



BACKGROUND

NATO's Role in Civil Emergency Planning



September 2006



What is Civil Emergency Planning?

In a rapidly changing world, populations in NATO and Partner countries are threatened by many risks including the possible use of chemical, biological, radiological weapons by terrorists. However, terrorism is not the only challenge. Natural disasters, such as earthquakes or floods and man-made disasters continue to pose a serious threat to civilian populations.

The aim of Civil Emergency Planning (CEP) in NATO is to collect, analyse and share information on national planning activity to ensure the most effective use of civil resources for use during emergency situations, in accordance with Alliance objectives. It enables Allies and Partner nations to assist each other in preparing for and dealing with the consequences of crisis, disaster or conflict.

Why is NATO involved in Civil Emergency Planning activities?

NATO has always placed great emphasis on the protection of civilian populations. As early as 1953, NATO agreed a disaster assistance scheme recognising that the capabilities to protect populations during a potential conflict could also be used to protect them against the effects of natural or man-made disaster. NATO's broad approach to security as described in the 1999 Strategic Concept recognises that major civil emergencies can pose a threat to security and stability. Countries can no longer rely on purely national solutions for large scale emergencies, particularly given the asymmetric nature of today's threats and the unpredictable security environment. Emergencies do not respect national borders. Disruptions to critical infrastructure, such as transport, energy and communication networks, often have trans-national dimensions. The resultant interdependencies are an international concern for which NATO continues to be a good forum for discussion on how best to meet these challenges individually or collectively and in a spirit of solidarity. As such, NATO Civil Emergency Planning has also evolved into a pivotal area of practical engagement and cooperation with Partners. Furthermore, it has become a force multiplier in the area of civil protection and consequence management, particularly with respect to possible terrorist attacks with chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear agents (CBRN).

Civil Emergencies, natural or man-made, are an area where both civilian and military authorities cooperate. NATO provides an effective forum in which the use of civilian and military assets can be dove-tailed to achieve a desired goal. This cooperation is often a two way street. Civilian assets can be very useful parts of military operations. For example, provision of civilian or commercial air and sea lift capabilities frequently provide a more cost effective and readily available means of strategic transport for military operations than by purely military means. Certain civilian assets have been used as part of NATO's operations in Afghanistan and Kosovo. Similarly, military assets are often very important in supporting operations for civilian populations such as disaster and humanitarian relief. NATO deployed military assets in operations following hurricane Katrina and the earthquake in Pakistan (see below). Furthermore, NATO assets and capabilities have been deployed in support of civilian defence against terrorism. For example, NATO AWACS aircraft were deployed at major sporting events such as the Olympic games and the World Cup.

Close cooperation and interoperability between military and civilian actors is therefore vital and NATO plays an important role in facilitating such cooperation.

What role does NATO play? What role do national authorities play?

Each country is responsible for handling emergencies that occur within its territory and taking care of its victims. Civil Emergency Planning is therefore first and foremost a national responsibility and civil assets remain under national control at all times. However, the magnitude and duration of a disaster situation may extend beyond the capacity of the affected country and its repercussions may reach far beyond national borders.

NATO plays its part by serving as a forum for comparing and analyzing national programmes to ensure that plans and procedures are operational and that the necessary assets are available for addressing emergency situations jointly if need be.

Civil Emergency Planning supports NATO's Crisis Management Process and Organisation through specific crisis management arrangements. The backbone of these arrangements is the use of some 360 civil experts from industry, business, government and other public administrations to advise on the effective use of civil resources during a crisis. Civilian capabilities constitute some of the tools in a military planners "toolkit" for use as and when appropriate. Use of civilian assets in support of or as part of military operations, primarily in the area of deployability and sustainability of forces, is an important Civil Emergency Planning function. NATO military planners routinely and consistently seek the expert advice of these civilian experts as they plan and execute NATO operations. A Civil Capabilities Catalogue identifies the relevant areas of expertise that could be made available to NATO military planners for use during crisis response operations.

Given the requirement for the military and civilian communities to develop and maintain robust cooperation, Civil Emergency Planning in NATO focuses on the five following areas:

- Civil support for Alliance operations under Article 5 – the collective defence clause of the NATO Treaty
- Support for non-Article 5 crisis response operations
- Support for national authorities in civil emergencies
- Support for national authorities in the protection of populations against the effects of weapons of mass destruction
- Cooperation with Partners

How does Civil Emergency Planning work in NATO?

