

**“NATIONAL CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE”
FOUNDATION**



**EXPERT PANEL REPORT
INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION OF
CRISIS MANAGEMENT STATE ACADEMY OF THE MINISTRY OF EMERGENCY
SITUATIONS OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA**

Yerevan 2020

INTRODUCTION

The institutional accreditation of Crisis Management State Academy (hereinafter: the CMSA or Academy) of The Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Armenia (hereinafter: RA MES) was carried out based on the application submitted by the Academy.

The "National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance" foundation (hereinafter: ANQA) organized and coordinated the accreditation process, guided by the regulation on "State Accreditation of RA Institutions and their Educational Programs" approved by the RA Government decree N978-N as of 30 June 2011 as well as by the RA Government decree N 959-N (30 June 2011) decree on "Approval of RA Standards for Professional Education Accreditation".

The expertise was carried out by the expert panel formed according to the requirements of ANQA Regulation on the Formation of the Expert Panel. The expert panel consisted of 4 local experts and 1 international expert.

The institutional accreditation is aimed not only at the external evaluation of quality assurance but also the continuous improvement of quality of the Academy's governance and academic programs. Hence, two issues were put forward to the international and local experts:

- 1) to carry out expertise of institutional capacities in accordance with the RA standards for state accreditation;
- 2) to carry out expert evaluation from the perspectives of the College's compliance with international standards and the Academy's ambitions to integrate into the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), aimed at quality improvement.

This report reflects on the results of the expertise of the CMSA's institutional capacities in accordance with the RA state accreditation criteria and with the international expert's peer-review observations from the perspective of the Academy's integration into EHEA.

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SUMMARY OF EVALUATION

EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES ACCORDING TO ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

The expertise of the CMSA's institutional capacities was carried out by the independent expert panel which was compiled according to the requirements set by the ANQA regulation on "Formation of the Expert Panel". The evaluation was carried out according to the 10 criteria for state accreditation, approved by the RA Government Decree N 959-N as of 30 June 2011.

In the evaluation the expert panel took into consideration that the CMSA is a higher education institution the main mission of which is to implement educational, scientific, methodical, expertise, publishing and learning activities in the field of civil defense and protection of population in emergency situations. The expert panel also took into consideration that the CMSA is a structural unit of the RA MES and it doesn't have full freedom in decision making in a number of aspects.

It should be noted that in the previous accreditation processes (in 2017), the Academy formed an Action Plan on Elimination of Shortcomings Mentioned in the Previous Accreditation Expert Panel Report (hereinafter: Action Plan) which had a huge impact on goals and directions of its activity in 2017-2019. The expert panel registers the fact that in 2017-2019 the Academy had a progress in almost all fields of its activity.

The Academy has its univalent role in the RA MES system and from this perspective the mission of the Academy is identically perceived by almost all stakeholders. However, the CMSA still has some shortcomings in defining its mission and especially its vision as well as goals and priorities of strategic development.

The governance system is significantly integrated into the hierarchy of the MES on the one hand, and in some aspects the College not only has autonomy but also practically functions it in decision making, on the other hand. Although the limits of the autonomy are not clear yet, the governance system of the CMSA generally fosters the smooth implementation of academic processes.

The professional academic programs (APs) of the College are compiled in line with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and are generally based on anticipated outcomes. The strive for and process of improvement of teaching, learning and assessment methods are observable. The main shortcomings existent in the aspect of APs are the absence of regular benchmarking process and limited opportunities for mobility. Besides, the framework of APs implemented by the Academy is not finally defined, in particular, there are some disagreements on to what extent of universal specialists the Academy should prepare.

The students are provided with diverse support by almost all levels of the Academy but only some part of the mentioned process is regulated, and the scope of opportunities for students is often not clear to them.

The teaching staff consists of specialists who are officers of the RA MES system as well as specialists from the non-professional field. The strong point about the teaching staff is the existence of practical experience and the link with the practice, but at the same time there is a problem in terms of development of pedagogical competences. Due to the tight link with the MES the assurance with teaching staff is generally not at risk.

In the research area the Academy doesn't yet have clearly formulated goals the efforts of which could be supported by the Academy. There are some research projects but they are not outcomes of

regular activity taken by the Academy. The CMSA doesn't yet have the exceptional investment in the development of the RA MES sphere. Such a passive approach to the sphere of research also impedes educational process.

The APs are rather resource consuming; apart from classroom conditions, special building facilities and a big number of equipment are needed. The Academy succeeds in ensuring them but the mechanisms of evaluating the effectiveness of use of resources are still imperfect. The mechanisms are especially important under conditions of limited resources and expensive equipment.

In the sphere of social responsibility the CMSA's activity, together with shortcomings, can be viewed as a best practice. The Academy gives importance to sharing the culture of security among society and with this goal it functions a number of mechanisms.

In the field of external relations and internationalization the autonomy of the Academy is limited. Besides, from the perspective of necessity to have at least mandatory agreement with the RA MES, the current level of foreign language proficiency is an obstacle for the development of external relations. However, even under these conditions the Academy has managed to be involved in joint projects within a short period of time and due to the projects it has made a row of reforms.

The quality assurance (QA) system is in the phase of formulation. Unfortunately, the internal QA system doesn't have significant impact on other infrastructures of the Academy and it doesn't ensure stable process of reforms either.

Strong points of the Institution

1. Existence of mainly generic approaches to the mission and goals of the Academy among different groups of external and internal stakeholders.
2. Tight links with the MES as a representative of the founder and the main employer.
3. Strive for improvement of almost all components of APs.
4. Functioning mechanisms of transferring knowledge and values to the society.
5. Development of staff's professional qualities and external cooperation ensuring technical equipment.

Weak Points of the Institution

1. Absence of mechanisms and procedures of comparative analysis of leading practice of APs.
2. Absence of mechanisms directed to the formation and development of teachers' pedagogical competences.
3. Vagueness of research interests and ambitions, absence of clear policy and procedures of implementation of short-term and mid-term research projects and research activities as well as poor internationalization.
4. Lack of international mobility of students and teachers.
5. Low level of foreign language proficiency among internal stakeholders.
6. Incomplete operation of QA policy and procedures.
7. Lack of impact of the QA infrastructure on the whole activity of the Academy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Mission and Purposes

1. To clarify the mission and vision of the Academy, especially specifying the framework of specialists prepared by the CMSA.

2. To involve a wide scope of external stakeholders in the process of formulating the goals of the Academy upon necessity, not being limited by the MES system only.
3. To invest such a toolset for evaluation of definition and implementation of goals which will allow to set real strategic priorities, to fully plan the fulfillment of goals and to regularly evaluate the process and outcome by using measurable indicators.

Governance and Administration

1. To invest toolset for evaluating the effectiveness of the governance system and resources used for its operation.
2. To put forward the role of the CMSA Board, as a control body which is independent on executive governing bodies.
3. To clarify the extent of the Academy's autonomy in all spheres.
4. To make the Strategic Plan (SP) as a main guide for the activity of all units of the CMSA by means of short-term plans and by defining measurable indicators.
5. To make the internal accountability system in compliance with the SP.
6. To regularly make scanning of external factors which influence the main key performance indicators (KPIs) of the Academy.
7. To make the CMSA's policies and procedures as an object of study of internal QA system.
8. To invest a concept on information management and respective indicators for evaluation of its efficiency.

Professional Academic Programs

1. To ensure the compliance of APs with current labor market requirements.
2. To ensure active involvement of students, teaching staff and external stakeholders in the processes of development and improvement of APs.
3. To clarify the policy of selection of teaching and learning methods by ensuring progress of teachers' knowledge and experience in this direction and by ensuring flexibility in terms of expanding the opportunities for students.
4. To improve procedures of student assessment by ensuring the check of outcomes in accordance with the levels of knowledge, competences and skills.
5. To improve the mechanisms of evaluating the efficiency of assessment system and analyzing the results.
6. To invest benchmarking procedures and process, thus fostering the mobility of teachers and students.
7. To coordinate the processes of monitoring, evaluation of efficiency and improvement of APs.

Students

1. To regulate the provision of support and guidance to students.
2. To coordinate the activity of the Student Council (SC) and the Committee on Protection of Students' Rights, to raise the level of awareness on the mentioned units among students.
3. To invest mechanisms of promoting students' research activities.

Faculty and Staff

1. To create opportunities for acquisition of pedagogical skills of teachers.

2. To invest mechanisms of evaluating teachers' general and professional competences, aimed at needs assessment and improvement.

Research and Development

1. To clarify the strategy of research by ensuring clear steps and measurable outcomes which will derive from the strategic goals and ambitions.
2. To ensure strategic management system in the sphere of scientific research by clarifying the role and significance of the Division of Scientific Research.
3. To foster the implementation of scientific research projects and involvement of students and teachers in them, as well as to promote internationalization of scientific research activities.
4. To invest clear policy on interrelation between research and educational process by ensuring its sustainability.

Infrastructure and Resources

1. To consider the opportunities of further diversification of income.
2. To fully operate current opportunities of documentation circulation in the Academy.

Societal Responsibility

1. In parallel with the integration of the concept on information management, to ensure efficient functioning mechanisms of external accountability and feedback.

External Relations and Internationalization

1. To develop and invest policy and procedures of external relations and internationalization.
2. To ensure the involvement in international projects by developing capacities in this direction.
3. To clarify the functions and role of the Division of International Relations and Cooperation in the processes of external relations and internationalization.
4. To foster internal and external mobility.
5. To promote the development of internationalization processes, including the assurance of proper level of foreign language proficiency.

Internal Quality Assurance System

1. To review the basic documents regulating the internal QA system by making them more adaptable.
2. To clarify the framework of functions and authorities of the QA Center and other units of QA infrastructure by ensuring the QA Center's autonomy and compliance of its competences to the set objectives.
3. To clarify the level of decentralization of the internal QA system by developing mechanisms which will ensure active participation of internal and external stakeholders.
4. To define mechanisms for evaluating the efficiency of the clarified QA system, aimed at improvement.
5. In the toolset of QA analyses to involve mechanisms which will allow to make current evaluation (and not from one self-evaluation to another) and to make the results of evaluation transparent.

PEER-REVIEW FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EDUCATION INSTITUTION'S INTEGRATION INTO EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA

The international expert hopes that this part of the holistic report will be constructively used, in line with the global report, to the development of the Crisis Management State Academy (hereinafter Academy) of MES of RA, and is truly convinced that this addendum will be used by all internal and external stakeholders of the Academy.

OBSERVATIONS

I. Mission

The mission of the CMSA of the RA MES, defined by its founding document - the Charter - focuses on creating and promoting the culture of security among all the citizens of RA. The Academy intends in that way to become an educational center of humanitarian relations and democratic traditions, acting in accordance with international standards in the sphere of civil defense and protection of the population in emergency situations. The mission of the Academy is sustainable, which has been proven by smooth transition from the SP 2014-2019 into its reviewed and updated version for the years 2020-2024, that aims at reinforcing the emerging trends in all main areas of the Academy's activities.

Site-visit of the expert panel confirmed existence of relatively strong and persistent links between stakeholders of the Academy (both external and internal) and the Academy's governing bodies, pictured e.g. by graduates of the Academy working in the departments of the MES as well as in other governing bodies and organizations of the RA. These links, however, do not seem to allow to foster the opportunities they create. This means, that participation of external stakeholders in Academy's mission statement and its sustainment seems to be limited to external stakeholders' representatives holding positions in the Academy's Board.

For assessing the results of implementation of its mission and goals the Academy introduced number of KPIs - Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The KPIs monitoring has been selected as the main instrument for assessment of progress of implementation of the Strategic Development Program. Nevertheless, KPIs have mainly descriptive and qualitative wording, making it difficult to clearly assess levels of its completion. It may be worth, therefore, to put efforts into definition of KPIs of quantitative character, being in this way easier to assess.

Coherence between Academy's SP, working plans of the faculties, structural subdivisions and departments has been achieved by, clearly defined, top-bottom planning process. The accountability, on the other hand, is achieved in a bottom-up approach, where reports being created at each level are taken into account during reporting at higher levels of governance.

It is vital for further development, that all the Academy's community (academic and administrative) mutually shares values defined in its mission statement, not only accepting its wording as a kind of orders. It requires trainings and teaching addressed to academic and administrative staff in that matter.

II. Governance and administration

The strategic goal of the Academy's administration is to develop and improve the governance system with necessary human, material and financial resources. Decision making and implementation of the goals of the Academy have been ensured through the legislation of the RA and the Charter of the Academy, with combination of autonomy, solitary and collegial managerial principles. Governance is

carried out by the Ministry of Emergency Situations of RA, the Academy's Board and the Scientific Council.

The highest governing body - the Academy's Board, being approved by the RA MES, operates in accordance with pre-defined rules of procedure. In the area of scientific activities of the Academy, the governance is pictured by the Academy's Scientific Council, also having its rules of procedure. Particular areas of governance are being delegated to Academy's faculties, divisions and subdivisions.

Participation of students in Academy's governance is fulfilled by the SC - an elective representative body, whose powers and procedure of operation are defined by the Academy and its Charter. The observations showed that stakeholders, including SC in fact passively use the opportunities given to them concerning decision making, expressing opinions and suggestions, and in most cases their participation is solely formal.

The assessment of the effectiveness and the execution of the Academy's activities is being monitored by KPIs, the analysis of which allows to ascertain the strengths and weaknesses of the Academy's management and planning processes.

The positive aspect of self-governance and scientific independence is delegating direct management of professional aspects of education and research to faculties and divisions. In that way, the faculty of the Academy constitutes an administrative and academic subdivision that implements higher education and post-graduate education. As the appointment of the Heads of the faculties is an open competitive selection, this encourages academics to self-improvement and self-quality assurance.

Proper quality assurance and constant improvement in accordance with the Deming's management cycle requires all the personnel to actively participate in that process, as feedback mechanisms of PDCA cycle seems not to operate fully, therefore further steps need to be taken to strengthen weaknesses in training and teaching of staff in governance procedures and importance of PDCA cycle.

III. Academic Programs

The Academic programs of the Academy are in accordance with the mission fixed in the SP of the Academy and in its Charter. Through its educational programs, the Academy provides main external stakeholders, i.e. the subdivisions of the MES, with competitive specialists able to solve problems of contemporary security environment and contribute to the development of the civil defense and safe conduct in emergency situations. However, active participation of representatives of the subdivisions of the MES in academic programs' formulation is not fully visible, although the external and internal stakeholders needs are declared to be taken into account.

Nevertheless, positive aspect is visible in the fact that subject descriptions of particular Chairs (e.g. Rescue Chair) are being reviewed in connection with changes in the legal framework of the MES and in the result of professional retraining of the teaching staff in foreign partner countries.

The educational programs of all the specialties have both compulsory and optional learning components of general education and professional education, which stays in line with European Quality Education Framework and Bologna Process.

The Academy has visibly taken steps to fill gaps identified during previous assessment conducted by ANQA, e.g. taking steps toward definition of state educational standards for Bachelor degree of Emergency Security and Crisis Management, as well as developing the methodological guideline for the development of educational programs and the procedure of their approval.

