Track B, the same ten sessions are delivered across the opening training weekends of the programme.

15.2 Week Two — Progression, Service, and Graduation

Theme: “The Furnace Forges the Steel” / “Competence in Service” / “The Beginning of the Journey”

Session	Content
11	Leadership Exercise: The Bridge Problem. Rotating student leadership with full debrief.
12	Night Exercise + Overnight Bivouac: 4km navigation to site; emergency shelter; morning stand-to. (Residential weekend — Part-Time Track.)
13	PT: 5km run, best effort. Full Strength Circuit (6 rounds). Peer encouragement.
14	First Aid Scenario Day: 4 scenarios (RTC, cardiac, hypothermia, major bleed). Timed and assessed.
15	Navigation Exercise: 8km cross-country, 6 checkpoints, pairs. Formally assessed.
16	Full-Day Field Exercise: navigation, first aid, loaded movement, shelter construction, service task. Assessed.
17	Recovery PT: 3km easy run + mobility. Self-assessment journal: What have I learned? What do I commit to?
18	FINAL FITNESS ASSESSMENT: 1.5-mile run, press-ups (2 min), sit-ups (2 min), loaded march (5km/10kg).
19	FINAL THEORY ASSESSMENT: Written paper (Corps history, values, first aid, navigation). Oral leadership assessment.
20	GRADUATION PARADE: Dress inspection. Drill display. Oath of Service. Certificate and Lanyard — promotion to Volunteer.

On Track A, Sessions 11–20 above are delivered across Week Two. On Track B, Sessions 1–20 are delivered in the same numbered sequence across the scheduled weekends rather than across two fixed calendar weeks — the 'Week' headings describe the stage of the programme, not a fixed calendar week, for Part-Time Candidates.

Section 16: Graduation Requirements

Graduation is earned, not conferred automatically. Successful graduation awards the rank of Volunteer. All of the following requirements must be met, on either training track.

16.1 Attendance

Minimum 80% attendance — at least 16 of 20 sessions. Absences must be notified in advance. Missed assessment sessions must be completed on a separately arranged date before graduation.

16.2 Physical Assessment Minimum Standards

Test	Pass Standard
1.5-Mile Run	Under 16 minutes (adjusted: +1 min per decade over age 40).
Press-Ups (2 minutes)	Minimum 18 full press-ups.
Sit-Ups (2 minutes)	Minimum 20 full sit-ups.
Loaded March	5km with 10kg completed in under 75 minutes.
Navigation Exercise	All 6 checkpoints recorded within the time allowance.

Members not meeting the physical standard may be granted a six-week extension by the Unit Leader to re-attempt failed elements.

16.3 Theory and Skills Standards

- Written theory paper: minimum 65% correct.
- First Aid Scenarios (FROG Level 3): satisfactory performance in at least 3 of 4 assessed scenarios.
- Oral leadership assessment: no outright failure on core competencies.

16.4 Conduct and Values

Training Officers maintain an ongoing conduct record throughout Foundation Training. Any Candidate who has received a formal conduct warning, or whose conduct is assessed as incompatible with Corps values, may not graduate. Team Leaders should use the programme to counsel members at risk — not simply record a failure at the end.

Section 17: Awards, Recognition, and Progression

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.” — John Quincy Adams

17.1 Foundation Awards — Presented at Graduation

Award	Criteria
Certificate of Foundation Training	All who meet graduation requirements. Marks promotion to Volunteer.
Top Physical Performer	Greatest improvement in fitness from Baseline to Final Assessment.
Leadership in Training	Voted by the team — the Candidate who best demonstrated leadership throughout.
Service Above Self	Most outstanding contribution to community service during the programme.
Most Improved	Exceptional growth in character or skill from Session 1 to Session 20 — Training Officer's award.

17.2 Full Membership Progression — 10 Ranks

Beyond Foundation Training, Corps members progress through ten ranks. Each rank is earned through demonstrated competence, service, and character — never through time-serving alone.