The day-to-day business of Civil Emergency Planning is guided by the Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee (SCEPC), composed of national representatives who provide oversight to the work conducted at NATO. Under the authority of the North Atlantic Council, this Committee meets semi-annually in plenary session and holds regular meetings in permanent session. Given the strong interest of Partner nations in Civil Emergency Planning, many SCEPC meetings are also held in the format of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) encompassing all NATO and Partner nations.

Under SCEPC's direction, 8 technical Planning Boards and Committees (PB&Cs) bring together national government experts, industry experts and military representatives to coordinate planning in various areas of civil activity. These areas are:

- Civil aviation
- Civil protection
- Food and agriculture
- Industrial production and supply
- Inland surface transport
- Medical matters
- Ocean shipping
- Civil electronic and postal communications

These bodies advise SCEPC on crisis-related matters and assist NATO Military Authorities and nations to develop and maintain arrangements for effective use of civil resources. For example,



the transport-related Planning Boards and Committees identify the availability of commercial surface and air resources and infrastructure to provide cost-effective, rapidly available transport for a potential operation.

The SCEPC and the PB&Cs are supported by a team of international civil servants in the Civil Emergency Planning section of the International Staff's Operations Division. This division is headed by an Assistant Secretary General for Operations and a Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Planning, Civil Emergency Planning and Exercises, who chair the SCEPC Plenary and Permanent session meetings respectively.

Because Civil Emergency Planning is a multi-dimensional effort, its management requires extensive coordination with other NATO committees, as well as coordination with other international organisations, in particular the United Nations.

The Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) is NATO's operational tool which acts as the focal point for information sharing on disaster assistance among EAPC countries and, when necessary, is responsible for coordinating the response of EAPC countries to disasters occurring within the EAPC area. This includes response to a potential major terrorist incident involving the use of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear agents (see box).

Who benefits from Civil Emergency Planning?

NATO Civil Emergency Planning activities benefit the NATO Allies and Partners nations who gain from cooperation at international level to better handle emergency situations, particularly those with trans-national dimensions. Through the exchange of information and best practices, and through participation in international training and exercises, nations at local, regional and national levels are better equipped to respond to protection of civilian populations in crisis situations. This acquired knowledge benefits the populations comprising the nations of the Euro-Atlantic area which amount to some 1.19 billion people.

Other beneficiaries of NATO's Civil Emergency Planning activity are countries beyond the Euro-Atlantic area, such as Pakistan. Following the devastating earthquake in 2005, a NATO air-bridge operation was mounted to transport humanitarian assistance and contributions by NATO medical and engineering units to Pakistan (see section below).

How much does it cost?

The Civil Emergency Planning operational budget at NATO Headquarters amounts to approximately 2.7 million €/year. This represents about 1.5 per cent of NATO HQ's total civil budget. Civil Emergency Planning's added value is neatly illustrated if one considers this sum divided across the population of the Euro-Atlantic area (1.19 billion people) – our "customers". Each person would need to pay 1/10 of a Eurocent per year – literally about the cost of a peanut. This is certainly a modest price to pay for internationally coordinated plans and procedures that work in the event of emergency situations and for the necessary assets to be made available across the EAPC.





The Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre

In June, 1998, a Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) was established at NATO Headquarters, based on a proposal made by the Russian Federation. Created within the framework of the Partnership for Peace programme, the Centre coordinates responses among NATO and Partner countries to natural and man-made disasters in the Euro-Atlantic area. Since 2001, the EADRCC also has a role in coordinating nations' responses following a terrorist act involving chemical, biological or radiological agents, as well as consequence management actions. In addition, the Centre acts as the focal point for information sharing on disaster assistance among the EAPC countries.

As part of its operational role, the EADRCC organizes major international field exercises in order to practice responses to simulated natural and man-made disaster situations and consequence management.

Staffed by officials from NATO and Partner countries, the Centre works closely with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance and other international organisations (International Atomic Energy Agency, World Health Organization, World Food Programme, Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, etc.).

Countries are encouraged to develop bilateral or multilateral arrangements to address issues such as visa regulations, border-crossing arrangements, transit

agreements, customs clearance and status of personnel. Such measures avoid bureaucratic delays in the deployment of relief items and teams to an actual disaster location.