The programs are being built with educational descriptors based on measurable outputs in the areas of knowledge, skills and abilities. The site visit proved consistency of all three levels of educational

descriptors (i.e. NQF vice academic programs vice course descriptions) and proved that correlation matrices are used to assure fulfillment of all the outputs defined at highest level, which is NQF, and mid-level of academic programs.

Academic programs are subject to further improvement, based on the evaluation feedback from students, graduates and lecturers, conducted mainly in the form of questionnaires. Site visit revealed that during development of teaching and learning methods of the academic programs, the priority is given to those that would effectively promote students' practical competencies. The fact that new methods directed towards student-centered learning are applied together with traditional methods is assessed positively and students are satisfied with those methods. Despite this, there is a strong demand for the increase of hours dedicated to practical lessons and internships.

In the area of collaboration with educational Institutions of other states, there is still an incontestable gap to be filled in the future. The CMSA declares mainly Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) members as priority collaboration targets, which is obvious due to the common cultural circle they represent, while other directions of internationalizations are still weak. Nonetheless, initiatives already undertaken by the Academy are worth prizing. Positive examples of international cooperation in the educational field is depicted by agreements signed e.g. with Japan International Cooperation Agency – JICA.

It is worth noting, that the EU member states constitute also great potential for cooperation, especially in the area of Crisis Response Operations or humanitarian aid operations that require multilateral, cross-countries trainings. It creates a chance for CMSA to further development of academic programs. Site visit revealed however, an important issue that hampers deepened collaboration with EU states that is lack of foreign language competencies. Due to that deficiency CMSA misses practical implementation of international collaboration, although it has established framework for internationalization (however still being highly dependent on MES of RA).

IV. Students

The admission of the applicants of the full-time and part-time system of learning with Bachelor's degree program is implemented in accordance with the Academy's internal regulations that are publically available. The competitions are carried out according to the specialties. Admission to the Master Degree Program is implemented by the order of the Minister of Education and Science of RA and according to the Academy's internal regulations. Thus, clear mechanisms of admission are in place.

The Academy's policy in the direction of revealing the students' educational needs is in place, but the efficiency of mechanisms resulting from that policy is low. Nevertheless, the Academy tries to foster enhancement of awareness of students of their rights and obligations. The main body dealing with issues of protection of students' rights and students' participation in governing the Academy is SC. Site visit and direct interview with SC members leaves however an impression that such participation is passive instead of being challenging or, ideally, supportive to the Academy's Heads. The conclusion that may be drawn is that SC and Students' Scientific Union do not yet have necessary experience for carrying out their activities.

The positive factor brought by self-evaluation report (SER), i.e. mechanisms of promoting extra-curricular activities through nomination of consultants devoted to development of particular student, did not find its full confirmation in students' interviews. Therefore, further steps need to be taken to strengthen the consultancy mechanisms.

Scientific research of the CMSA in terms of students' participation has been proven, although the extent of such participation is very low. It has to be stated, that participation of students in research connected with their Master thesis preparation, may not be considered as scientific and research activity. As overall scientific and research activity of CMSA students is low, this weakness requires deeper change in CMSA tasks and change from practical orientation of the CMSA towards more general academic orientation in form of e.g. dual (hybrid – practical and scientific) academic system.

Overall, the CMSA provides student support and ensures effectiveness of learning, but with little participation of students themselves.

V. Faculty and Staff

Taking existence of two subsystems of personnel, i.e. officers of Rescue Service and the civil staff into account, there is an impression that recruitment regulations derive from different laws or RA. It hampers transparency of staff recruitment procedures, despite the fact that such procedures were drawn by the SC of the Academy (SC, No2, 13.05.2019).

Teaching staff of the Academy, as for the academic year 2018/2019, confirm sufficient manpower to conduct didactic processes, but overall load of didactic hours assigned to particular lecturer leaves very narrow space for further development of teaching staff.

The career paths, identified by expert panel during site-visit, confirm existence of coherent personal development plans for academics, but precise requirements for the professional qualifications of the teaching staff have only been formulated according to the educational programs requirements, omitting scientific and research activities of the Academy and participation of Academy's staff in such activities.

There are mechanisms in place to conduct the assessment of teaching staff at the Academy, which is conducted by the Heads of the Chairs, the Deans of the Faculties and students. This includes lessons' observations, which are held in the Chairs, according to the approved schedule, and students' semester polls, in order to identify their opinions about the teaching methods, the quality, the professional abilities and the preparedness level of the teaching staff.

Positive factor is involvement of external stakeholders and experts in teaching processes, but such involvement requires regular basis to be effective, as ad-hoc lectures given by occasionally invited guests do not present significant advantage.

Another advantage in development of teaching staff is organization of trainings in the area of Quality Assurance, organized in cooperation with ANQA.

Important factor that may potentially hinder further development of teaching staff, particularly based on international cooperation, may be lack of English language capabilities among teaching staff (20 % factor of English language knowledge).

VI. Research and Development

One of the strategic priorities of the Academy, as stated in its Strategic Development Plan, is promoting internationalization of the scientific research activities in the European Research Area (ERA). Reaching the goal of active presence of the Academy in ERA is limited with foreign language capabilities (already mentioned in the context of other criteria). Thus, such capabilities need to be elevated in order to achieve this strategic goal.

Positive impulse of creating a solid framework for R&D activities of the Academy is the order of the Minister of Emergency Situations that established the Scientific Research Centre in the Academy. The Centre plays a crucial role in initiating, monitoring and promoting research activities.

However, due to relatively short period that passed since establishment of SRC, its performance indicators (e.g. number of international R&D programs with Academy's participants, number of publications in international journals, etc.) remain at low level, compared to other universities with similar areas of scientific interests.

Despite lack of long-term experience in R&D conduct, it is worth highlighting that the Academy was able to initiate some international R&D programs (e.g. the "Armageddon" project, devoted to development and demonstration of a resilient infrastructure, enabling autonomous and flexible disaster crisis management and rapid recovery). Such examples should be followed and supported by Academy's governing bodies, particularly through reward system for researchers.

Another positive achievement of the Academy, being a milestone on its way toward R&D proficiency (although still being a long way ahead) is its capability to conduct the third level of higher education in line with the requirements of the national qualifications framework (the Academy was allowed by Supreme Certifying Committee (SCC) of RA to approve the Ph.D. thesis in the field of "Geoecology").

Another positive example is the establishment of the scientific journal "Crisis management and technology", which is recognized in the "List of periodic scientific publications acceptable for publication of the main results and provisions of theses and dissertations", approved by SCC of RA. Such an initiative is worth prizing.

Despite all the above, an overall participation of Academy's researchers in international programs, conferences and workshops remains relatively low (25 lecturers in the academic years 2018-2019).

The documents presented to the expert panel did not clearly show that R&D financing is of sustainable character. Thus, sustainable sources of R&D financing need to be strengthened in order to keep research activities of the Academy under constant development.

The Academy signaled the fact that researchers of the Academy carry out research within the framework of agreements conducted with external institutions. The Academy has signed a number of cooperation agreements and memoranda with multiple national and international research bodies, but scope and timing of practical utilization of such memoranda is doubtful, as very few R&D projects conducted together with external partners have been presented.

Students' participation in R&D activities is also limited, practically only to Master's Thesis preparation, conducted in parallel to routine didactic process. This leaves no space for deepened research and constitutes more qualification confirmation rather than innovative research.

There is still a work to be done in the inventive and innovative field where there is a need for material and technical base with the most up-to-date equipment, human and financial resources for carrying out quality research.

VII. Infrastructure and Resources

The Academy has a sufficient number of educational buildings and educational base for theoretical and practical training. Information and appropriate technical means and systems are available to the teaching staff to conduct lessons. Results of surveys conducted among academic staff and students did not reveal any shortfalls, proving general satisfaction from existing infrastructure and resources.

Positive factor is that the Academy does not remain passive in this field, and takes steps to acquire new classrooms' equipment through national and international cooperation, e.g. "Situational room" acquired from Italy, interactive learning cabinet, opened together with the MES of RA, the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, German Red Cross Baden-Württemberg countryside organization,

UNDP, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. Nevertheless, it is crucial to keep a sustainable resource of founding to maintain continuity of Academy's development.

Improvement of the educational environment is considered to be an important priority of the Academy. Sustainment of this process, primarily through continuous financing scheme has to be ensured in the future, as the Academy's income depends mainly on state funding and tuition fees and is basically conditioned with the students' number. Therefore, one of the strategic objectives of the Academy has to be the diversification of its incomes.

When it comes to the management of information and documentation, the Academy is well prepared to handle this area, having defined policies and procedures to manage information. A long-term goal suggested in this area may be to establish a unified ERP-class information system that would replace or integrate multiple, currently existing ones (e.g. the Management Super Vision, YSU Information System, Hosting Space 2 service, STOR services, Mulberry 2.0 system).

Resources, particularly financial, and infrastructure play a crucial role in the achievement of Academy's mission and goals. Expert panel did not reveal any critical shortfalls that may require urgent reaction in the area of maintenance of its infrastructural potential.

From site-visit perspective it was visible, that availability of computers and software used in didactic processes is sufficient and keeps up to date with modern trends in IT branch (e.g. modern GIS laboratory with recent ArcGIS software).

The only shortfall visible is connected with very strict annual planning schemes that leave no space for actions that were not planned in advance. As far, as annual financial planning is based on existing norms in all areas of the Academy's activities, it may stop the Academy from undertaking challenges that may be profitable, but were not planned in advance.

VIII. Social Responsibility

The process of the accountability of the Academy is regulated by The Law of RA, by a number of Government Decrees of RA and by the Academy's Charter. The Academy has the principle of hierarchical accountability, defined according to the Charter and the Regulations of the subdivisions. This scheme creates a framework for clear internal accountability.

Compared to the above statement, the external accountability seems to be vague and oriented only towards the MES, being practically main external stakeholder and, at the same time, the only controlling body. This makes general sense in terms of governance of public funds, but lacks mechanism of responsibility directed towards the society of RA.

The ways in which the Academy informs the public about its activities (i.e. activities of the Academy's structural subdivisions, academic associations – namely Student Scientific Society, SC, etc.) are: the Academy's official web-site, the "911 Emergency Newspaper", and social networks. Despite the existence of number of information distribution and sharing channels, they are of rather promotional character, than constitute accountability schemes.

CMSA signals its transparency through sharing news over websites and social media. One of positive achievements of the Academy is its contribution to cultural and social life in the Republic, evidenced by the organization of conferences, events dedicated to the holidays and memorial days, an online games, etc.

CMSA has definitely proven its accountability to the governmental bodies (MES in particular), but accountability to the society still needs to be enhanced.

IX. External Relations and Internationalization

The directions of the Academy's external relations and internationalization strategy are set out in the Strategic Development Plan. The Academy has developed a policy promoting foreign relations and international cooperation (SC, No2, 18.06.2018), but there is still lack of department dedicated to international relations of the Academy. The centralized management of external relations and assurance of continuity of internationalization of the Academy are carried out by the RA Ministry of Emergency Situations, with the Academy communicating its needs and ambitions in this term. Thus, the absence of separate position responsible for internationalization decreases the effectiveness of processes towards internationalization. Nevertheless, such department of international relations and cooperation within the structure of the Academy is declared to be in the preparatory phase.

Meanwhile, in the area of R&D such role is played, since March 2019, by a new subdivision set up at the Academy - the Centre for Scientific Research, which has acquired a number of international partners in relatively short period.

The main disadvantage in the area of internationalization is that independence in shaping international relations of the Academy is hampered by the fact, that the Academy is a subsystem of power structure of MES of RA, where any international procedures are managed centrally.

Despite existing limitations in self-governance of international relations, the Academy developed strategies and procedures, i.e. "Strategy for External Relations and Internationalization" and "Policies, Procedures and Mechanisms for Promoting External Relations and Internationalization" in order to provide the basis for the smooth development of this area of Academy's activities. Having the observations of the previous ANQA Expert Report in mind, the Academy made an important improvement in developing its international relations. This is supported by examples of the Academy's activities in the international arena (e.g. educational cooperation with Japan International Cooperation Agency or scientific research activities within the "Armageddon" project).

Positive trend is visible in foreign languages learning, but indicators of foreign language proficiency are still low and have to be considered as one of the main problems hindering the processes of internationalization. On the other hand, the policy adopted by the Academy in this term is not implemented purposefully - both students and teachers signaled urgent need for development of their language skills.

Despite the fact that overall international involvement is still relatively low, the progress that has been made since the previous audit is significant, and has to be prized.

X. Internal Quality Assurance System

The Academy is willing to integrate into the European Higher Education Framework and the European Quality of Education Association structures. For this purpose, the Academy established a qualification committee and relevant committees to ensure the quality and evaluation of student education.

The need for governance in accordance with Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and by ISO 9000-2000 standards is recognized among the Academy's authorities, but at the same time processing, investment and permanent improvement of quality assurance system seems to be one of the main problems of the Academy.

In order to manage QA processes, the self-governing Quality Assurance Centre (QAC) has been established with sufficient manpower to coordinate QA activities of the Academy. Unfortunately, wide scope of declared activities of the Centre does not find confirmation in its practical performance.

QAC seems to act passively, being only internally-oriented on assessment of e.g. students' satisfaction with academic programs and particular courses, teachers' satisfaction with facilities and resources, etc. Given examples reveal the main focus of QAC that has been put on assessment of current status of various activities, instead of future-oriented development and improvement of procedures. Such an attitude has been confirmed during expert panel interviews with QAC staff that did not prove mutual understanding of quality assurance system.

The weakest point of QAC is lack of involvement of stakeholders (both internal and external, but external in particular) in QA processes of the Academy. Despite the fact that there is a significant improvement resulting from corrective actions undertaken after previous assessment done by ANQA experts, the participation of both internal (teaching, faculty and administrative staff, students) and external stakeholders (representatives of MES of RA, Ministry of Education of RA, the Academy's graduates, etc.) remains passive. This seriously hampers establishment of quality culture and mutual sharing of quality assurance values.

Although, declaratively, goals and objectives of the Academy's QAC are being constantly reviewed and updated, such statement does not find its confirmation in practice. The expert panel identified an urgent need for trainings addressed to QAC staff in the area of quality assurance that may not be limited to observations and gaining best practices from other RA TEIs, but should rather focus on ANQA teaching expertise.

For the sake of quality assurance, appropriate policy and procedures have been elaborated and CMSA has made an important step towards overall improvement over last years, but as the quality assurance at its heart focuses on constant development of best practices leading to overall improvement of CMSA processes, it requires active participation of whole academic community, and may not be limited to QAC only.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Although durable links with external stakeholders are visible, their participation in the Academy's mission statement is passive. The Academy should put therefore efforts towards greater and active involvement of external stakeholders in its mission statement and implementation.
2. It is vital for further development, that all the Academy's community (academic and administrative) mutually shares values defined in its mission statement. It requires trainings and teaching addressed to academic and administrative staff in that matter.
3. It is necessary to define KPIs that are suitable to assess whether the strategic goals are reached or not and to explain why the specific indicators were chosen. Efforts should be made to define KPIs of quantitative character, being in this way easier to assess.
4. Democratization of governance should be emphasized in the area of "non-uniformed", academic activities of the Academy.
5. Feedback mechanisms of PDCA cycle seem not to operate fully, therefore further steps need to be taken to strengthen weaknesses in training and teaching of staff in governance procedures and importance of PDCA cycle.
6. More attention should be paid to student's and alumni's opinions, as they present passive attitude towards their participation in Academy's governance.
7. Active participation of representatives of the subdivisions of the MES in academic programs' formulation is not visible, therefore it is crucial to involve the MES personnel, being a main external stakeholder of the CMSA, more actively in academic programs' review and development.

