



Barents Rescue 2007

Saariselkä, Finland

Seminar Publication



Barents Rescue 2007

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Contents

Barents Euro-Arctic Cooperation – Framework for Regional Cooperation, Including Emergency and Rescue Services	2
Barents Rescue 2007 Project Culminates in a Major Emergency Exercise	4
Changing Tides In Barents Rescue Cooperation – from Cross-Border Exercises to Shared Capacities?	6
Commercial Aviation – the Safest Form of Transportation	8
Handling of Media Challenges During Crises	10
Managing the Cold in Emergency Situations – a Systematic Approach	12
Towards Balanced Information Sharing in Crisis Management SHIFT	14
Finland’s Voluntary Rescue Service	16
Nineteen Years of Rescue Service Seminars	18
Authors	19

Barents Rescue Seminar is designed to support the overall aim and objectives of the Barents Rescue 2007 project. The Seminar promotes and strengthens trans-boundary cooperation between authorities in the Barents Region and the seminar programme, as an integral part of the exercise, has the same thematic areas as the exercise itself. This publication covers most of the seminar presentations.

Barents Euro-Arctic Cooperation

Framework for Regional Cooperation, Including Emergency and Rescue Services

Barents cooperation was launched by the foreign ministers of the Nordic countries, Russia and the European Commission in 1993, when new opportunities opened up for cross-border cooperation with Russia in the north. From the beginning, a special feature of this cooperation has been the twofold nature of its structure: the intergovernmental Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) on the one hand, and the Barents Regional Council, consisting of thirteen counties or similar subregional entities, on the other.

The developments in the Barents Region are challenging. The region has become increasingly attractive due to its valuable natural resources, especially oil and gas, and also due to its appeal as a tourist destination. With the rising price of energy, climate change and technological advances there are now prospects for economic progress in the Barents Region. But climate change and increasing economic activity in a fragile arctic and subarctic environment entail ecological risks. These challenges can be met through regional cooperation. The ultimate goal is to strengthen stability, wellbeing and sustainable development.

Finland is currently chairing the intergovernmental Barents cooperation, while the Republic of Karelia is in the chair on the regional level. In November, the BEAC chairmanship will be transferred to Russia and the Oulu region will take the chair of the Regional Council. Sustainable regional development has been a priority during Finland’s two-year BEAC chairmanship just as it has been a leading theme during the whole existence of Barents cooperation – particularly in its successful sectors, economy, the environment and social issues. There have also been positive developments in the transport and logistics sectors. During the Finnish BEAC chairmanship, youth cooperation, cultural cooperation and rescue cooperation have been underlined as they reflect the genuine regional characteristics and needs of the Barents Region. A joint effort to create an International Barents Secretariat (IBS) in Kirkenes has also taken place during the Finnish chairmanship. At the same time, the regional level has reviewed its organisational structure.

Finland’s BEAC chairmanship got an additional tool in the new Northern Dimension (ND) policy, adopted at the Northern Dimension Summit in Helsinki, in November 2006. The renewed Northern Dimension policy is a common policy of the EU, Russia, Norway and Iceland. The northern councils, such as the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, are participants in the new Northern Dimension policy. The Barents Region has now been named as one of the priority regions of this policy. Barents cooperation has already contributed significantly to the implementation of the Northern Dimension policy, especially to the ND Environmental Partnership and the ND Partnership on Public Health and Social Wellbeing.

In the environmental field, Barents cooperation has tackled problems of industrial pollution, municipal waste and nuclear safety. Other important areas are the promotion of cleaner production and energy efficiency and undertakings known as Hot Spot projects. There is now an urgent need to pay increasing attention to climate change, which, it is feared, could have serious ecological consequences in the Barents Region. Within the Barents framework, the recommendations of the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment, published in 2004, are being implemented regionally. Faced with new aspects of climate change, cooperation between emergency and rescue services increases in importance, as floods and other natural disasters are becoming more frequent.

As BEAC Chairman, Finland has decided to organise the Barents Rescue 2007 Exercise. The aim of the exercise is to facilitate communications, coordination and cooperation among the member countries and civilian and military services that may become involved in an emergency in the Barents Region. This is the third Barents Rescue Exercise. The first one was organised by Sweden in 2001 and the second by Norway in 2005. This shows that cooperation between emergency and rescue services is considered more and more important in this sparsely populated region with its harsh climatic conditions. The experience gained from Barents cooperation in emergency and rescue operations has already shown that regional planning and agreed cooperation across borders is

extremely useful. It has contributed to good results, for instance in the outbreak of forest fires and in operations requiring rescue personnel and equipment across borders. Negotiations are now underway to conclude an intergovernmental Agreement on Rescue and Emergency Cooperation in the Barents Region.