Since its launch, the EADRCC has been involved in more than 30 operations around the world ranging from coordination of relief supplies to refugees, aid to flood, hurricane and earthquake victims, fighting forest fires, and assistance to Greece during the Olympic Games (2004). The recent operations in the wake of hurricane Katrina in the US (2005) and the earthquake in Pakistan (2005-2006) are explained below.

The EADRCC is operational on a 7/24 basis.

NATO support to the United States following Hurricane Katrina

On 29 August 2005, Hurricane Katrina hit the United States gulf coast causing widespread devastation. An official request for assistance from the United States was received by EADRCC on 3 September and was instantly dispatched to EAPC capitals. Thirty-nine EAPC countries responded by providing assistance coordinated through the EADRCC. On 4 September, a liaison officer was deployed on behalf of the EADRCC to the stricken area. His main role was to ensure close cooperation with the US Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance.

Following the US request, on 8 September 2005, the North Atlantic Council authorised a NATO transport operation to help move urgently needed items from Europe to the US using NATO Airborne Early Warning (NAEW) Training and Cargo aircraft (TCA) and NATO Response Force (NRF) airlift capabilities. The EADRCC acted as a clearing house, gathering requests and offers of assistance. In total, 189 tons of relief and emergency supplies were flown to the US. This operation was concluded on 2 October 2005.



The CEP Rapid Reaction Team

In early 2006, the Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee approved a new instrument for rapidly evaluating civil needs and capabilities to support a NATO operation or other emergency situation. Within a 24 hour period of approving a request

for advice, a Rapid Reaction Team composed of civil experts taken from the Planning Boards and Committees can be deployed by the SCEPC to assess civilian requirements across the functional areas of civil protection, communications, transportation, supply and medical assistance and provide advice and management

support as needed. If necessary, the Team can be augmented by members of the NATO International Staff, the NATO Military Authorities and other national experts. In the case of a humanitarian disaster, the Rapid Reaction Team would coordinate closely with the United Nations and the affected nation.



NATO assistance to Pakistan following the earthquake

On 8 October 2005, a devastating earthquake struck Pakistan causing more than 73,000 deaths and leaving over 4 million people homeless. On 10 October, Pakistani authorities approached NATO with an official request for assistance. The North Atlantic Council agreed to respond positively to this request and a staged NATO response was agreed.

The first stage of the relief operation was an air-bridge. Acting as the point of contact, the EADRCC established links between national aid authorities and the Pakistani authorities. NATO Response Force tactical aircraft were used to bring aid to the embarkation point in Turkey before being flown by strategic airlift to Pakistan. Commercially sourced aircraft and NAEW Training and Cargo Aircraft were also used.

On 13 October 2005, the EADRCC received the first request from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to airlift relief supplies to Pakistan. The first NATO relief flight arrived in Pakistan on 14 October. The NATO air-bridge was used by EAPC nations and 2 non-EAPC nations (Malta and Bosnia-Herzegovina). In addition to the UNHCR, two other UN agencies also used the NATO air-bridge: the World Food Programme and UNOCHA.

The second stage of the relief operation involved the deployment of a command and control headquarters, engineer units, helicopters and military field hospitals all with appropriate support. Working closely with the Pakistani and UN authorities, NATO's roles in the relief operation were to maintain the air-bridge, provide in-theatre lift, restore critical road infrastructure and provide makeshift shelter and medical support. The purpose of these relief activities was to help the survivors of the earthquake face the challenges of the upcoming winter.

By early December 2005, most elements were in place and contributing effectively to the relief efforts in the Bagh area, identified by the Pakistanis as the focus for NATO's operation on the ground. NATO concluded its operation in Pakistan on 8 February 2006.

DID YOU KNOW?

During the NATO relief operation in Pakistan:

- 164 humanitarian relief flights were flown to Islamabad. In terms of distance, this is the equivalent of flying from the Earth to the Moon 1.5 times!
- 18,000 tents, 505,000 blankets, 17,000 stoves/heaters, 31,500 mattresses, 49,800 sleeping bags and medical supplies (3500 tons of relief supplies from the UNHCR, NATO Allies and Partner countries) were flown to Pakistan through the NATO air-bridge.
- 1,750 tons of relief supplies were flown inside Pakistan by NATO helicopters.
- 7,650 sick and injured people were transported by NATO helicopters out of the earthquake zone.
- More than 10,000 patients were treated in NATO field hospitals and by mobile medical teams.
- 110 multifunctional shelters were built by NATO engineers at high altitude.
- NATO engineers cleared and repaired 60 kilometres of road, removing some 42,000 cubic metres of debris.
- NATO engineers provided fresh water for 3,300 people per day and repaired a spring water distribution and storage system serving 8,400 people per day.