8. International academic exchange programs to ensure incoming and outgoing mobility of both teachers and students should be introduced on regular basis.
9. The policy of external relations, strengthening international cooperation in education processes and academic programs, should be developed in cooperation with the MES of RA, broadening independence of the CMSA in academic cooperation with foreign universities.
10. English language proficiency should be further developed.
11. Site visit and direct interview with SC members leaves an impression that participation of students in Academy's governance is passive. The conclusion that may be drawn is that SC and Students' Scientific Union require more encouragement to be involved in Academy's governance and R&D activities.
12. Mechanisms of promoting extra-curricular activities through nomination of consultants devoted to development of particular student, did not find its confirmation in students' interviews. Therefore, further steps need to be taken to strengthen the consultancy mechanisms.
13. As overall scientific and research activity of CMSA students is low, this weakness require deeper change in CMSA tasks and change from practical orientation of the CMSA towards more general academic orientation in form of e.g. dual (hybrid – practical and scientific) academic system.
14. Involvement of external stakeholders and experts in teaching processes requires regular basis (e.g. annual plans) to be effective.
15. Sustainable sources of R&D financing need to be strengthen in order to keep research activities of the Academy under constant development. Involvement of teaching staff in R&D activities should be supported by Academy's governing bodies, particularly through reward system for researchers.
16. As the Academy's income depends mainly on state funding and tuition fees and is basically conditioned with the students' number, the strategic objectives of the Academy has to be the diversification of its incomes.
17. CMSA should invest and strengthen QA processes at all the governance levels.
18. There is an urgent need for trainings addressed to QAC staff in the area of quality assurance that may not be limited to observations and gaining best practices from other RA TEIs, but should rather focus on ANQA teaching expertise.

Tigran Mnatsakanyan
Chair of the expert panel

04 March 2020

DESCRIPTION OF EXTERNAL REVIEW

COMPOSITION OF EXPERT PANEL

The external evaluation of the Academy was carried out by the following expert panel¹:

1. **Tigran Mnastakanyan** - Candidate of Economic Sciences, Armenian State Economic University, Assistant at Chair of Management
2. **Bartłomiej Pączek** - Professor of Security Science, Polish Naval Academy, Dean of the Faculty of Command and Naval Operations
3. **Tsaghik Hovhannisyan** - Candidate of Technical Sciences, Associate Professor, National Polytechnic University of Armenia, Scientific Secretary of Institute of Information and Communication Technologies and Electronics
4. **Armenuhi Sarsyan** - Candidate of Physical and Mathematical Sciences, Associate Professor, Shirak State University, Head of Scientific Scientific Policy, Quality Assurance and Management Center
5. **Mariam Torosyan** - 3rd-year BA student, specialty of Management, Eurasia International University

The composition of the expert panel was agreed upon with the Academy.

The activities of the expert panel were coordinated by Meri Barseghyan, Specialist at Division of Policy Development and Implementation.

The translation was provided by Ani Shahinyan, Specialist at Center for Quality Assurance of Brusov State University.

The members of the expert panel, including the translator and the coordinator, signed declarations of confidentiality and exception of conflict of interests.

PROCESS OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW

Application for state accreditation

CSMA applied to ANQA for institutional accreditation by submitting the application form, the copies of the license and respective appendices.

The ANQA Secretariat examined the data presented in the application form and the attached documents.

After making decision on submission of application, bilateral agreement between ANQA and the Academy was signed. The time-schedule of activities was compiled and approved.

Self-evaluation

Within the set deadlines and according to the form set by the ANQA, the Academy submitted its self-evaluation report in Armenian and English languages and the attached package of documents.

The self-evaluation of the CMSA was made by the work group which was particularly compiled for self-evaluation based on the order of the CMSA Rector.

¹ Appendix 1.CVs of expert panel members

Preparatory phase

The ANQA coordinator examined the report with the aim to check its correspondence with the technical requirements set by ANQA. Afterwards the ANQA Secretariat sent the self-evaluation report to the expert panel the composition of which was agreed upon with the Academy in advance and was approved by the order of ANQA Director.

In order to prepare the expert panel for the upcoming activities and to ensure the efficiency of processes, the ANQA training coordinators conducted 4 trainings in the following topics:

1. accreditation process, peculiarities of expertise, expert panel's ethics and code of conduct,
2. preliminary evaluation of institutional self-evaluation by practical examples,
3. site visit by means of role plays,
4. preparation of expert panel report.

Having observed the self-evaluation and the attached package of documents of the Academy, the expert panel made a preliminary evaluation according to the set form. The lists of additional documents for further review as well as questions and issues for further clarification by mentioning respective structural units and target groups were formed.

In the preliminary evaluation the expert panel observed practical courses and had class observations. Hence, the expert panel visited the "Lusakert" Center for Practical Courses and observed the practical course for 2nd-year students studying "Rescue Service" within the scope of the subject "Emergency Rescue Technical Means".

Within the scheduled time the expert panel summarized the results of the preliminary evaluation and formed a time-schedule of the site visit. In accordance with the ANQA manual on expertise, the time-schedule comprised planned meetings with all the groups, close and open meetings, review of documents and observation of resources, visits to structural units of the Academy, etc.

After specifying the issues and documents subject to examination, the expert panel clarified the problems to be discussed in meetings. During regular meetings the questions on each standard were discussed, and the package of preliminary visit by the expert panel was planned. The package included the planned time-schedule of meetings², issues for further review and clarification according to target groups and the list of additional documents which were planned to be examined during the site visit. The representatives of teaching staff and students, alumni and employers were selected from the lists provided by the Academy to participate in the meetings.

Preparatory visit

On 29 November 2019 the preparatory visit to the CMSA was made. The time-schedule of the site visit was agreed upon with the Academy, the list of additional documents for further examination was presented, mutually agreed decisions on organization, technical and informational issues, code of conduct and ethical rules of participants were discussed and made. The rooms arranged for focus group meetings and for the expert panel were observed, and the issues relating to their furnishing and technical equipment were clarified.

Site-visit

The site visit was made in the period of 9-12 December 2019. According to the time-schedule, the activities of the site visit launched with the closed meeting the aim of which was to discuss with Bartłomiej Pączek the framework of expertise evaluation, the issues subject to examination during the site

² Appendix 2. Time-schedule of the site visit

visit, the Academy's strong and weak points according to criteria, the procedure on focus group meetings, and to come to an agreement on them with him, as well as further steps were clarified.

All the members of the expert panel, the coordinator and the translator participated in the site visit.

The expert panel had a meeting with the CMSA Rector on 8 December, the site visit was summed with the meeting with the management staff of the CMSA. All the planned meetings, including the open meeting in which the representatives of the College's administrative, teaching staff and students also participated, were held in accordance with the time-schedule. During the site-visit the expert panel made a review of documents³, observation of resources⁴ and had focus group meetings in different structural units of the College.

In the closed meeting of the expert panel held at the end of each working day of the site visit, the current results of evaluation were put forward, and the main results of the site visit were summed by the closed discussion upon the end of the site visit.

The expertise evaluation was made within the framework of state accreditation criteria and standards as well as ANQA procedures according to which the evaluation has two levels – **satisfactory/meets** and **unsatisfactory/doesn't meet**.

Expert panel report

The representatives of the expert panel and the ANQA coordinator prepared the draft version of the expert panel report. The international expert prepared a separate opinion on peer review which was integrated into the expert panel report.

The draft version of the expert panel report was presented to the College on 3 February.

The College's agreement on the draft report, some remarks as well as the expert panel's perspective to the mentioned were discussed among the CMSA's representatives, expert panel members and the coordinator on 28 February. As a result of the discussion, some changes were made in the report, and the final version of the expert panel report was submitted to ANQA on 4 March.

Meri Barseghyan
Coordinator of the Accreditation Process

04 March 2020

³ Appendix 3. List of reviewed documents

⁴ Appendix 4. Observed resources

EVALUATION ACCORDING TO ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

BRIEF INFORMATION ABOUT THE EDUCATION INSTITUTION

HISTORY. The Crisis Management State Academy of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Armenia was established during the years of formation of the third Republic of Armenia as a training Institute of cadres, according to the Decree of the RA Government, afterwards it was renamed as Crisis Management Institute of the Department of Emergency Situations. According to the RA Decree No 1055-N as of 29 January 2005, the Institute was renamed “Crisis Management State Academy” non-profit organization.

Since 1993 the Academy has held first training courses for specialists and governing bodies of the RA Government, as well as invested a comprehensive program on radial protection and a row of radio broadcasts as well as organized massive education on issues of radial protection for the population.

During its activity the Academy has had 2215 graduates and the majority of them have been successfully employed in different structural units of the RA MES, state and public sectors, in the field of bank, etc.

Within the scope of fulfillment of its strategic goals the activity of the CMSA is aimed at preparation of high quality specialists having higher education in civil defence and protection of population in emergency situations, at fostering the scientific, intellectual, educational, economic and cultural advancement in the region, as well as at provision of educational and working environment with highly technical modern equipment and high quality and efficient services.

EDUCATION. The activities of the Academy are aimed at development of intellectual and creative abilities of students and teaching staff, creation of student-centered environment and opportunities for students for self-realization, modernization of education content, improvement of creative and analytical-thinking process, innovation and initiative activities, refreshment of teaching methods and investment of modern technologies, assurance of education quality, development of students’ teamwork skills, reinforcement of cooperation with partner institutions as well as formation of education quality assurance system and quality culture.

The Academy fulfills its educational activity in specialties set by the license provided by the RA Ministry of Education and Science (MoES), is guided by main provisions of the RA National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and vocational, Bachelor and Master academic programs in compliance with professional academic programs. The postgraduate, Master, Bachelor and vocational academic programs are implemented in the Faculty of Emergency Situations and Crisis Management.

RESEARCH. Taking into account the fact that the research is considered to be a powerful trigger for ensuring professional progress in the fields of emergency situations and civil defence as well as for enhancing the quality of teaching, the Academy plans to maximum involve teachers and students in research projects, to develop research collaboration with scientific-research institutes, higher education institutions (HEIs) and enterprises of the RA as well as to foster internationalization of the its research activity.

INTERNATIONALIZATION. The Academy cooperates with international partner universities and international organizations such as UN Unicef, UNDP, JICA Japanese organization, Save the Children,

Oxygen, “Response” (Switzerland), German Red Cross, etc. due to which it acquires modern technical equipment. One of the strategic goals of the Academy is to foster processes directed to internationalization for which the CMSA plans to develop and implement a policy promoting internationalization, to develop internationalization processes in the field of education aimed at implementing joint projects with foreign HEIs and organizations as well as at fostering mobility.

QUALITY ASSURANCE. The grounds of QA policy have been set by the Academy’s SP 2014-2019 which reflects all the main issues aimed at enhancement of education quality. The Academy participates in processes of internal and external evaluation and state accreditation, ensures their transparency and publicity of outcomes.

I. MISSION AND PURPOSES

CRITERION: The Tertiary Level Institutions' (TLIs) policy and practices are in accordance with its mission, which is in accordance with the Armenian National Qualifications Framework (hereafter ANQF).

Findings

1.1. The institution has a clear, well-articulated mission that represents the Institution's purposes and goals and is in accordance with Armenian National Qualifications Framework (hereafter ANQF).

The mission of the CMSA of the RA MES, defined by its founding document - the Charter, as well as by Strategic Development Plan (SP) 2014-2019. The SP includes the vision as well as goals and objectives which derive from the vision. The mission and vision of the Academy defined in the SP 2020-2024 are reviewed and expanded.

In the stipulated mission it is defined at what levels of the NQF the Academy carries out its activity.

Different groups of stakeholders highlighted the priority to educate the whole society and thus to formulate culture of security as a component of the CMSA's mission. According to the management of the Academy, it is also important to prepare specialists who will have in-depth thinking and not only commanding skills.

In terms of the goals set for academic programs, some stakeholders mentioned that the Academy prepares specialists exceptionally for the needs of the MES, and some of them mentioned that more multifunctional specialists are prepared. According to some external stakeholders, the Academy prepares more specialists than needed. At the same time, while recruiting employees in the MES system, the Ministry assigned to give priority to the graduates of the CMSA.

The Academy has replenished the list of specialties and specializations together with the RA MoES.

According to the Action Plan and respective time-schedule (2017), the Academy has planned to formulate the goals of the SP on the basis of analyses of external factors and opportunities.

1.2. The TLI's mission, goals and objectives reflects the needs of the internal and external stakeholders.

While speaking about the mission and goals of the CMSA, the internal and external stakeholders used almost the same expressions and directions, except for those mentioned above.

The communication between the representative of the CMSA founder and the main employer - MES, is ensured almost on a daily basis; the reflection of needs of the MES in the goals and objectives of the Academy is ensured by orders. Apart from being an authorized body, the MES representatives are involved in collegial governing bodies and teaching staff, and the CMSA graduates - in different levels of the MES system.

The specialists of the MES are involved in the working group which was compiled for the development of the CMSA SP 2020-2024, based on the Rector's order. The working group collects suggestions and remarks from different structural units and groups of stakeholders and puts them for discussion on a regular basis. In order to ensure wide-scale discussions among stakeholders, the draft version of the SP was posted on the website of the Academy.

1.3. The Institution has approved mechanisms and procedures to evaluate the achievement of its mission and purposes and further improve them.

Since 2010 the presentation and evaluation of the Academy's activity are made with the help of annually published general report which reflects the main outcomes of activities of different structural units in the previous year, the main achievements and revealed problems as well as planned activities and improvements.

According to the self-evaluation, the process of implementation of the SP and its goals is evaluated upon completion of each academic year, based on the Rector's report on the main outcomes of the CMSA' activity, as well as on KPIs and other analyses (Dean of the faculty, heads of structural units). However, no changes have been made in the SP based on annual reports.

In annual reports on implementation of the SP it is mainly mentioned which actions have been fulfilled, which are still in the process and which of them haven't been made yet.

According to the Action Plan (2017), it has been planned to re-develop the plan and time-schedule of the SP by ensuring its compliance with the SP, to make clear distribution of resources, to thoroughly define guiding indicators for evaluating the progress of the SP and to make analysis of implementation of SP goals by using the mentioned indicators.

Although there is analysis on the activity of the Academy in accordance with the KPIs, the analysis is not sustainable and it doesn't serve as a basis for future activity.

There are no coordinated grounds of revision of the CMSA's mission, vision and goals set in the SP 2020-2024.

According to the representatives of the QA Center, the fulfillment of goals is evaluated by either "done" or "not done".

The plan and time-schedules of implementation of the SP have been developed, and the planned actions or activities for the implementation of each strategic objective, set deadlines, responsible bodies or performers as well as necessary resources are presented. However, the allocation of resources is not clear; it is only mentioned - human, informational and financial.

The significant number of strategic objectives is planned to be solved by activities to be taken within the scope of international projects.