The Barents 2007 Rescue Exercise is part of a wider effort to improve cooperation in international civilian crisis management, since this exercise also involves a Multinational Experiment (MNE) to test cooperation involving civilian and military authorities as well as NGOs in crisis management. A part of the experiment is to test the Shared Information Framework and Technology (SHIFT). The special aim in the Barents Rescue Exercise is to examine the linkages between crisis management and rescue and emergency services.

As Finland is chairing the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, it is natural that the Barents Rescue Exercise 2007 is organised in Finnish Lapland. This exercise will certainly contribute to increased know-how and experience in joint tackling of emergency situations in the north.

Mr Ilkka Kanerva
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland
Chairman of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council

Finland's two-year chairmanship of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) is coming to an end, but before that Finland has the honour of hosting the Barents Rescue 2007 Exercise.

Barents Rescue 2007 Project

Culminates in a Major Emergency Exercise

From the viewpoint of rescue services, this exercise is the most important event to be held during Finland's chairmanship. The great distances and limited resources in the Barents Region pose a real challenge to rescue operations. For this reason, it is important that the BEAC member countries plan together how to use the resources available. This makes rescue operations more effective particularly in sparsely populated areas.

The planning process for this exercise has helped to develop cooperation and to improve disaster preparedness. In planning the exercise, emphasis has been placed on leadership skills. The main part of the exercise involves a simulated emergency situation where participants are required to use their leadership skills. The Barents Rescue 2007 Exercise provides an opportunity for leaders at various levels to further develop their skills and knowledge.

Experiences and feedback on the exercise will help to develop not only the leadership system and situation awareness solutions but also the exercise system. Dozens of organisations from the member countries have taken part in the preparation of the exercise.

The objectives of the exercise, planned together with participating organisations, emphasise the learning aspect of this process. The exercise objectives are:

- To test how functional agreements on assistance are. Agreements are either bilateral or multilateral. Feedback received

during the exercise can be utilised when renewing these agreements.

- To test how effectively the countries in the Barents Region alarm each other in case of a major emergency or share information with each other. The exercise, consisting of three different phases, will start with an alarm exercise involving alarm centres across the Barents Region.
- To develop leadership skills in major emergencies. Leadership is based on the cooperation between emergency operations centres and various organisations.
- To practise and develop informing at all levels. Informing the media and the relatives of people involved in an emergency is a challenge to all authorities and organisations working in disaster situations.
- To improve preparedness and the maintenance of situation awareness. During the exercise, participants will try new situation awareness solutions and also study these solutions.

- To develop transportation and logistics, particularly in view of preventing hypothermia in major accidents. In northern desolated regions, people must be evacuated to areas hundreds of kilometres away from the accident site. It is important that different organisations and states can share their transportation capacities flexibly.
- To develop the capacity to organise a major international exercise. The whole process is seen as a learning opportunity for all participating organisations.

The scenario for the Barents Rescue 2007 Exercise is an aviation accident. The scenario is based on a real risk assessment as hundreds of flights will be arriving in Lapland in December. Geographic and climatic conditions with long distances and a limited infrastructure pose a real challenge to any rescue operation. The exercise scenario will challenge all services and agencies to enhance transboundary cooperation. Finnish authorities will request rescue assistance from other BEAC countries.

Hundreds of people have been involved, one way or the other, in planning and preparing this exercise. This joint planning has been as valuable as joint practising will be in this exercise.

The whole process is seen as a learning opportunity for all participating organisations.

Mr Petteri Taitto
Crisis Management Centre Finland
Project Leader for the Barents Rescue 2007

Our recent risk assessments within the Barents Region have proved that new requirements for comprehensive risk management, whether based on challenges of natural or man-made origin, are needed.

Changing Tides

in Barents Rescue Cooperation

From Cross-Border Exercises to Shared Capacities?

When it comes to preparing for comprehensive, adjustable and border crossing rescue cooperation, the password for a success story is nowadays interoperability. In that respect the so called all hazards approach is a legitimate concept when striving for better operative integration and division of tasks between essential stakeholders in the Barents Region. However, besides the extraordinary

distances between major cities and sparsely populated rural communities, the limited rescue capacities together with restricted means for transport and hospital resources are hindering the intergovernmental cooperation and creating additional challenges for local rescue planners of the Barents Region.

