

The Operator's Handbook

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Cover block

Series and number: HND, ARC-HND-001 Series mark: ARC Title: The Operator's Handbook State: Adopted, first issue, October 21, 2026 Adoption act: Founder Ricky, October 21, 2026, 6:41 PM PDT, by the words "you have my approval for the CLI manual and then for all the documentation so that you can publish that into its corresponding places repo website app CLI"; this document is one of the seven tranche-one documents adopted by that ruling, and the adoption is recorded in the corpus registry Evidence grade: E1 Evidenced (the procedures assembled here stand in the operating record and were verified against it at drafting; the custodian handbook the charter calls for does not exist, and this volume names that gap on its face rather than filling it) Record age: the operating facts in this handbook were verified against the record of October 21, 2026, and the distinction between current and wanted runs through every chapter; facts older than that verification are labeled with their dates Digest: computed at filing and carried in the corpus registry; the digest of this draft as filed is recorded with its filing act License line: the text of this document is licensed under CC BY 4.0, attribution the only condition; code samples in this document are under the Apache License 2.0; the ARC and VALIS names and marks are not licensed under either instrument. Decided by Founder Ricky on October 21, 2026, at 6:45 PM PDT Next review date: October 21, 2028, on the Handbooks review clock of two years the charter sets Stable address: the corpus registry entry for ARC-HND-001, when the registry stands Authority note: this handbook assembles operating procedure. It confers no authority, admits nothing, and settles nothing. Under the charter's fourth standard, a document describes a governed act; the act itself belongs to governance.

A named gap on the face of this handbook

The charter's founding ten counts one operator's handbook, and the inventory of October 21, 2026 states the condition the corpus drafts under: a single handbook volume exists, and the custodian handbook does not yet exist. This volume is the operator's handbook for standing up and keeping a node. It is not the custodian handbook. No custodian handbook has been written: custody procedure stands scattered across the treasury custody statement, the key coverage findings of the resilience program, and the key work the operating record carries as open items, and no assembly of that material into a handbook has been chartered. Where a node's life touches custody, this volume points to the fragments at their true strength and says plainly that the handbook for them is missing. Closing that gap is a named item for a later tranche, and it begins with a charter for the volume, not with prose in this one.

The shape of a node's life

A node's life, as the operating record runs it, has five movements: standing up, where the node is founded, recorded, and graded; hardening, where the working store is sealed and the access layer is opened under proof; presence, where the node is witnessed on its heartbeat and its seats are watched for liveness; continuity, where the record survives restarts, restorations, and operator absence; and federation, where the node binds to its peers under signed act. This handbook assembles what the record holds for each movement, in that order, with doctrine references replacing any restatement the record does not support.

Standing up

The stand-up verification standard of October 19, 2026 is the grading instrument for a node's founding, and its instructions govern this chapter: it is a verification standard, not an installation guide, and it exists to produce one artifact per node, the stand-up recording, standing beside the node's registry entry, in which every element is graded from evidence rather than asserted. Its fifteen elements are carried here as the chapter's checklist, unabridged in substance. The node record carries its public address. A live endpoint binding stands, founded and endpoint recorded. The registry publication stands byte-identical and verifiable against the upstream record. Presence stands live, with a signed heartbeat record and its reachability demonstrated. The establishment record stands recorded and verifiable. At least one reference field artifact stands ingested with provenance-bound findings. A reference query runs against the ingested field with correct output. The establishment proof command stands passing against the published establishment record and its artifacts. An identity-binding proposal stands settled. A key-custody declaration stands of record, its statement digest in the founding proposal. The license basis stands recorded. The confirmation acts stand received and recorded under their own numbers. The step four founder reply stands received. The node declaration stands of record. An enrollment activation stands recorded.

The grading discipline is part of the standard and travels with it: held means the verification was performed and passed; partial means the verification was performed and produced a named defect, which is recorded as a defect and not graded held; not held with a pointer means the evidence lives in a named record that this volume does not restate. The record of October 21, 2026 shows the instrument in use: Nodes 002 and 003 carry complete recordings with all four steps evidenced, including the founder replies the confirmation poll of October 20, 2026 recovered, and the kit on each seat verified digest by digest against its manifest.

The sealed installation and governance specification of the founding release is the product acceptance contract behind the founding: it is not implemented by that specification alone, and any product claiming compliance must satisfy its acceptance criteria through governed settlement, authorized evidence, and fail-closed checks. The

kit that carries the founding to a new machine is governed by its own standing note: the field kit is a standing baseline, superseded in its presentation generation by the canonical CLI tree of October 21, 2026, and every package copy is verified by content against its baseline record before it is treated as the kit [ARC-SEM-001].