CONSIDERATIONS: The mission and goals of the Academy are stipulated by the Charter and strategic plans and this way they reflect the vision of the founder. However, the fact that the same ideas are pointed out by different groups of stakeholders which (ideas) are not fixed in the formulations of documents state that the real perception of the CMSA' mission to some extent differs from the fixed one. Nonetheless, it is clear to all stakeholders what expectations they have from the Academy.

The CMSA's mission on some key issues is not finally formulated yet. In particular, it is not clear if the Academy "serves" for the MES system only or it prepares more flexible specialists. Because of lack of clear orientation in this field the future employment of CMSA's graduates is put at risk. This is also stated by the necessity of the MES's order to give preference to the CMSA's graduates in recruitment of specialists.

The compliance with the NQF is also ensured by the activities which are jointly implemented by the MoES.

The Academy has large opportunities to study its external stakeholders' needs and to convert them into strategic plan as far as the majority of external stakeholders is focused on the MES system, and there is an intensive communication with the MES. However, in this regard, the external stakeholders who are not representatives of the MES are drawn to the background and can be left out from the processes of forming the Academy's goals.

The homogeneity of internal stakeholders' opinions on the mission and the Academy's efforts directed to the assurance of internal stakeholders' participation in the development of the SP allow to conclude that the mission, goals and objectives are in compliance with their needs.

The different approaches which are applied to ensure and to evaluate the implementation of goals defined by the SP (reports, KPIs, plans and time-schedules) and the absence of their significant impact on the SP state about the fact that the Academy hasn't invested functional mechanisms of monitoring the implementation of goals and their improvement. At the same time, the poor planning hinders the evaluation and improvement which is conditioned by the fact that the necessary resources and other factors are not clearly defined beforehand, and the strategic priorities are linked with international projects. As a result, there is a risk to set priorities which differ from those which derive from real needs.

SUMMARY: Taking into consideration the general approaches of majority of different groups of the Academy's internal and external stakeholders to the mission and goals, the large opportunities of the founder and the main employer to influence the goals of the Academy as well as the steps directed to the investment of some mechanisms of evaluation of implementation of the set goals, it can be concluded that the activity of the CMSA is in compliance with the mission it has adopted.

CONCLUSION: The compliance with the institutional competences of the CMSA with the requirements of the Criterion 1 is evaluated *satisfactory*.

II. GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

CRITERION: The institution's system of governance, administrative structures and their practices are effective are effective and intend to the accomplishment of its mission and purposes by keeping the governance code of ethics.

Findings

2.1. The Institution's system of governance ensures regulated decision-making process, in accordance with defined code of ethics and has efficient provision of human, material and financial resources to accomplish its educational and other purposes.

The CMSA is a non-profit state organization. Its governing bodies (including collegial ones), their functions and relations are defined by the Charter. The issues relating to decision making by governing bodies as well as the framework of their authorities are defined by the Charter and by the regulation of each body.

The main governing body - the Board, convenes sessions at least once a year in which the activities of the given year are summed, the Rector's report is heard, the budget is approved and, upon necessity, the SP and the Charter are discussed. The Rector is the Deputy President of the Board.

As a rule, the Rector's suggestions are discussed and approved in the Councils.

The authorities of structural units are defined by the CMSA's Charter as well as by charters and regulations of structural units. There are separate job descriptions.

Based on the recommendations mentioned in the expert panel report of the institutional accreditation (2017), the Academy has replenished the organizational structure of management, in particular, it has been replenished with structural units which are necessary for coordination of separate

directions. However, the new structural units are not recruited with human resources yet and they are not fully operated. In particular, the Scientific Research Center is not fully recruited with human resources yet, till May 2019 it was managed by the Vice-Rector, and the Assistant to the Rector is in charge of some issues on internationalization⁵.

The rest of the structural units do not express any need for human, material and financial resources but there are no invested mechanisms for continuous evaluation of efficiency of the management system and resources used for it. For example, in the Accounting Department there are 4 staff members the need of which is not grounded. A Committee on maintenance of legality and protection of students' rights has been established which hasn't carried out any activity within a year but the reasons of the inactivity of the mentioned Committee haven't been evaluated yet.

If specific professional problems emerge for solution of which there are no respective responsible staff members, the Academy applies to the MES, e.g. to the Legal Department.

The guards are full-time employees of the Academy.

The regulation on ethical rules and code of conduct of the CMSA's staff functions.

2.2. The TLI's system of governance provides student and teachers opportunity to participate in decision-making processes directed to them.

The teachers and students are involved in the Board and Scientific Council of the Academy. Although the regulation on selection of internal stakeholders for involvement in councils is defined, it is not always functional; as it turned out from the site visit, some members of the Board/Council do not exactly know how they were involved in the composition of the Board.

According to the minutes of sessions and stakeholders' opinions, the students' participation in session of the Council is passive.

All teachers of the chair are members of the chair and by the management of the Head of the chair they participate in chair discussions relating to the educational and scientific issues of the chair.

2.3. The TLI's develops and implements short, mid, and long- term planning consistent with its mission and purposes and has clear monitoring and implementation mechanisms.

As a first level of planning or long-term planning, the Academy has developed a five-year SP which was approved by the Board, and the ways and means for its fulfillment have been set by the planned time-schedule. There are short-term annual plans. However, the hierarchy of long-term and short-term plans is not ensured.

Based on the SP, every structural unit compiles work plan for the given academic year, and its performance is evaluated by the report, taking into consideration the anticipated outcomes which are stipulated in the work plan on implementation of each goal and objectives of the SP. There are strategic development plans of chairs which, however, do not have a strategic character and do not involve measurable goals.

Besides the Rector's report, there are reports provided by faculties and other units. But the reports are not compiled in the format of respective plans. There are no other mechanisms of monitoring of plans, except for operative control of implementation of short-term plans. There are guiding indicators stipulated in the SP which evaluate the progress of implementation of the SP. The indicators are defined

⁵ The sentence was changed as a result of the discussion among the CMSA's representatives and the experts.

for implementation of each goal and objectives, however, the indicators are not being analyzed. The Academy doesn't make analyses based on reports.

2.4. The TLI conducts environmental scanning and draws on reliable data during the decision -making process.

The Academy doesn't make studies of factors influencing its activity. But the studies made by the MES as well as the MES system, as a central component of the CMSA's external environment, are available to the Academy. The studies/scanning of internal environment is made by current meetings, discussions and surveys.

2.5. The management of the policies and the processes draws on the quality management principle (plan-do-check-act /PDCA/).

Conditioned by the specificity of the sphere within the scope of which the Academy acts, the control and accountability are given importance to by the CMSA but they are not directed to the evaluation of efficiency.

Some of the procedures are in the phases of planning and implementation, but no evaluation assuming the consequences of the rest has been made by the Academy.

2.6. There are mechanisms in place ensuring data collection on the effectiveness of the academic programmes and other processes, analyses and application of the data in decision-making.

According to the Action Plan (2017), it has been planned to establish a necessary database for evaluating and analyzing the management and efficiency of APs and other processes as well as to make it available to the Academy's stakeholders.

Nonetheless, the efficiency of data collection, elaboration and application is not being evaluated in the Academy.

2.7. There are impartial mechanisms evaluating the quality of quantitative and qualitative information on the academic programs and qualification awards.

The positive image is appreciated in the Academy, and the latter tries to follow the website and it has realized that the frequency of visits to the website can be tracked and considered to be an indicator. However, in general there are no regulations of information publication, and no evaluation is made.

CONSIDERATIONS: The functional framework of almost all the governing bodies of the Academy is clearly set by respective documents. But there are no examples the operation of which is restricted by uncertainty of functions and authorities (especially committees, centers).

The fact that as a rule, the CMSA' Board and the Scientific Council approve the Rector's suggestions, and that the Rector is the Deputy Head of the Board, points out that the collegial bodies are to some extent fictive which has a negative impact on the collegial management principle.

The effectiveness of the governance system is not evaluated yet which puts at risk the efficacy of resources applied in the system.

The point that the CMSA has different approaches to different directions of non-profile activity (in particular, it recruits its own human resources on the one hand, and uses the MES infrastructure, on the other hand) also states about the fact that the decisions on organizational structure of management are

made mostly intuitively, and the relations between the Academy and the MES are not clearly regulated in all spheres.

There are opportunities for the CMSA's teachers and students to participate in decision making but the opportunities are very poorly used especially by students.

The existence of plans with different terms states about the fact that the CMSA gives importance to the top-bottom planning but the everyday activities of the Academy's structural units are not based on the plans derived from the SP yet and consequently, they are not directed to the strategic goals.

There are hardly any functioning mechanisms of monitoring of different plans which endangers their objective evaluation and improvement. Different levels of the Academy have to make decisions intuitively, without any specific indicators.

In decision making the base of information on the environment is mainly ensured by the MES. In this regard, the reliability of information doesn't raise any doubt but the Academy is not proactive.

The imperfect mechanisms of evaluating the efficiency of policies and procedures put their improvement at risk. However, the integration of new procedures states that some evaluation is being made but mostly intuitively. The efficiency of data collection, elaboration and application is not evaluated by the Academy.

The CMSA realizes the importance and possible impact of published information but there are no clearly formulated regulations and mechanisms of evaluating the efficiency of published information yet.

SUMMARY: Taking into consideration the fact that the major part of functions and authorities of the CMSA's governing boards and structural units is defined, job descriptions are existent, stakeholders are involved in collegial bodies, and the MES is available in terms of being a necessary source of information for decision making, it can be concluded that the governance system of the Academy ensures some level of efficiency and in general complies with the mission and goals.

CONCLUSION: The compliance with the institutional competences of the CMSA with the requirements of the Criterion 2 is evaluated *satisfactory*.

III. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

CRITERION: The programs are in concord with the Institution's mission, form part of institutional planning and promote mobility and internationalization.

Findings

3.1 The academic programs are thoroughly formulated according to the intended learning outcomes, which correspond to an academic qualification and are in line with the TLI's mission and the state academic standards.

In the last 5 years the list of specialties for Bachelor's (BA) and Master's (MA) degrees, in compliance with the Objective 2.2. of the SP 2014-2019, has been replenished with demanded specialties and specializations. 2 specializations for BA academic program (AP) have been integrated, and 3 - for MA program. The existing specialties have been re-classified, and content-related and structural updates of APs, aimed at attainment of learning outcomes (LOs), have been made on a regular basis. The APs are in compliance with the mission. The Academy has made a change in awarding qualifications aimed at

ensuring their compliance with the mission. In the newly developed APs there is a detailed description according to awarded qualifications and outcomes. The future opportunities of employment for graduates are described. However, not all APs are in line with this structure. The link of LOs with the NQF outcomes is not clear. The changes of APs do not quickly respond the current requirements of the labor market. The involvement of teachers and external stakeholders in processes of development and revision of APs is poor.

According to the Action Plan (2017), it has been planned to also clarify the mapping of LOs of APs and syllabi which is in the process.

3.2 The Institution has a policy that ensures alignment between teaching and learning approaches and the intended learning outcomes of academic programs promoting student-centered learning.

After the previous accreditation process, according to the improvement/action plan, a necessity has emerged to clarify the mapping of LOs of syllabi and the methodology of assessment, teaching and learning by grounding the compliance of LOs. Currently there are defined LOs for all APs. In APs there are set competencies, mapping of formation of competences as well as compliance of teaching and learning methods with LOs. The teaching and learning methods have been differentiated which, however, are not defined at the level of courses. The teaching and learning methods of LOs defined as knowledge, competences and skills in the APs do not differ from each other. The experience of teachers in clearly forming and defining LOs is not sufficient. Teachers' professional trainings which are dominantly guided by the MES lead to modernization of teaching methods but the main focus is on practical methods, while theoretical ones are ignored.

The Academy is mainly led by the requirements set by the MES, thus to some extent ignoring other requirements of the labor market and students' needs.

At the same time the Academy mentions that some changes are anticipated in the legal field deriving from the concept on "Disaster Risk Management" (DRM) which will further imply the necessity to invest the DRM processes in legal frameworks of all governing bodies of the RA. This will foster the formation of the new labor market and the study of other employers' needs⁶. The methods directed to the acquisition of competences and skills are not flexible enough and sometimes they do not allow to fill in the gap even if the absence is grounded with reasonable excuses. Although there are a number of mechanisms which directly and indirectly evaluate the efficiency of teaching and learning methods, in particular, surveys conducted among students per semester, annual surveys conducted among graduates, surveys for studying external stakeholders' opinions about the Academy's graduates, open and demonstrative classes as well as class observations, the involvement of students in formation of education content is passive.

3.3 The TLI's has policy on students' assessment according to the learning outcomes and ensures academic integrity.

There is a clearly set policy on assessment and testing of students as well as mechanisms through which students' knowledge, skills and competences are assessed. In 2019 the Procedure on Appeal of Student Knowledge Assessment was replenished. The Regulation on Organization of Educational Process with Bachelor's and Master's Programs defines assessment procedures but not the policy, principles and

⁶ The sentence was added as a result of the discussion among the CMSA's representatives and the experts.

criteria of assessment. The conduction of current/mid-term examination does not allow to check students' residual knowledge which is important for the formation of LOs. The outcomes of assessment of students' course and final papers are not satisfactory either and they often didn't fully serve for the set purpose and were rather fictive. As the site visit showed, the final attestation is mainly directed to the assessment of theoretical knowledge. The assessment process does not fully ensure the check of LOs, the list of assignments at course level is missing.

The efficiency of the invested assessment system is discussed at chairs, faculties and among students upon the end of each semester, and some parts are revised on the basis of suggestions provided by internal stakeholders. The link of the assessment system of internship and respective LOs is not substantiated.

Since 2016 the Academy functions the Regulation on Academic Honesty. At the same time the investment of the system of control and assessment of students' knowledge fosters the integration of components of competitiveness and objectiveness in the educational process. The Academy implements graduates' final attestations by means of respective committees, and the whole process is being video-recorded.

3.4 The academic programmes of the TLI are contextually coherent with other relevant programmes and promote internationalization and mobility of students and staff.

In 2014-2018 there were no inflows and outflows of the Academy's students and teachers, at the same time the opportunities to invite leading specialists (especially international ones) to teach within the scope of the CMSA's APs are limited. There are no mechanisms and clear procedures of comparative analysis (benchmarking) of leading practice of APs while in this regard the experience is not sufficient. At the same time, according to the action/improvement plan, it was planned to develop policy of benchmarking.

However, the Academy has taken activities in this direction and expands the scope of cooperation. In 2018-2019 the Academy signed cooperation agreements with National Technical Research University after A. N. Tupolev of Kazan (Federation of Russia) and the Academy of Civil Defence of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of Russia, aimed at assurance of exchange and mobility of students and teachers. After the conditional institutional accreditation (2017) the groups compiled for revision and formation of established APs in accordance with specialties studied the state standards of HEIs of Russia in the given field. Based on the results of studies and respective APs, the Academy has compiled and invested APs which are in line with modern educational requirements, are compatible with the NQF and contain formulation of competences in accordance with provisions of the Bologna process. Professional trainings of teachers which are regularly held and supported by the MES, also foster the acquisition and investment of leading practice.

3.5 The Institution has a policy ensuring academic program monitoring, evaluation of effectiveness assessment and enhancement.