Cross-border and cross-sectoral civil protection exercises are the most efficient and cost effective tools for improved emergency preparedness and rescue operation. If national rescue capacities are harmonised between neighbouring countries and a common language and culture exist in the region, such systems as the TETRA radio network or usage of the Geographical Information Systems (GIS) will make the international emergency assistance much better equipped. This became evident during the flooding of the Central Europe in 2002 which further generated the EU Solidarity Fund, a common financial instrument created for Member States to be able to share the burden in case of a large-scale catastrophe. It is important to realise however that the intergovernmental rescue cooperation should never be based only on

high-level meetings and state-of-the-art declarations. The operational and voluntary personnel need to be fully rooted to up-to-date situation awareness and to be given a possibility to meet regularly their counterparts across the national/federal borders and to learn about the latest IT applications and methodologies used in neighbouring countries. This can be assured only through shared training modules and workshops, regional data bases and annual/regular full-scale rescue exercises.

The Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) Working Group on Emergency and Rescue Services Co-operation (WG ERS) was established in September 2002. The BEAC was the first multilateral attempt in the Barents Region to harmonise regional aims for emergency and rescue services cooperation and to improve the possibilities for the rescue services agencies to cooperate on emergency and rescue issues across the borders in the Barents Region. The BEAC Working Group was also given a role to play in assuring the interaction with other intergovernmental tools, such as the United Nations, the NATO-Russia cooperation, and

Cross-border and cross-sectoral civil protection exercises are the most efficient and cost effective tools for improved emergency preparedness.



Mutual Emergency Assistance Agreement on Radiation Accidents (1963), the Copenhagen Agreement on Oil Spill Prevention (1971) and the Nordic Agreement to prevent damage to people, property and the environment (1989), the Eurobaltic Programme for Civil Protection was generated within the Council of the Baltic Sea States in 2001. Soon it became evident that the programme itself and the high-level gatherings would not make the difference; there should also be practical exercises.

The Eurobaltic Project for Civil Protection binds together all the countries of the Baltic Sea Region, including Russia. During its four year implementation and second phase of Eurobaltic II, it has clearly showed that the training methodologies, usage of IT and decision support systems, and operative culture practised by the rescue personnel vary more than was ever expected. However, the cooperation within Eurobaltic has been a tremendous success story and it gives a good incentive to repeat the formula in Barents rescue cooperation in years to come.

During the upcoming years, Barents rescue cooperation could be enhanced by the European Commission Civil Protection Financial Instrument. There are also plenty of other stakeholders who are interested to participate in this type of cooperation, derived from their own needs and resources. In this regard, I see the Barents Rescue 2007 Exercise as an excellent opportunity for more a dynamic and profound discussion on new initiatives as well as on networking between the rescue authorities, emergency response centres, municipalities, voluntary organisations and research institutes. We should materialise this momentum in order to generate a new form of Barents rescue cooperation taking advantage of the existing instruments and decision-making bodies. More practical cooperation is needed, and in this case it should be based on the principle of thinking locally, acting regionally.

Mr Timo Hellenberg
Head, CIVPRO Research Network
Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki

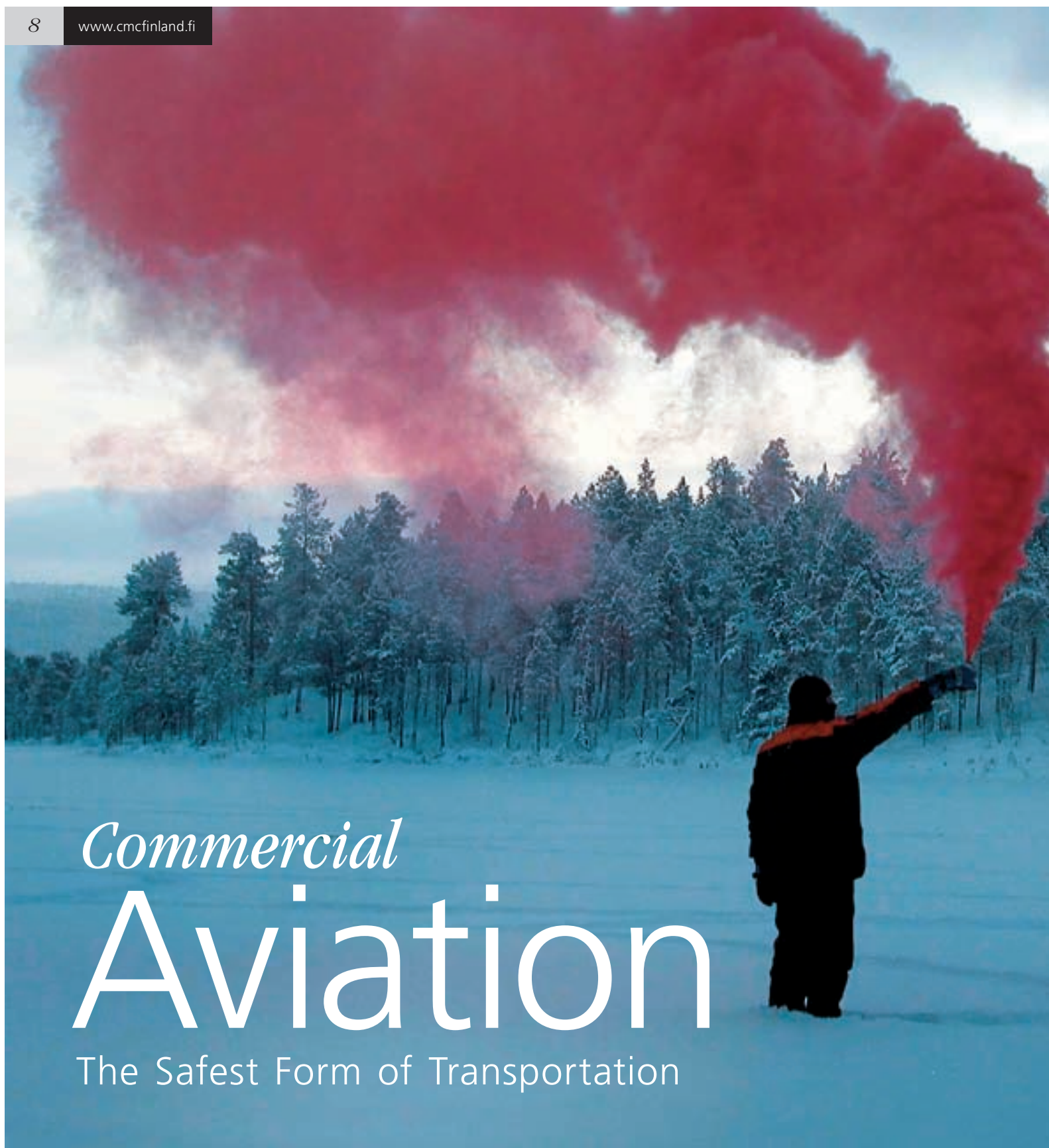
Essential intergovernmental agreements on Cross-Border Risks

	Nordic Mutual Emergency Assistance	Copenhagen Agreement	Nordic Agreement to prevent damage to people, property, environment	Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response	Eurobaltic Civil Protection Program	Cooperation within field of Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response
Year	1963	1971	1989	1991	2001	2005
Field	Radiation Accidents	Oil Spills	All major accidents	Arctic accidents	Natural, Man-made CBSS	Emergencies
Forum	Nordic	Nordic	Nordic (Iceland 01)	Arctic Council	CBSS	Barents Euro- Arctic Council
Denmark	x	x	x		x	
Finland	x	x	x	x	x	x
Norway	x	x	x	x	x	x
Sweden	x	x	x	x	x	x
Germany					x	
Estonia					x	
Latvia					x	
Lithuania					x	
Poland					x	
Russia				x	x	x

Source: Cross-Border Risks in the Baltic Sea Region: Lessons to Be Learned by Timo Hellenberg and Sigrid Hedén, Eurobaltic Publications 4, 2006

the European Union. Finally, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council generated an agreement on cooperation within the field of emergency prevention, preparedness and response. In 2005, Finland, Sweden and Norway ratified this agreement together with Russia.

Whereas the Barents rescue cooperation is a relatively fresh issue on the agendas of the Government Councils' in Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden, the Baltic Sea Region civil protection cooperation has a half a century background in this field. Following the Nordic



Commercial Aviation

The Safest Form of Transportation

Air traffic is seldom considered a form of public transportation. Sure enough; during 2006 about 2.25 billion passengers were transported by air. Globally it is an amazing figure! This amount of people was transported extremely safely with 25 million jet and with about 8 million turbo propeller flights. According to statistics published by IATA (International Air Transport Association), these planes made about 51 million flight

Continuous training is considered an essential part of the Finnair safety culture.

hours. The year 2006 was by all measurements the safest year in the aviation history.

The most followed measurement WBJ (Western-built Jet) describes that globally there were 0.65 accidents per one million flights. It is a great achievement; and compared to 2005, it means a decrease by 25 %. IATA carriers (about 260 companies) made it even better; the WBJ shows 0.48 accidents per one million

flights. Unfortunately, there were also about 900 fatalities in 2006. Europe, North-America and Australia show best safety records in the world.