The first clearing

The first-clearing runbook of October 11, 2026 is the operating procedure for the institution's first governed settlement, and this handbook carries its shape at the strength its date deserves: it is a runbook for a specific first act, written before the machinery it describes had its present form, and it stands in this volume as the record of how the first clearing was prepared, not as current settlement procedure. Current settlement procedure stands in [ARC-GOV-002]. An operator who runs the October 11 text as today's procedure has misread its standing, and this chapter exists partly to prevent that misreading.

Hardening

Hardening, as the record of October 21, 2026 runs it, has two movements: sealing the working store, and opening the access layer under proof. The working store is encrypted at rest, with one key file per seat in the node home at mode 600, and reads without the key refuse by name. The establishment stores stand not encrypted on both seats by recorded disposition, because the kit's establishment verifier has no vault key path; that gap is recorded for the next kit revision, and this handbook carries it as an open item rather than a satisfied one. Directory discipline travels with the seal: a node's field directory stands at mode 700.

Presence and the seats

Presence is a signed heartbeat: a statement issued by the node over its registry identity, its counter, its timestamp, and its record head, verified on every beat against the node's public key and published in the presence feed. A node's seats, the machines it operates from, are watched for liveness as operating fact, and a seat's transition is reported while its steady state stays silent. The presence heartbeat runs on its own isolated lane under the doctrine of October 21, 2026 [ARC-GOV-002], so that presence does not starve behind unrelated holds.

Continuity

Continuity is the discipline that the record survives its machines. The backup discipline stands in the backup skill of record: a daily snapshot of the core state, digest-verified, with extended coverage and an off-machine second home decided under the redundancy programme of October 21, 2026. The first scratch restore drill of that date

proved the snapshot's content and found the procedure defective in named ways, and this handbook carries the findings as operating instruction: extraction as invoked in the drill failed on ownership, with the remedy recorded as no-same-owner or root extraction; the snapshot contains neither the configuration directory nor the SSH directory, so the custody key and the SSH keys are not recoverable from it, a finding that belongs to the missing custodian handbook's material as much as to this one; five of twelve user file links restore dangling; and the manifest carries no per-file hashes. A quarterly restore drill stands recommended in the drill report and awaits its cadence registration. The drill's scratch tree stands in the build home pending deletion on the founder's reading.

Federation

Federation is the node's life among peers, and it runs on signed acts: bindings filed and carried, handshakes completed between nodes, and standing recomputed from the record rather than asserted. The record of October 21, 2026 shows the programme mid-flight and grades it partial at its honest strength: the handshake between Nodes 003 and 004 stands complete, bindings for Nodes 002, 005, and 007 stand queued behind each node's own signed touch, and Node 002's binding rides the founder's own signature together with its gating retrofit. Federation procedure beyond the record's own statements is not written here, because the record does not hold it at handbook strength.

When things break

The operating record's standing instruction for a broken tool path is manual control through another real route rather than a report of limitation: a blocked tool is a routing problem, not a verdict. The failure modes this institution has actually met, and their answers, stand as follows. A worker offline on a governed lane is a truthful readback, not a failure to disguise; the lane stalls and the answer is the worker's restoration, which the fleet boot guard now performs on its cadence for the fleet units and which remains a manual start for the laptop adapter pending its self-healing bundle. A claim left standing by a dead worker is governed by the lifecycle standard [ARC-GOV-002], never by hand-editing engine state. A seat that stops answering is watched, reported on transition, and probed before any scope is generalized from one lane's silence to the system's, a discipline the record learned by correction on October 4, 2026.

What this document does not establish

This document does not establish the custodian handbook. It names the gap on its face, points to the fragments where custody material lives today, and closes none of it. Key custody, recovery, and re-key procedure stand unhandbooked, and the drill finding that the snapshot cannot restore the custody key stands open with them.

It does not establish the procedures it assembles as adopted doctrine. The stand-up standard, the sealed installation specification, and the kit note each stand at their own adoption strength, printed in their own texts; this assembly inherits those strengths and adds none of its own.

It does not establish federation procedure at handbook strength beyond the record's mid-flight state, nor settlement procedure, which stands in [ARC-GOV-002], nor the October 11, 2026 runbook as current practice.

It does not establish the backup discipline as complete. The drill of October 21, 2026 proved content and found the procedure defective in four named ways, three of which remain unremedied at this drafting, and the quarterly drill cadence stands recommended and unregistered.

It confers nothing. An operator following this handbook performs governed acts only through the machinery those acts belong to; the handbook itself authorizes no step it describes.

Drafted October 21, 2026, by Noetica, Keeper of the Record, under WO-56. Sources of record: the stand-up verification standard of October 19, 2026; the sealed `NODE_INSTALLATION_AND_GOVERNANCE_v0.1.md` of the founding release; the field kit standing note in the kit's README; the first-clearing runbook of October 11, 2026, `org-valis-kore/drafts`; the restore drill report of October 21, 2026; the WO-22 completion record of October 21, 2026; the documentation corpus inventory of October 21, 2026 for the custodian handbook's absence.