The Policy and Procedures of Evaluation of Academic Programs of the Academy was endorsed in 2017. The mentioned document reflects the main provisions of evaluation of outcomes of APs and LOs as well as the general description of processes of evaluation and improvement. In 2018 the regulation on current monitoring and revision of APs was replenished and invested according to which it is mandatory for all APs to be monitored and regularly revised. In the SER it is mentioned that in monitoring the quality of providing the given AP as well as academic standards in the implementation of the AP are

evaluated, strong and weak points of the AP are put forward but there are no summative reports on monitoring of APs at chairs.

The Academy conducts surveys on courses (as components of the AP) among students but the general average point is provided to chairs. Class observations are held but the analysis results are again expressed only by general average point. In the processes directed to implementation and continuous improvement of APs the interest and participation of external stakeholders is weak. At the same time the teachers are mainly from the MES and they also make changes at micro-level.

In general, the process of APs' monitoring, evaluation of efficiency and improvement is not coordinated but it is carried out based on the practical experience of experienced specialists, partners and employees of the MES.

CONSIDERATIONS: The replenishment of list of specialties with demanded professions and specializations gives learners large opportunity to be employed in the labor market. The APs are in compliance with the mission, and with this aim a change of awarded qualifications of different APs has also been made. The expert panel positively evaluates the fact that some steps have been taken to clarify the LOs, however, their interrelation with the outcomes of the NQF is not clear. Taking into consideration the character of APs implemented at the AP it is highly important to ensure quick response of APs to current requirements of the labor market, however, it is not ensured. The Academy should also be concerned about the fact that its teachers and external stakeholders are poorly involved in the processes of development and revision of APs.

As a result of the last change of APs the teaching and learning methods in accordance with outcomes are involved in them but this is not expressed at course level. The teaching and learning methods of APs do not differ from each other according to knowledge, competences and skills; in this regard the policy of selection of methods is not understandable and is not clearly perceived by teachers either.

The insufficient flexibility of methods applied for the acquisition of competences and skills can impede the complete formation of LOs. Teachers' participation in trainings ensures modernization of teaching methods which, however, is not expressed at the level of course delivered by the given teacher. In terms of evaluation of efficiency of methods there are a number of mechanisms but it is also important to take into account students' opinions, while their involvement and activeness is to some extent not sufficient.

The Academy has clear policy and defined procedure in the processes of students' knowledge assessment and appeal. However, it doesn't give an opportunity to check students' residual knowledge which can hinder the formation of LOs. In general, the assessment process does not fully ensure the check of outcomes, and especially at course level there are no clearly assigned tasks in accordance with outcomes. At the same time, the Academy should be concerned about the fact that the final attestation doesn't allow to make evaluation of practical competences and skills.

There are mechanisms of evaluating the efficiency of assessment system, however, they need to be improved, and at the same time the research outcomes need to be comprehensively analyzed.

In the Academy there are enough means and mechanisms to ensure academic honesty.

The expert panel finds that the absence of mechanisms and procedures of mobility of students and teachers as well as lack of comparative analysis of leading practice of APs are highly worrisome. Still, the activities taken by the Academy towards expanding the scope of cooperation and improving APs are important as far as this gives large opportunities for mobility of teachers and students.

The expert panel positively evaluates the fact that there is a policy on APs' monitoring, evaluation of efficiency and improvement, and separate processes are carried out which, however, are not coordinated, regulated and targeted. This should be in the center of attention of the CMSA' managerial staff.

SUMMARY: Taking into consideration the fact that the current APs are mainly in compliance with the Academy's mission, are described in details according to awarded qualifications and anticipated LOs, the Academy has taken steps to ensure selection according to teaching and learning methods of LOs, realizes the importance of proper policy on knowledge assessment, ensures academic honesty, gives importance to mobility of teachers and students and takes a number of activities in this direction, has a policy on APs' monitoring, evaluation of efficiency and improvement which allows to further ensure coordinated process, as well as fosters the involvement of students, teachers and employers in the mentioned processes, the expert panel finds that the Academy meets the requirements of the Criterion 3.

CONCLUSION: The compliance with the institutional competences of the CMSA with the requirements of the Criterion 3 is evaluated *satisfactory*.

IV. STUDENTS

CRITERION: The TLI provides relevant student support services ensuring the effectiveness of the learning environment.

Findings

4.1. The Institution has set mechanisms for promoting equitable recruitment, selection and admission procedures.

According to the self-evaluation, the admission to the Academy is organized in accordance with the Regulation on Full-time and Part-time Education with Bachelor's Academic Program in the Academy. And the admission to education for Master's degree is organized according to the Regulation of Admission and Education in Master's Degree of Higher Education Institutions of the Republic of Armenia and the Regulation on Organization of Admission and Education with Master's Academic Program of the Academy (SC N2, 05.05.2014). In spite of the existence of the clear procedure of admission and positive tendencies in admission, no analysis on admission is made, and not all applicants have a full picture of what kind of educational institution they are admitted to.

During the site visit it turned out that in order to recruit applicants, the Academy disseminates information on its website and in the "911" electronic newspaper. In the site visit it was clear that the recruitment of applicants is also fostered by the currently acting college through which some of the students continue their education at the CMSA. The representativeness in the *Dasaran.am* also has a positive impact.

4.2. The Institution has policies and procedures for revealing student educational needs.

According to the self-evaluation, there are a number of mechanisms of needs assessment of students at the Academy such as students' involvement in governing bodies, conduction of surveys among students. The CMSA's students also have opportunities to directly address their concerns to the administrative staff representatives who guide them towards solution to different problems. Although the

Academy conducts surveys among students to reveal their needs, it doesn't make in-depth analysis on survey results, and the level of efficiency of their conduction is not evaluated either.

The site visit showed that some students mainly prefer to solve their problems by addressing them to the administrative staff. A number of problems have been solved this way, among which the change of a teacher based on students' request and addition of practical hours can be mentioned.

4.3. The TLI provides advising services, opportunities for extra-curricular activities supporting students' effective learning.

According to the self-evaluation made by the Academy, the policy of organization of facultative courses and provision of consultancy is stipulated in the SP 2020-2024. There is also an educational consultant, and in order to regulate his/her activity, a Regulation on Activity of the Educational Consultant at the Academy has been developed. The consultant presents students' academic interests and regularly organizes group and individual consultancies on students' diverse problems relating to the educational process.

Besides consultancy services, facultative professional consultancies are also organized according to the time-schedules approved by chairs, in particular, consultancies relate to the courses taught by the given chair in respective semester, and they are specially organized to prepare students for final attestation examinations.

In the site visit it turned out that facultative courses are organized for students to enhance their language proficiency. However, the involvement of students in those courses is low. The site visit also showed that the SC organizes meetings with teachers ever week to discuss different issues.

The efficient learning of students is also promoted by the conduction of courses in small groups due to which students can receive answers to their questions during those courses.

4.4. The TLI has set regulation and schedule for students to receive additional support and guidance from the administrative staff of the faculty.

According to the self-evaluation, in order to provide support and guidance to students, a clearly set time-schedule is available according to which the administrative staff admits students. But there isn't respective regulation relating to the mentioned process; the students are not informed who they should apply to. In the site visit it turned out that the students often apply to the administrative staff to find solutions to their problems.

4.5. The Institution has student career support services.

According to the self-evaluation, in order to increase the efficiency of career support services provided to students, the information illuminating the activities of students, the SC and the Student Scientific Union (SSU) as well as those about organized educational trainings, sports and other events is posted on the CMSA's website, Facebook page and "911" e-newspaper.

There is an order of the RA Minister of Emergency Situations as of 2012, according to which the CMSA's graduates are given priority in recruitment as employees to different structural units of the MES system.

In the site visit it turned out that mainly the MES's needs and requirements are taken into account, while the needs of other employers are mostly not taken into consideration. The site visit also

showed that the link with alumni is poor. The information about the alumni is mainly collected by means of Facebook pages; no other mechanisms are applied.

4.6. The Institution promotes student involvement in its research activities.

According to the Academy's SP, the assurance of students' participation in scientific research activities is a priority to the CMSA. According to the self-evaluation, the BA and MA APs envisage students' involvement in different research activities, in particular, by preparation of essays, course papers and MA theses.

In spite of the fact that according to the Action Plan and time-schedule (2017) it was planned to develop clear policy/mechanisms of promoting students' involvement in scientific research activities, no mechanisms have been respectively invested.

As it turned out in the site visit, in the Academy there are no programs in which students are involved. The number of published articles is also low. However, the SSU regularly organizes conferences.

As the results of the site visit and review of documents showed, some graduates didn't make any research within the scope of their thesis but at the same time the suggestions which made by some of the graduates as a result of their research were applied in different spheres after some time.

It was also clear from the site visit that there isn't any clearly set differentiation between papers prepared by BA and MA students.

4.7. The Institution has a special body for the students' rights protection.

According to the SER, the rights and obligations of the Academy's students are stipulated by the RA legislation, RA Government decrees and internal disciplinary rules of the Academy.

There are respective units which are in charge of protection of students' rights, namely, the Student Council and the Committee on Protection of Students' Rights. However, in the site visit it was observed that the information about the activity of the mentioned Committee among students was missing. The Committee hasn't put forward any problem relating to students within one year of its activity. As the meeting showed, the students mainly individually approach respective bodies rather than the SC to address their concerns.

4.8. The TLI has evaluation and quality assurance mechanisms of student educational, advisory and other services.

According to the self-evaluation, the CMSA's policy on mechanisms of evaluation and QA of students' educational, consultancy and other services is stipulated in the SP, in the CMSA's Charter and in the QA Concept. The QAC conducts surveys among students to evaluate educational, consultancy and other support services for students. The results of surveys are elaborated and analyzed by the QAC and are discussed in respective structural units.

There is a clear time-schedule for applying to the consultants at the Academy, as well as clear regulation on planning of consultants' activities is available. Nonetheless, in the site visit it turned out that the students are not aware of the time-schedule and they apply casually. The results of the consultants' activities are not analyzed, and the opportunity to develop improvement plan is missing.

In accordance with the Action Plan and time-schedule (2017), it was planned to make analyses on evaluation of services provided to students in order to identify their reliability and impact of results on services. Besides the mentioned surveys, no other mechanisms have been invested.

CONSIDERATIONS: The expert panel finds it positive that there are clear mechanisms of students' recruitment and selection in the Academy, but the dissemination of information about the activity of the Academy needs some improvement. Another positive point is that surveys are conducted among students to reveal their needs but this process is imperfect. According to the expert panel's observations, the selected policy is unclear. The conduction of surveys is inefficient as far as students don't raise their problems through surveys but rather address them to the administrative staff.

It is a positive point that there is a clear time-schedule set for provision of support and guidance to students, however, the process is not coordinated.

Taking into consideration the fact that the research activities made by students are few, the expert panel finds that some promotional means can foster the increase of number of students' research activities.

The expert panel positively evaluates the fact that there are SC and Committee on Protection of Students' Rights but the mentioned bodies to some extent lack trust of students, and the level of students' awareness about their activities is also very low.

SUMMARY: Taking into account the fact that the Academy has clear mechanisms of students' recruitment and selection, surveys are conducted among students to identify their needs, and students are factually provided support by different structural units of the Academy, it can be concluded that in order to ensure efficiency of educational environment, the Academy provides sufficient support to its students.

CONCLUSION: The compliance with the institutional competences of the CMSA with the requirements of the Criterion 4 is evaluated *satisfactory*.

V. FACULTY AND STAFF

CRITERION: The TLI has a highly qualified teaching and supporting staff to accomplish the institution's mission and to implement the goals set for academic programmes.

Findings

5.1. The Institution has policies and procedures promoting recruitment of a highly qualified teaching and supporting staff capable of ensuring programme provisions.

According to the self-evaluation, there is a regulation on selection of teaching staff with necessary qualifications for the implementation of APs, as well as there are clear processes to apply the mentioned regulation. The latter defines the rules of formation of the Academy's teaching staff, criteria of career promotion, competition-based selection as well as regulation and conditions of positioning.

In 2014 the policy and procedures of recruitment, selection and professional development of teaching staff in the Academy were approved, and in 2019 the regulation on competition-based selection and positioning of teaching staff was developed.

According to the self-evaluation, the selection of support staff is made by the chair, based on peculiarities of APs which are implemented by the given chair. The selection is mainly made among best

graduates who have graduated from the given MA AP in the specialty provided by the chair or in related specialties.

5.2. The teaching staff qualifications for each programme are comprehensively stated.

According to the self-evaluation, apart from the practice of ensuring selection, positioning and progression of teaching staff, the precise requirements set for professional qualities of teaching staff of the Academy according to APs are newly being developed in spite of the fact that respective action was planned according to the Action Plan and respective time-schedule (2017). There is also a system of moral and material promotion at the Academy.

In the site-visit it turned out that there are policy and procedures on recruitment, selection and professional development of the CMSA' teaching staff, and the job descriptions are existent, but the requirements set for teachers' professional qualities according to APs are not clear. The Academy is in direct communication with the MES and its staff members, and while making recruitment of teachers, the priority is given to experienced staff members, sometimes disregarding their pedagogical and teaching competences.

5.3. The Institution has well established policies and procedures for the periodic evaluation of the teaching staff.

The Academy considers the process of recruitment with high quality specialists as a strategic objective. In order to fulfill it, a multidimensional evaluation of teaching staff is made in accordance with professional preparedness, pedagogical skillfulness, personal qualities, age group, etc. According to the SER, the evaluation of teaching staff is made directed by the head of the chair, Dean of the faculty and students.

In the site visit it turned out that the evaluation of teaching staff is made twice a year. The class observations, questionnaires filled in by students, evaluation by the heads of chairs as well as reciprocal class observations are among forms of evaluation. There is also a rating system of teachers the results of which, however, are not analyzed.

5.4. The TLI implements teacher professional development in accordance to the needs outlined during regular evaluations (both internal and external).

In 2014 the document on "Policy and Procedures of Recruitment, Selection and Professional Development of Teaching staff" was developed by which teachers' job descriptions, general procedure of formation of teaching staff and selection criteria as well as indicators of efficiency of recruitment and selection process are defined. In 2019 the regulation on competition-based selection and positioning of staff was developed.

In the site visit it turned out that the majority of teaching staff are officers for which no trainings on teaching methods were held. It also turned out that the needs assessment is not made. There are no clear mechanisms for identifying teachers' needs.

According to the Action Plan and respective time-schedule (2017), it was planned to make evaluation of efficiency of trainings based on compliance with prioritized needs, but the analysis on teachers' needs is missing which is stated by the absence of steps directed to improvement. The Academy organizes trainings on foreign language proficiency which does not derive from needs assessment and is

not coordinated either. With the aim to ensure practice exchange, class observations of young teachers are held.

5.5. The TLI ensures the sustainability of the teaching staff according to academic programs.

According to the SER, the teaching staff is recruited based on the necessity to fulfill the mission of the Academy, the objectives and goals of APs, and the mechanisms of multifactor evaluation of the mentioned staff and improvement plans do not give opportunity to the Academy to recruit its teaching staff with specialists who will meet the academic needs of the Academy's internal and external stakeholders. The policy of mentoring is among mechanisms ensuring retention of teaching staff, i.e. more experienced teachers support freshman teachers. The factor fostering the retention of high-quality specialists of the Academy is the permission to approve topics for dissertations in the specialty of "Geological Environment Protection" provided by the Supreme Certifying Committee of the Republic of Armenia (RA SCC) in 2019.