Cooperation with Partners

Civil Emergency Planning and disaster preparedness, under the framework of Partnership for Peace have made a significant contribution to promoting practical cooperation between and among NATO and Partner nations. More than 30,000 civil and military representatives from various branches of national, regional and local government, international organisations, and non-governmental organisations have taken part in NATO Civil Emergency Planning activities (seminars, courses, training, exercises and team visits). These events focus on cooperation in the fields of emergency preparedness, civil-military cooperation and disaster management.

Cooperation on Civil Emergency Planning between NATO and Russia began in 1991. Within the framework of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), an ad hoc group on Civil Emergencies implements this cooperation in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding on Civil Emergency Planning and Disaster Preparedness. Russia has hosted a number of important terrorist incident simulation exercises which have significantly contributed to fostering practical cooperation.

Cooperation between NATO and Ukraine began in 1995 following heavy rains and flooding in the Kharkiv region. Support during subsequent flooding has consolidated successful cooperation and NATO's EADRCC has coordinated assistance to the region on several occasions. Ukraine has hosted a number of Civil Emergency Planning exercises. Most recently, the field simulation exercise "Joint Assistance 2005" focused on the response to a potential terrorist attack using chemical agents and improved the EAPC's ability to provide effective responses to such incidents.

Civil Emergency Planning is a principal component of NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue, whose countries has been invited to participate in several Civil Emergency Planning activities, including training courses and seminars. Further to the Istanbul Summit's call in 2004 for a more ambitious and expanded partnership with the Mediterranean Dialogue, cooperation on disaster response and Civil Emergency Planning has intensified.

Since 2004, Civil Emergency Planning cooperation has been further extended to include the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative countries. This enterprise aims at fostering security and regional stability in the areas of the broader Middle East. To date, NATO team visits to the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Qatar have enabled information exchanges on NATO's Civil Emergency Planning activities. Possibilities for participation by these countries in training activities have been explored.

Fighting terrorism and preparing for CBRN attacks

As a result of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks and subsequent attacks in Istanbul, Madrid and London, Civil Emergency Planning activities have focused on measures aimed at enhancing national capabilities and civil preparedness in the event of possible attacks using chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear agents (CBRN). At Prague in 2002, a Civil Emergency Action Plan was adopted for the protection of populations against the effects of Weapons of Mass Destruction. As a result, an inventory of national capabilities for use in CBRN incidents (medical assistance, radiological detection units, aero-medical evacuation) has been developed. In addition, guidelines and standards have been developed for EAPC nations to draw upon in the areas of planning, training and equipment for first responders to CBRN incidents. These activities have contributed to enhancing the capability of Allies and Partners to assist one another in the face of such attacks.

Critical Infrastructure Protection

Critical infrastructure are those assets, facilities, networks and services which, if disrupted or destroyed, would have a serious impact on the health, safety, security, economic well being or effective functioning of a country. Such infrastructure, if not protected is vulnerable to natural and man-made disasters as well as terrorism. Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP) focuses on preserving the functionality, robustness and reliability of these infrastructures. It is a complex issue that cuts across national boundaries given the integrated and interdependent nature of our societies (energy supplies, communications, transport networks, etc.). Disruption to critical infrastructure in one nation can have serious implications and consequences for surrounding nations with potential cascading effects.

Critical Infrastructure Protection is a key focus of NATO's Civil Emergency Planning activity in which all EAPC countries participate. International cooperation facilitates information-sharing relevant for work on Critical Infrastructure Protection such as threat and vulnerability assessments and exchanging of best practices. Training and education is also an area where NATO concentrates considerable effort to ensure that countries recognise the importance of Critical Infrastructure Protection to their societies and to the international community.

DID YOU KNOW?

Examples of Critical Infrastructure in the Euro-Atlantic area:

- 15,000,000 km of roadways. If these roads were joined end to end, they would go round the Sun 3.5 times.
- 675,900 km of railroad. This is equivalent to 17 times the Earth's circumference.
- 22,914 airports or airfields.
- 227 cargo ports.
- 1.4 billion telephone lines (619 million land lines, 781 million mobile phone lines).
- Information technology networks that host half a billion internet users.



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