#	Rank	Description
1	Candidate	New applicant undergoing induction and basic training.
2	Volunteer	Completed basic training and committed to the values.
3	Senior Volunteer	Demonstrates reliability, skill, and active involvement.
4	Steward	Takes responsibility for others and supports the section.
5	Senior Steward	Leads by example. Mentors and develops members.
6	Instructor	Qualified to deliver training in one or more disciplines.
7	Senior Instructor	Leads training programmes and instructor development.
8	Unit Leader	Leads a Local Unit. Responsible for people, training, and service.
9	Regional Leader	Leads one of the four regions. Supports and develops units.
10	National Leader	Serves on National Leadership. Shapes the future of the Corps.

17.2a Ongoing Unit Training

Graduation to Volunteer is the beginning of training, not the end of it. Every Local Unit holds a minimum of one full training session per month, bringing together all ranks for fitness work, skills refreshers, and service planning. Attendance at monthly Unit training is an ongoing obligation of membership, in the same spirit as the attendance standard set during Foundation Training.

Unit Leaders schedule the monthly session at a consistent time wherever possible, so members can plan around it. Additional sessions, exercises, and deployments may be called as needed — the monthly session is the floor, not the ceiling.

17.3 Post-Foundation Qualifications

Qualification	Requirement
FROG Level 3 Refresher	Refresher recommended every 2 years to maintain currency.
Outdoor Leadership	Mountain navigation, group leadership outdoors, remote emergency response.
Community Emergency Response	Advanced flood response, search coordination, critical incident management.
Junior Instructor	Qualifies holder to assist in delivering Foundation Training.
Senior Instructor	Qualifies holder to lead Foundation Training as Training Officer.

17.4 Annual Recognition

- Volunteer of the Year — most service hours contributed to community during the year.
- Mentor of the Year — the leader who best developed others during the year.
- Unit of the Year — strongest overall performance across service, training, and community impact.
- Long Service Award — presented at 5, 10, and 20-year milestones.

Section 18: Oath of Service — Mionn Seirbhíse

The Oath of Service is the most solemn act of Corps membership. It is taken publicly, before the assembled Unit, on Graduation Day — marking the Candidate's promotion to Volunteer. It is not a legal instrument; it is a moral commitment, freely undertaken.

The Oath is read aloud by the Unit Leader and repeated, phrase by phrase, by the graduating class standing at attention in full service dress.

MIONN SEIRBHÍSE — OATH OF SERVICE

I, [name], having freely chosen to join Corps na hÉireann, do solemnly commit, before my fellow members and before God, to uphold the values of faith, integrity, discipline, service, excellence, and community in all that I do; to maintain my body in a state of readiness for the tasks of service; to obey all lawful directions of my superiors in the Corps and to treat all those I serve with unfailing dignity and care; to place the welfare of my community above my own convenience; to be honest in all my dealings, faithful in all my commitments, and courageous in the face of all that is difficult; to honour the memory of those who served before me, and to be worthy of those who will serve after me.

Ní neart go cur le chéile.

There is no strength without unity.

ONE CORPS. ONE PURPOSE. ONE ÉIRE.

Following the Oath, each graduating member steps forward to receive the Corps Lanyard from the Unit Leader — the visible symbol of promotion to Volunteer and full membership. The ceremony concludes with a period of silent reflection and, optionally, a blessing from the Unit Chaplain.

Section 19: Closing Remarks

You have now read the foundational document of Corps na hÉireann. You understand what we are, what we demand, and what we offer in return. The question before you is simple: are you willing?

Not willing in the abstract — willing in the specific. Willing to get up early on a Saturday morning when the rain is lashing and the training ground is muddy. Willing to carry someone else's kit when they are struggling. Willing to tell a fellow member an uncomfortable truth rather than let them fail. Willing to serve a community that may not know your name or think to thank you.

Ireland does not lack talent. She does not lack intelligence, warmth, or humour. What she has sometimes lacked is the organised, disciplined expression of her people's best instincts — the structures through which individual goodwill is amplified into collective impact. Corps na hÉireann is one such structure, and it will grow better with the contribution of people like you.

Prepare, therefore. Train with intention. Serve with humility. Lead with example. Every river clean-up, every comfort visit, every midnight response to a neighbour's flood, every young person who sees in you a model of what a good adult looks like — all of it matters. None of it is wasted.

We believe you are equal to it.

"Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger people." — John F. Kennedy

Ar aghaidh linn le chéile.

Together, forward.



CORPS NA hÉIREANN · ÉIRE · CNÉ-HB-001 · ONE CORPS. ONE PURPOSE. ONE ÉIRE.