In the site visit it turned out that the MES ensures the retention of teaching staff, and the salaries of the given teachers are paid by the MES as far as they are considered to be officers. However, there isn't any developed policy which would reflect the sustainability of teachers teaching subjects not related to specialties.

5.6 There are set policies and procedures for the staff promotion.

According to the SER, the management staff of the Academy pays big attention to the development and enhancement of teachers' professional competences, skills and their professional progression. There are a number of mechanisms of ensuring teachers' professional development and supporting young teachers. With the aim to gain experience, young teachers often participate in courses conducted by experienced teachers or invite them to their own classes which also fosters the development of professional competences of freshman teachers.

5.7 The Institution has necessary technical and administrative staff to achieve the strategic goals.

According to the SER, the formation of list of positions for administrative and support staff, definition of obligations of employees according to positions, staff selection, progression and attestation are regulated by the Charter of the Academy, charters of separate structural units, job descriptions and by the participation of the authorized body.

As defined in the draft SP 2020-2024, the Academy has set the objective to revise job descriptions of support, engineering-technical staff and other categories of employees, to develop and invest system of training and attestation of staff members involved in administrative, support and engineering-technical positions as well as to develop criteria and respective regulation on diversified premium for administrative and support staff.

In the site visit it turned out that while recruiting administrative and support staff members, the Academy mainly gives priority to its graduates, sometimes not looking for other employees with high professional competences.

CONSIDERATIONS: The expert panel positively evaluates the fact that there are policy and procedures of selection of teaching and support staff with necessary qualifications for the implementation of APs. But the Academy gives preference mainly to its graduates. The tight links with the MES, on the other hand, ensure availability of experienced specialists in the recruitment of teaching staff.

Although the Academy manages to ensure teachers with professional competences, the efficient transition of those competences to students is put at risk as far as no significant efforts are made in the direction of forming and developing pedagogical competences of the teaching staff.

The functioning of different ways of evaluating the activity of teaching staff (surveys, class observations, etc.) allows to conclude that the policy of evaluation of teaching staff is being formulated at the Academy. However, the evaluation is not yet aimed at needs assessment and respective improvement although according to the Action Plan and respective time-schedule (2017) it was planned to interlink the current mechanisms of teacher evaluation, to make qualitative analyses and based on them to develop policy of improvement.

There are some invested mechanisms on experience exchange among teaching staff and progression of freshman specialists which fosters the retention of teaching staff. The MES is among those guaranteeing the mentioned (in terms of ensuring with officers). However, the existing mechanisms do not ensure long-term sustainability of teaching staff yet.

The professional progression system is dual; there are some mechanisms which are typical to HEIs (positions, titles and degrees for teaching staff) on the one hand, and the hierarchy of officer ranks is functioning for the officers, on the other hand, which is an additional trigger for professional progression. Nevertheless, in terms of fostering professional progression, the Academy is not active in its internal organizational regulations.

The fact that in selection of administrative and support staff the Academy mainly gives priority to its graduates, gives an opportunity to make quick recruitment of administrative and support staff which fosters its graduates' employment but at the same time it doesn't promote the recruitment with respectively highly professional specialists.

SUMMARY: Taking into consideration the existence of the policy and procedures on selection of teaching and support staff, availability of specialists of the MES, the operation of different forms of evaluation of teachers' activity as well as existence of some mechanisms of experience exchange and progression of freshman specialists, it can be concluded that the assurance with teaching and support staff of the Academy is sufficient for implementation of APs.

CONCLUSION: The compliance with the institutional competences of the CMSA with the requirements of the Criterion 5 is evaluated *satisfactory*.

VI. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

CRITERION: The Institution ensures the implementation of research activity and the link of the research with teaching and learning.

Findings

6.1 The Institution has a clear strategy promoting its research interests and ambitions.

The scope of the Academy's research interests and ambitions are defined in the SP 2014-2019. Besides, within the framework of the action on development of a separate strategy on organization of scientific research activity, defines by the Action Plan and respective time-schedule (2017), a Concept on

Scientific Research Development 2017-2022 was developed which, however, is limited by formulation of generic objectives, is not expressed in clear steps, and the outcomes are not measurable. No analyses have been made to evaluate the efficiency of implementation of research projects.

A Scientific Research Division has been established the activity of which, however, is not regulated yet, the work plan of the mentioned Division is missing either, and it mainly deals with signing contracts and agreements. The Academy has the ambition to expand the scope of its research and to ensure applicable outcomes.

6.2. The TLI has a long-term strategy as well as mid and short -term programmes that address its research interests and ambitions.

The system of strategic management of the scientific research sphere is missing in the Academy. There are neither scientific research projects nor short-term and mid-term research programs in which the representatives of the Academy's teachers and students could be involved in spite of the fact that according to the SP 2014-2019 it was envisaged to ensure involvement of at least 10% of teachers and at least 15% of MA students in research projects which, however, was not ensured. There is a lack of practice in carrying out scientific research activity in the Academy.

The research directions of chairs are clarified but no scientific projects in accordance with those directions are made, only some articles are published, and course papers and MA theses are brought into compliance. Besides, there are not invested research activities jointly carried out by chairs, and the research programs are not interlinked which was planned to ensure according to the Action Plan and respective time-schedule (2017).

Currently the Academy has drafted a project for ensuring research outcome which will be applicable, by investing unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). In cooperation with the Disaster Risk Reduction National Platform (ARNAP) the Academy has a memorandum of implementing scientific research activities.

6.3. The Institution ensures the implementation of research and development through sound policies and procedures.

The budget allocated to science is small; the MES supports the Academy in its initiatives. There is a scientific bulletin at the Academy which is involved in the RA SCC, and the authors have the opportunity to publish articles free of charge. The number of articles published by the CMSA's teachers hasn't increased. The number of published articles authored or co-authored by students is very low. The involvement of teaching staff in scientific research activities hasn't increased. The teaching staff has received remuneration as a promotion but it was awarded to all staff members, and there are neither clear promotion mechanisms nor defined criteria.

There are no clear policy and procedures on conduction of research activities. There are no mechanisms of promoting students to be involved in scientific research activities. The Academy organizes conferences, including those for students. There are no promotion mechanisms, and the indicators separated for scientific research activity in the rating sheet of teaching staff do not derive from strategic ambitions.

6.4. The Institution emphasizes internationalization of its research.

There are available scientific works published by the Academy's teachers in foreign scientific journals but the number of publications in peer-reviewed professional journals of CIS countries hasn't increased, and there are no publications in internationally rated journals at all. There are no international joint scientific research projects. In terms of involvement in international grant research projects, the competences of the CMSA's teaching staff are poor, and at the same time the level of foreign language proficiency is low. There are no articles co-authored with international researchers. The teachers of the Academy have participated in international conferences and workshops but there are no mechanisms of promoting and supporting the conduction of international scientific research.

6.5. The Institution has well established mechanisms for linking research with teaching.

The Academy doesn't have a policy of ensuring interconnection between research and educational process, nor any strategic ambition is set in this direction. The process is not coordinated. The continuity of research works in BA and MA studies is not ensured. The research activity and the educational process are interlinked mainly in MA studies. The MA APs have a research direction, and the research component forms 40% among the 120 credits in total. There are some cases when the outcomes of research made within the scope of MA thesis have been invested in the educational process.

The teachers make their research outcomes reachable to students by means of subjects they teach, by literature assigned to students to prepare their individual, course and final papers as well as by thematic lectures. The process of approving final papers/MA theses beforehand together with employers as well as of organizing internships is in progress. There is a Student Scientific Union (SSU) which organizes conferences for students. The GIS system is applied in the educational process. The conduction of students' research activity is neither fostered nor supported. Besides, there aren't any mechanisms which would foster or support the representatives of the teaching staff who involve students in scientific research activities. Within the scope of internships the students make research in communities, and taking into account the research outcomes, teachers publish manuals. The Academy plans to go on with suchlike research activities with all communities. A new subject course has been integrated into APs – Scientific Research Methodology.

CONSIDERATIONS: The Academy's research strategy having unclear and generic formulations doesn't ensure the development of research activity, and the absence of studies made in the direction of ensuring efficiency of research projects and that of strategic management system of the sphere of scientific research weakens it.

The existence of the Scientific Research Division can foster the coordination of processes in the research field but the Division's functions are not clarified yet, and its activity is not planned in spite of the fact that it is about a year the Division carries out activity.

It is positive that the Academy has an ambition to expand the scope of research and to ensure applicable outcomes, and it has a memorandum signed with ARNAP directed to conduction of research activities.

It is worrisome that there are no scientific research projects, and the Academy lacks the practice of conducting scientific research activity. The scarce of budget allocated to science cannot ensure development.

The existence of the scientific bulletin and the free-of-charge publication of articles as well as organization of conferences provide good opportunities to both teachers and students to present their research outcomes and to establish cooperation.

The Academy should be concerned about the fact that the number of articles published by the teaching staff as well as teachers' involvement in research hasn't increased. There are no mechanisms of promoting conduction of research activity at the Academy.

There are problems in terms of internationalization of research works as far as there are no jointly implemented scientific research projects, articles co-authored with international researchers, publications in internationally rated journals, moreover, the promotion mechanisms deriving from strategic goals are missing. There are publications in peer-reviewed professional journals of CIS countries but the number of suchlike publications hasn't increased. There is a problem in terms of foreign language proficiency and competences of working in international scientific research grant projects which impedes opportunities of mobility and cooperation with foreign universities.

The Academy doesn't have policy of ensuring interlink between research and educational process, neither any strategic ambition is set in this direction, the process is not coordinated as a result of which it is not possible to ensure concurrent development. But it is praiseworthy that some processes are ensured within the framework of internships, course papers and MA theses. There are cases when the research outcomes have been invested in the educational process; this is a positive tendency. But in case of BA APs the research activity is limited by preparation of essays and course papers which hinders the assurance of continuity.

SUMMARY: Taking into consideration the fact that currently the research interests and ambitions of the Academy are neither clear nor measurable, the scientific research directions are not clear, there are no mid-term and short-term programs, the clear policy and procedures on conduction of research is missing, the internationalization in the sphere of research is weak, the links between research and learning are not clear, and the actions planned in the Action Plan and respective time-schedule (2017) haven't taken by the Academy, the expert panel evaluates the Criterion 6 as unsatisfactory.

CONCLUSION: The compliance with the institutional competences of the CMSA with the requirements of the Criterion 6 is evaluated *unsatisfactory*.

VII. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

CRITERION: The Institution has necessary resources to create learning environment and to effectively support the implementation of its stated mission and objectives.

Findings

7.1 The Institution has an appropriate learning environment for the implementation of academic programs.

One of the goals of the Academy's SP is the establishment of high quality infrastructures. In the SER it is mentioned that the Academy has sufficient number of academic campuses and educational base for practical courses – "Lusakert" base of educational-practical courses and Stepanavan "Lore" rescue brigade training grounds. The buildings of the Academy are equipped with respective classrooms and material-technical facilities for the organization of practical, laboratory and research activities.

7.2 The Institution provides appropriate financial resources with necessary equipment and facilities as needed to achieve its mission and objectives.

The objectives relating to the assurance of effective management of resources and financial stability are presented in the CMSA's SP (SP, Objective 6.2). In order to ensure management and control of financial flows of the Academy, the annual estimate of budget inflows and outflows is compiled, and after completion of the given financial year, based on the analyses of factual data, the annual budget performance is presented. In 2019 the Academy developed policy and procedure on financial management, and there are mechanisms of self-evaluation and external evaluation by means of which the CMSA's income and expenses are controlled.

In the site visit it turned out that the Academy has obtained necessary facilities and equipment in accordance with the identified needs, and respective investment has been made in the direction of enhancement of bases.

7.3 The Institution has sound financial distribution policy and capacity to sustain and ensure the integrity and continuity of the programmes offered at the Institution.

According to the Action Plan and respective time-schedule (2017) it was planned to develop mechanisms for defining priorities in allocation of financial means.

The budget estimate of the CMSA is compiled by the Rector, Vice-rectors and Chief Accountant, based on income calculated by the Accountancy, general planned expenses and applications deriving from the needs of the Academy's structural units. Every year the Internal Audit Department of the MES Staff provides independent audit conclusions on financial reports and financial-economic activity of the Academy.

In the site visit it turned out that the financial means ensuring the implementation and continuity of APs are not stable as far as the major part of the budget is generated by students' tuition fees.

7.4. The Institution's resource base supports the implementation of Institution's academic programmes and TLI strategic plan, which promotes sustainability and continuous quality enhancement.

According to the self-evaluation, the planning of resources which are necessary for the implementation of the educational process is made in accordance with the requirements set by the RA Law on Procurement. From the perspective of resource planning and acquisition, the changes of APs based on labor market demands as well as the number of students involved in the APs are the most important factors. In case of some increase of number of students, the Academy can ensure respective amount of resources, e.g. to provide additional load to the teaching staff or to recruit new teachers, etc.

7.5 The Institution has a sound policy and procedure to manage information and documentation.

The improvement of information and documentation circulation management is one of the strategic objectives of the Academy, and the internal and external documentation flow is made according to the regulation of paperwork. In 2011 the Mulberry 1.3 electronic documentation system was invested in the Academy, i.e. network ensuring exchange of internal academic data among structural units of the Academy, and in 2014 – Hosting Space 2 was invested, in 2016 – unified programs on administration of staff and elaboration of database, in 2017 – STOR services, and since 1 April 2019 – new version of electronic management system of documentation circulation - Mulberry 2.0 (2 staff members of the Academy were trained to operate this system) which are centralized information system having one general database.

In the site visit it was clear that the internal networking (STOR) is not widely applied across the Academy, its effectiveness is not evaluated, and the Mulberry 2.0 system is applied for ensuring documentation circulation directly with the MES and in the CMSA it is only used by the Rector. There is documentation circulation system at the Academy but the processes are not operated electronically.

7.6 The Institution creates safe and secure environment through health and safety mechanisms that also consider special needs of students.

It is mentioned in the SER that the security system of the Academy operates since 2009 and the function of guaranteeing safety of buildings, protection of property of the hotel complex as well as security of students and staff is fulfilled in a twenty-four-hour duty mode. The buildings of the Academy are equipped with security and fire protection alarm systems, the campuses and the adjacent area are monitored by cameras. In all campuses of the Academy smoking is strictly forbidden.

In the site visit it turned out that there are security system, elevator, ramp, evacuation scheme and First Aid. As the meetings with teachers and students showed, there are students with special needs in the Academy.

7.7 The Institution has mechanisms in place for the evaluation of the effectiveness, applicability and availability of resources given to the teaching staff and learners.

In the SER it is mentioned that the surveys on satisfaction with resources conducted among teachers, alumni and students, as well as organized discussions and meetings are the mechanisms for evaluating the usefulness, availability and efficiency of provided resources and services. However, as the site visit showed, surveys are conducted but the mechanisms of evaluation and analyses are not clear although according to the Action Plan and respective time-schedule (2017) it was planned to make evaluation of resources and services provided to students in accordance with the requirements of the APs and the SP of the Academy.

CONSIDERATIONS: The existence of territories and technical means ensuring educational diverse environment allows to conclude that the academic environment is favorable for the implementation of APs, and the assurance with resources in educational bases is among priorities of the Academy.

The clear procedure of financial planning shows that the estimates reflecting current needs are greatly taken into account. The equipment of resource base is a priority for which the peculiarities of implementation of APs are taken into consideration. However, in spite of the support provided by the MES, the income of the Academy is not diversified, and the major part of the budget is formed by students' tuition fees. Such a structure of income puts at risk the allocation of resources for new initiatives and the real financial autonomy.

It can be concluded that the necessary resource base is existent, and some activities are taken to expand the base but there are some shortcomings in the risk management system.

The tendencies of enhancing the software which expands the opportunities of improvement of documentation circulation system state that the Academy gives importance to efficient administration of paperwork but the current opportunities are not fully used yet.

There are all the necessary conditions in the Academy to ensure basic safety. Taking into consideration the peculiarities of APs, specific means are required to ensure safety in different practical

courses. Those means are existent by assurance of efficient balance between security and aspirations to formulate an environment which will be maximum realistic.

The conducted surveys allow the Academy to have an overall picture about the efficacy of resources but the lack of in-depth approach to analyses of survey results doesn't allow to fully reveal improvement directions.

SUMMARY: Taking into consideration the fact that the CMSA gives importance to the existence of high quality infrastructures and modern resource base, ensures satisfactory conditions for implementation of APs, has financial means through which it ensures the fulfillment of goals of APs, and there are mechanisms of evaluating the applicability, availability and efficiency of resources provided to internal stakeholders, the expert panel finds that the CMSA has necessary resources to efficiently fulfill its APs.

CONCLUSION: The compliance with the institutional competences of the CMSA with the requirements of the Criterion 7 is evaluated *satisfactory*.

VIII. SOCIETAL RESPONSIBILITY

CRITERION: The Institution is accountable to the government and society for the education it offers and the resources it uses as well as for the research it conducts.

Findings

8.1. The Institution has clear policy on institutional accountability.

The process of accountability of the Academy is regulated by the RA Laws on Education, on Higher and Postgraduate Professional Education, on State Non-Profit Organizations, on Rescue Service, as well as by a number of RA Government decrees and the CMSA's Charter.

The Academy functions bottom-top accountability system; the members of teaching staff submit their reports to chairs based on which the chairs compile their report and submit it to faculties. Afterwards the Rector compiles his annual report which is available and posted on the website, and he presents it to the MES. The financial report of the Academy is also available.

8.2. The Institution ensures transparency of its procedures and processes and makes them publicly available.

According to the Action Plan and respective time-schedule (2017), it has been planned to update the website of the Academy with necessary information. There are orders and procedures available on the website of the Academy but they are not expanded, and it is very difficult to search for information in the website; it takes much time to find any regulation or order.

Since 2015 the editorship of the "911" electronic newspaper is functioning in the structure of the Academy the function of which is to illuminate about activities of the CMSA's Rector and its structural units as well as materials about carried out events and other processes, but the transparency of processes is not fully ensured.

As a unique higher education institution in the region, the Academy tries to illuminate and ensure availability of ongoing processes.

8.3. The Institution has sustainable feedback mechanisms for establishing relations with society.

The Academy keeps in touch with the society through different platforms almost every day. There are mechanisms of forming public relations (PR) among which Facebook pages, visits to schools and other institutions can be mentioned. However, there are no analyses of their efficiency. The feedback is also functioning but the information about its sustainability is missing in spite of the fact that according to the Action Plan and respective time-schedule (2017) it was planned to develop policy and procedures of feedback with the society and studies of social needs, and the Academy has developed the document on the "Policy on Approval of Feedback Fostering the Establishment of Public Relations"⁷.

8.4. The Institution has mechanisms that ensure knowledge transfer to the society.

The dissemination of culture of security is one of the strategic goals and it is highlighted in the mission. The organization and fulfillment of simulation evacuations in other institutions is also notable and it fosters the appropriation of necessary knowledge among teachers and students of other HEIs in emergency situations. Besides, site visits to kindergartens and schools as well as seminars and trainings are organized.

There are publications for schoolchildren available at the CMSA's library which have been published by the Academy, as well as a "Super David" game has been created and it is posted on the *Dasaran.am* website.

A syllabus for the school subject of Physics has been developed, and it is planned to form rescue brigades of volunteers at schools.

CONSIDERATIONS: There is a clear regulation of internal accountability in the Academy which is conditioned by the peculiarities of the MES system. The internal accountability is partially converted into external accountability. The latter is not limited by compulsory components (annual report, financial report, documents relating to the procurement process). They strive to make the processes very transparent is observed which, however, is not fully technically manifested due to the absence of information management system.

There are opportunities to ensure feedback but their efficiency is not evaluated yet. The diversity of mechanisms for transferring knowledge and values to the society (in terms of both focus groups and ways of transfer) as well as clear goals allow to evaluate the Academy's activity in this sphere as the best practice.

SUMMARY: Taking into consideration the fact that there is an accountability system in the Academy, there are platforms which ensure the availability of processes to the society, there is feedback which forms PR, and there are several mechanisms through which knowledge is transferred to the society, the expert panel finds that the Academy is sufficiently accountable to the society.

CONCLUSION: The compliance with the institutional competences of the CMSA with the requirements of the Criterion 8 is evaluated *satisfactory*.

⁷ The sentence was changed as a result of the discussion among the CMSA's representatives and experts.

IX. EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONALIZATION

CRITERION: The Institution promotes experience exchange and enhancement through its sound external relations practices, thus promoting internationalization of the Institution.

Findings

9.1 The Institution promotes its external relations through sound policies and procedures aimed at creating an environment conducive to experience exchange and enhancement as well as internationalization.

The strategic directions of the Academy's external relations and internationalization are defined in the SP. The Academy was a structural unit of the MES which had a centralized management system of international procedures. Although according to the Action Plan and respective time-schedule (2017) it was planned to develop a separate policy which would serve as a basis for concrete work plans of structural units which relate to internationalization, the Academy didn't and doesn't have policy and procedures of external relations and internationalization. However, within a very short period of time, apart from the cooperation established through the MES, the Academy has managed to sign a number of cooperation agreements and contracts with international organizations. There are no procedures of fostering the establishment of external relations. The CMSA is not engaged in international projects, and there is also a lack of practice in this field.

9.2 The Institution's external relations infrastructure ensures regulated process.

The process of external relations is managed by Vice-rectors, Assistant to the Rector, Head of the Scientific Research Center and even by the Student Council. At the same time, the Rector is authorized to expand the scope of external relations, to conduct negotiations and sign contracts with foreign universities and other educational and scientific institutions. Besides, any event relating to external relations is agreed with and implemented by the MES Department of Development of Emergency Situations Policy and International Cooperation. At the same time, the MES expands the scope of external collaboration and opportunities of internationalization.

In accordance with the Action Plan and respective time-schedule (2017), the Academy has established a Division of External Relations and Cooperation which is involved in its current organizational structure. The Division is currently in the preparatory process of establishment, and its functions are not specified.

9.3 The TLI promotes fruitful and effective collaboration with local and international counterparts.

The Academy cooperates with 25 different foreign institutions and international organizations in formats of trainings, seminars and exercises that ensure professional capacity building of the Academy's human resources. The CMSA has signed international cooperation agreements and contracts with institutions and international organizations from about 10 countries. Since 2014 the Academy cooperates with Military University after V. Sargsyan and Military Aviation University after Marshal A. Khamperyants of the Ministry of Defence. Due to international cooperation the material resources have been enhanced; in 2014 a multifunctional complex of training and simulation games equipped with interactive educational modern technical facilities, 2 cabinets with modern technical equipment - biochemical, civil defense and first aid, fire rescue equipment and facilities as well as fire rescue and mountaineering outfit cabinet, were established in the Academy. Although the framework of the

Academy's cooperation didn't involve internal and external mobility of students and teachers, the results of the mentioned have fostered the modernization of the educational process.

9.4 The Institution ensures internal stakeholders' appropriate level of a foreign language to enhance productivity of internationalization.

According to the Action Plan and respective time-schedule (2017), it has been planned to ensure satisfactory level of foreign language proficiency among teachers and students.

Since 2015 the staff member of the QA Center conducts English courses for administrative and teaching staff as well as for students of the Academy, while in the staff member's viewpoint she also needs trainings. According to the SER, as a result of English courses the teaching, administrative staff and students have improved their English language proficiency but there is no significant progress in the number of people proficient in English. The teachers' language proficiency is not sufficient to ensure professional cooperation and conduction of professional courses in a foreign language.

CONSIDERATIONS: It is a positive point that the Academy has defined the strategic directions of external relations and internationalization in the SP. The absence of policy and procedures relating to this field and the non-assurance of internal and external mobility have a considerable negative influence on the processes of internationalization. It is praiseworthy that within a short period of time the CMSA has also established its own framework of cooperation independently from the MES although the MES has a specific supportive role in external relations and internationalization of the Academy as far as it expands the opportunities. As a result of collaboration the Academy manages to ensure the development of its staff's professional qualities and technical equipment, including professional cabinets. The Academy hasn't yet specified the functions and role of the Division of External Relations and Cooperation in the processes of external relations and internationalization which makes the infrastructure vulnerable. The CMSA should be concerned about the language proficiency of its staff members and students as far as the current situation hasn't led to the progress in the field of internationalization.

SUMMARY: Taking into consideration the fact that in spite of the absence of respective policy and procedures the Academy ensures the development of teachers' professional competences and experience exchange through cooperation at national and international levels, enhances its resources, invests its capacity to establish and expand external relations, makes efforts to regulate respective infrastructure activities and development of processes directed to internationalization, realizes the importance of upgrading the level of language proficiency among its staff members and students, and it has taken respective steps towards fulfilling the actions mentioned in the Action plan and respective time-schedule (2017), the expert panel evaluates the Criterion 9 as satisfactory.

CONCLUSION: The compliance with the institutional competences of the CMSA with the requirements of the Criterion 9 is evaluated *satisfactory*.

X. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

CRITERION: The Institution has an internal quality assurance system, for promoting establishment of a quality culture and continuous improvement of all the processes of the Institution.

Findings

10.1 The Institution has internal quality assurance policies and procedures.

In 2014 the Charter of the QA Center, the QA Concept and policy as well as methodical instructions were developed. Some of the mentioned QA documents have some intersections.

The QA is given importance to in different goals of the CMSA's SP.

The QA procedures are approved by the SC, are provided to structural units and are posted on the website. However, the complexity of QA procedures is only partially applied in practice.

10.2 The Institution allocates sufficient time, material, human and financial resources to manage internal quality assurance processes.

The Academy functions QA Center and QA Standing Committee attached to the SC but the framework of its activity is not clearly defined; the Committee discusses the documents presented by the QA Center and together with respective conclusion presents them to the SC for approval.

According to the organizational structure of management, the QA Center is an independent unit and it is subject only to the Rector. But practically the activity of the QA Center is mainly regulated by the Vice-rector.

The QA Center mainly doesn't deal with the faculty responsible for the enhancement of qualification of the administrative staff. One of the 4 positions of the QA Center, namely the position of the Head is vacant about 4 months, and one of the staff members is the acting head of the Center.

The needs assessment of the QA Center hasn't been made. But the staff members of the QA Center regularly participate in trainings organized by ANQA.

The conducted surveys are mainly paper-based, and the analyses are made mostly without any statistic analyses and software.

Currently the QA Center establishes a database of alumni. Some of the QA processes are fulfilled in a decentralized way - individually, which mainly refers to employees who have only recently joined the staff of the Academy.

10.3 The internal and external stakeholders are involved in quality assurance processes.

The main means of ensuring the involvement of stakeholders are considered to be the feedback mechanisms (surveys, regularly organized meetings with teaching staff, students and representatives of external stakeholders).

Different groups of stakeholders have been involved in subgroups of self-evaluation - representative of administrative staff, external stakeholder, teacher, student and one more member.

After the completion of final attestation the president of the Committee who must be an external stakeholder presents his/her opinion. There are no developed mechanisms of ensuring active and continuous involvement of stakeholders (especially external ones) in QA processes, although according to the Action Plan and respective time-schedule (2017) it has been planned to develop and approve regulation which will ensure stakeholders' involvement in QA processes.

10.4 The internal quality assurance system is periodically reviewed.

The Academy has made benchmarking of QA systems of a number of HEIs in Russia, Poland and Armenia. But the QA policy and procedures haven't been revised since 2014. The needs of the internal QA system haven't been studied in spite of the fact that according to the Action Plan and respective time-schedule (2017) it has been planned to make evaluation of approved QA policy and procedures as well as to revise the QA system based on efficiency analyses and to make it in compliance with the Academy's needs.

10.5 The internal quality assurance system provides valid and sufficient background for the external quality assurance processes.

The ENQA criteria of education quality are guides for the Academy's internal QA system in a sense that the Academy is guided by ESG in terms of terminology. The methodical instructions of "Internal Quality Assurance System" are mostly based on the ANQA terminology. However, there are few analyses made before the self-evaluation.

In surveys the grade 4 among 5 is prevailing the reasons of which are not analyzed.

10.6. The internal quality assurance system ensures the transparency of the processes unfolding in the TLI through providing information on the quality of the processes to the internal and external stakeholders.

Giving importance to the positive image, the Academy publicizes information about procedures and processes but not about their quality. The results of surveys relating to internal stakeholders can be available but the availability is not guaranteed although according to the Action Plan and respective time-schedule (2017) it was planned to develop and invest mechanisms of ensuring transparency on QA processes (regulations, processes, orders and other legal acts).

CONSIDERATIONS: The existence of different founding documents and the non-clear differentiation of respectively planned regulations impede the application of those documents. The inconveniences of using the documents do not allow to fully adapt them into the CMSA's structural units and to make them provisions of regulation of the activity.

The independence of the QA Center is at risk as far as it is factually subject/accountable to the Vice-rector. The impact of the QA Center on the Academy's activity is limited in terms of both involvement of structural units and depth of its impact. The recruitment of new specialists in separate vacancies of the CMSA (in particular, Dean, Head of chair) has considerable refreshed the QA system in respective units. It can be concluded that the activity of the QA Center is not sufficient and the mentioned Center doesn't yet manage to foster the formation of quality culture.

The efficiency of use of resources (including human resources) allocated to the QA Center is endangered as far as the QA Center's needs assessment is missing. Another reason is the non-specified position of the QA Center in the system of the Academy.

The Center tries to evaluate the ongoing processes but this is not made based on the outcome of future reforms.

In spite of the tight links with the MES and participation of different groups of stakeholders (as respondents) in QA processes, the QA Center doesn't apply mechanisms of active and continuous involvement of stakeholders in its activities. The activity of the QA Committee is not sufficient to ensure

full participation of internal stakeholders, and the concept of involvement of external stakeholders is not developed.

The fact that the QA policy and procedures are not being revised and the needs of the internal QA system are not studied, is risky in terms of ensuring efficiency of the QA system. In this regard the QA system cannot support advancement of other infrastructures of the Academy.

In regard to external evaluation it is favorable that the ESG terminology is used in the internal QA system but the lack of current analyses hinders not only external evaluation but also the self-evaluation of the Academy as well. The lack of in-depth internal analyses also impedes the external evaluation; for example, surveys are conducted but their results are not properly analyzed, and the reasons are not revealed either.

The CMSA doesn't publicize information about the quality of its procedures and processes. The results of surveys relating to internal stakeholders are not available for them which endangers the efficiency of operated mechanisms.

SUMMARY: Taking into consideration the incomplete operation of QA policies and procedures, poor impact of the QA infrastructure on the whole activity of the Academy, stakeholders' passive participation in QA processes, lack of evaluation of efficiency of the QA system and respective reforms, lack of analyses in internal QA processes, unavailability of information about quality as well as the fact that the major part of actions envisaged by the Action Plan and respective time-schedule (2017) hasn't been fulfilled, it can be concluded that the internal QA system does not sufficiently foster the continuous improvement of the Academy and formation of quality culture.

CONCLUSION: The compliance with the institutional competences of the CMSA with the requirements of the Criterion 10 is evaluated *unsatisfactory*.

EVALUATION ACCORDING TO ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

CRITERION	CONCLUSION
<i>I. Mission and Purposes</i>	<i>satisfactory</i>
<i>II. Governance and Administration</i>	<i>satisfactory</i>
<i>III. Academic Programs</i>	<i>satisfactory</i>
<i>IV. Students</i>	<i>satisfactory</i>
<i>V. Faculty and Staff</i>	<i>satisfactory</i>
<i>VI. Research and Development</i>	<i>unsatisfactory</i>
<i>VII. Infrastructure and Resources</i>	<i>satisfactory</i>
<i>VIII. Societal Responsibility</i>	<i>satisfactory</i>
<i>IX. External Relations and Internationalization</i>	<i>satisfactory</i>
<i>X. Internal Quality Assurance System</i>	<i>unsatisfactory</i>

Tigran Mnatsakanyan

Chair of the expert panel

04 March 2020

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1.CVS OF EXPERT PANEL MEMBERS

Tigran Mnatsakanyan – in 2008 graduated from Armenian State Economic University (ASEU) in the specialty of Management. In 2011 he was awarded the scientific degree of Candidate of Economic Sciences. Since 2011 T. Mnatsakanyan is a teacher and assistant at the ASEU Chair of Management. In April-September 2019 he was the Vice-Rector on Science of the same university. Tigran Mnatsakanyan has published a number of scientific articles relating to the spheres of management theory, history of public administration, methodology and enhancement of evaluation of efficiency of current problems in public administration, issues of local self-governance, etc.

Bartłomiej Pączek – in 1999 graduated from the Naval Academy of Poland. Since 2007 he is a teacher afterwards – professor at the same Academy. Since 2011 B. Pączek is a Doctor of Security Sciences. In 2016 he was selected as a Vice-dean of the Faculty of Command and Naval Operations at Polish Naval Academy. The same year he was appointed as an expert of the National Quality Assurance Committee in Poland. In 2019 B. Pączek was awarded the scientific title of Professor of Security Sciences, afterwards was appointed as a Dean of the Faculty of Command and Naval Operations at Polish Naval Academy. Bartłomiej Pączek has authored more than 50 scientific articles and about 20 monographs. He has managed 27 scientific research projects, organized 20 national and international conferences. B. Pączek has received many awards, including those awarded by the President of Poland, Ministers of Defence, Infrastructures and Ecology.

Armenuhi Sargsyan – in 2006 graduated from Gyumri State Pedagogical Institute after M. Nalbandyan (GSPI) in the specialty of Mathematics. In 2011 she was awarded the scientific degree of Candidate of Physical and Mathematical Sciences. In 2007-2011 she acted as a teacher of the Chair of Math. Analysis and Differential Equations of GSPI, in 2011-2014 – assistant of the same chair, and in 2004-2017 – Associate Professor of the Chair on Methods of Higher Mathematics and Mathematics Teaching. Since 2018 A. Sargsyan is the Head of the Center of Scientific Policy, Quality Assurance and Management of Shirak State University. She has authored and co-authored a number of scientific articles.

Tsaghik Hovhannisyan – in 2007 graduated from State Polytechnic University of Armenia (SPUA) in the specialty of Informatics and Computer Systems. In 2007-2009 she was the lab assistant and jointly acted as a teacher in the Chair of Computing Techniques. In 2009-2017 she was a teacher of the Chair of Computer Systems and Networks of the Faculty of Computer Systems and Informatics at SPUA. In 2017 she was awarded the scientific degree of Candidate of Technical Sciences. Since 2017 Ts. Mnatsakanyan acts as a Scientific Secretary of the Institute of Information and Communication Technologies and Electronics at National Polytechnic University of Armenia. Since October 2017 Tsaghik Hovhannisyan is an Associate Professor of the Chair of Computer Systems and Networks of the same institute, and since August 2018 – Associate Professor of the same chair. She has authored and co-authored a number of scientific articles.

Mariam Torosyan – 3rd-year BA student in the specialty of Management at Eurasia International University. She has participated in the course of preparation of student-experts within the framework of “Student Voice” ANQA project.

APPENDIX 2. SCHEDULE OF SITE VISIT

	08.12.2019	<i>Start</i>	<i>End</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1.	Meeting with Rector of Crisis Management State Academy (CMSA)	14:30	15:10	40 mins

	09.12.2019	<i>Start</i>	<i>End</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1.	Close meeting with the expert panel	09:30	10:00	30 mins
2.	Meeting with representatives of the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES) responsible for coordination of activities of CMSA	10:10	10:55	45 mins
3.	Meeting with Vice-Rectors	11:05	11:50	45 mins
4.	Meeting with members of self-evaluation working group	12:00	12:45	45 mins
5.	Lunch, expert panel discussions	12:55	13:55	60 mins
6.	Meeting with Deans of faculties	14:05	14:50	45 mins
7.	Meeting with CMSA alumni	15:00	16:00	60 mins
8.	Meeting with CMSA employers	16:10	17:10	60 mins
9.	Close meeting of the expert panel and review of documents	17:20	18:30	70 mins

	10.12.2019	<i>Start</i>	<i>End</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1.	Meeting with representatives of CMSA Board	09:30	10:10	40 mins
2.	Meeting with heads of chairs, cycle heads and academic program designers (10-12 representatives)	10:20	11:20	60 mins
3.	Meeting with teaching staff (10-12 representatives)	11:30	12:30	60 mins
4.	Meeting with representatives of CMSA Student Council, Student Scientific Union	12:40	13:20	40 mins
5.	Lunch, expert panel discussions	13:30	14:30	60 mins
6.	Meeting with BA students (10-12 representatives)	14:40	15:40	60 mins
7.	Meeting with MA students (10-12 representatives)	15:50	16:50	60 mins
8.	Close meeting of the expert panel and review of documents	17:00	18:30	90 mins

	11.12.2019	<i>Start</i>	<i>End</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1.	Meeting with representatives of Quality Assurance Center and responsible stall member of Alumni & Career Center	9:30	10:30	60 mins
2.	Visit to Deans' Offices and chairs /documentation review/	10:40	12:10	90 mins
3.	Observation of resources (auditoriums, labs, library, First Aid Point, Canteen)	12:20	13:40	80 mins
4.	Lunch, expert panel meetings	13:50	14:50	60 mins
5.	Meetings in CMSA structural units (Scientific Research Center, HR Division, International Relations and	15:00	17:00	120 mins

	Cooperation Division, Accounting Department)			
6.	Close meeting of the expert panel and review of documents	17:10	19:30	160 mins

	12.12.2019	<i>Start</i>	<i>End</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1.	Open meeting with the expert panel	9:30	10:10	40 mins
2.	Meeting with the staff member(s) selected by the expert panel	10:20	12:00	100 mins
3.	Close meeting of the expert panel and review of documents	12:10	13:10	60 mins
4.	Lunch, expert panel meetings	13:20	14:20	60 mins
5.	Close meeting of the expert panel and review of documents	14:30	17:30	180 mins
6.	Final meeting with CMSA management	17:40	18:00	20 mins

APPENDIX 3. LIST OF REVIEWED DOCUMENTS

N	NAME OF DOCUMENT	CRITERION
1.	Results of surveys conducted among external stakeholders	1
2.	Short-term plan of implementation of the Academy's Strategic Plan (SP)	1
3.	Mid-term plan of implementation of the Academy's Strategic Plan (SP)	1
4.	Annual reports on current implementation of the SP	1
5.	Development plans of the Academy's structural units	2
6.	Minutes of the Scientific Council sessions (2018-2019)	2
7.	Minutes of the Academy's Board sessions (2018-2019)	2
8.	Minutes of the Student Council sessions (2018-2019)	2
9.	Work plans of the Academy's structural units	2
10.	Current and annual reports of structural units	2
11.	Samples of students' bulletins	2
12.	Syllabi	3
13.	Regulation on Academic Honesty	3
14.	Complex regulation on education quality assessment indicators	3
15.	Samples of diploma and diploma supplement	3
16.	Procedure on partial compensation of tuition fees	4
17.	Regulation on admission to full-time and part-time education for Bachelor's degree at the Academy	4

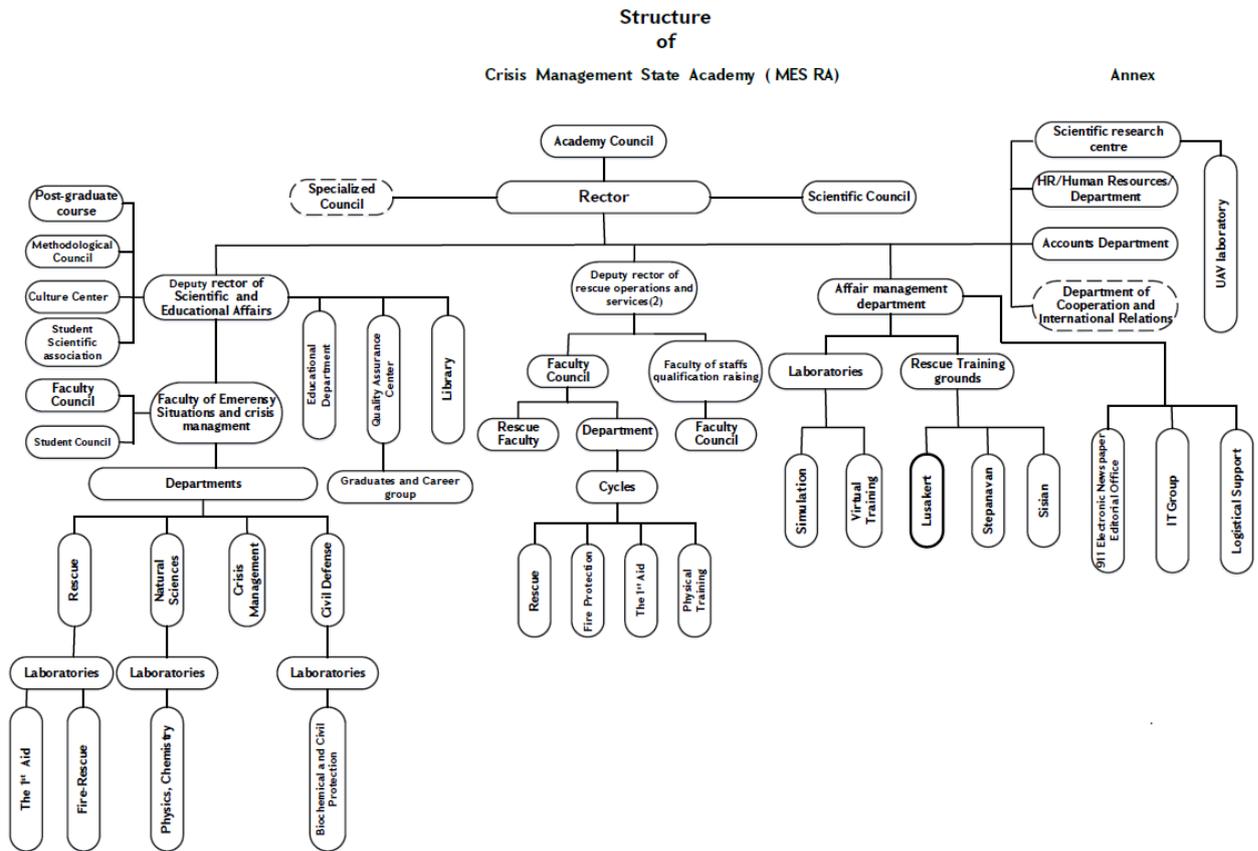
18.	Regulation on admission and organization of education for Master's degree at the Academy	4
19.	Regulation on activities of educational consultants at the Academy	4
20.	Results of student surveys on quality and efficiency of teaching	4
21.	Results of student surveys on activities of the Academy's consultants	4
22.	Annual working plans of consultants	4
23.	Regulation on activity of the Academy's Alumni and Progression Center	4
24.	Order N 19-A as of 02.02.2012 of the RA Minister of Emergency Situations on assurance of the Academy's graduates with jobs	4
25.	List of published articles authored or co-authored by students	4
26.	Charter of the Academy's Student Council	4
27.	Procedure of appeal of assessment of student knowledge	4
28.	Regulation on competitive selection and staffing of positions for teaching staff (2019)	5
29.	Samples of individual plans of teaching staff	5
30.	Samples of filled-in sheet for rating of teaching staff's scientific and pedagogical activities	5
31.	Analyses of sheet for rating of teaching staff's scientific and pedagogical activities	5
32.	Filled-in questionnaires of student survey on quality and efficiency of teaching	5
33.	Regulation on conduction and organization of discussion on class observations at chairs	5

34.	Certificates of trainings of teaching staff	5
35.	Concept on scientific research development 2017-2022	6
36.	Indicators of teachers' involvement in research activity in years	6
37.	Regulation on rating of teachers' activity	6
38.	Policy and procedure on financial management of the Academy	7
39.	Policy on assurance of information to the society	8
40.	Policy on establishment of feedback fostering formation of public relations	8
41.	Informational materials in foreign languages	8
42.	Policy fostering external relations and international cooperation	9
43.	Strategy of external relations and internationalization	9
44.	Job descriptions of staff of QA Center	10
45.	Analyses of surveys on teaching quality	10

APPENDIX 4. OBSERVED RESOURCES

1. Classrooms (theoretical and practical courses, first aid, simulation classrooms)
2. Deans' Offices
3. Chairs
4. Structural units (Scientific Research Center, HR Division, Accountancy, Administration Office)
5. Laboratories
6. Distance learning hall
7. Conference hall
8. First Aid
9. Canteen
10. Library
11. Sports hall
12. Storage
13. “Lusakert” Center for practical courses

APPENDIX 5. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION INSTITUTION



APPENDIX 6. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANQA - National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance

AP - academic program

CMSA – Crisis Management State Academy

EHEA - European Higher Education Area

HEI – higher education institution

KPIs - key performance indicators

LOs - learning outcomes

MES – Ministry of Emergency Situations

MoES – Ministry of Education and Science

NQF - National Qualifications Framework

PDCA - plan, do, check, act

QA - quality assurance

RA - Republic of Armenia

SC - Student Council

SSU – Student Scientific Union

SER – self-evaluation report

SP - strategic plan

SCC - Supreme Certifying Committee

SSU – Student Scientific Union

UAV - unmanned aerial vehicle

YSU - Yerevan State University