Aviation safety and security – safety management

Safety management is defined as the systematic management of the risks associated with flight operations and related ground operations to achieve high levels of safety performance. A Safety Management System is an explicit element of the corporate management responsibility that sets out an operator's safety policy and defines how it intends to manage safety as an integral part of its overall business. Quality and safety management systems have about 70 per cent in common.

Safety management differs from quality management by focussing more on human and organisational factors because they dominate operational risks in all kinds of ways. Human and organisational errors cannot be eliminated. Therefore safety management systems set up processes to improve communication about hazards and errors and take action to manage and minimise risks.

The systemic approach to accident and incident investigation has shown that for almost every aviation accident or incident, civil or military:

- The main contributing systemic factors were present before it happened.
- In most cases, they were common knowledge, they had often been formally documented, and many people were not surprised by what happened.
- In all cases, they could have and should have been identified and fixed before the accident or incident.



One of the corner stones in a successful safety culture is an operational reporting system. Every one, in ground handling operations, maintenance and technical services as well as flight operations, must remember requirements in aviation law, and must report according to instructions given on dangerous situations and damages caused, and everyone should take the initiative in the measures of safety.

Emergency response as part of the safety culture

ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) has placed requirements to airports and airlines concerning emergency response. In some countries such as the USA, Brazil, Australia and China, there are laws that define the airline responsibilities in an emergency situation. As an IOSA accredited airline, we have preparedness world wide to establish our emergency response.

To be able to meet the challenges faced during unexpected, sudden situations, we need to develop safety consistently. And there are always inherent risks associated with the operations of an airline. Our readiness and ability to handle unwanted and often also serious situations in the best possible way are part of the Finnair safety policy. We have therefore developed a comprehensive plan which will help Finnair to respond compassionately and effectively in the event of an accident.

Continuous training of the personnel and cooperation with different agencies and parties is considered an essential part of the Finnair safety culture. In the immediate aftermath of an accident, despite such unfortunate adversity and the tremendous pressure it would cause, we will do our utmost to assure safe operations, take good care of our customers and our own personnel.



Preparedness, emergency plans, and well rehearsed cooperation at each airport enable us to establish an efficient and flexible response together with the authorities and agencies involved in the immediate aftermath of an accident. Cooperation at both national and international levels is important as airlines carry hundreds of passengers and crew from different countries representing several nationalities. The Barents Rescue 2007 Exercise is a good example on the cooperation and team work of different parties at international level.

Conclusion

Finnair has in course of time achieved trustworthiness and a high-level of satisfaction among its customers. Internationally, the development in measures of safety is good. We must, however, at the same time be professionally humble. Safety in aviation industry is considered as every person's obligation. The responsibility can not be buck-passed to "someone else".

A contiguous safety chain does not allow any weak links. The positive development in aviation safety is not something that is a given fact, but we all must work every day to achieve this goal.

Safety is our priority number one. Let's be careful out there!

Mr Erkki Ahtee
Senior Vice President
Aviation Safety and Security Finnair Plc

Handling of Media Challenges

During Crisis

The picture of the crisis

Some reflections on the nature of crisis might be useful. A crisis has three important dimensions. These are:

1. *The crisis itself*
2. *The crisis/emergency management by authorities and enterprises*
3. *The emerging picture of the crisis*

The crisis itself is, as a general rule, difficult enough to handle. The experience is that it becomes even more difficult to handle if the authorities do not have a Crisis Management Plan (CMP). It is maintained that the greatest problems often do not stem from the crisis itself, but from how the authorities manage the crisis. This view is also confirmed by experts that state a major event (crisis) often is characterised by poor routines and procedures. A situation does not necessarily have to be perceived as a crisis by the enterprise itself. However, others in its surroundings may see it differently. When we talk about the emerging picture of the crisis, we primarily think about the picture created by the media. This could be the picture the media create from the crisis itself, but also the picture on how the enterprise manages the crisis. For the surrounding environment, the picture itself may often be just as real as the crisis itself.

The role of the media

It might also be useful to reflect on the role of the media during crisis:

1. *Can the media be of use to us?*
2. *Is cooperation possible?*
3. *Do the media create problems?*

Most people involved in crisis/emergency management know that a possible answer to all these questions is Yes. However, everybody with experience of crisis/emergency management also knows that there is no straightforward answer to the questions.

May be useful

The authorities will seldom, if ever, be able to keep up with the speed of the media. The technological development has accelerated the pace – with regard to both the actual gathering of information and the dissemination to society. This enables the authorities to quickly spread useful information to the public.

Moreover, the media can facilitate the distribution of information from the authorities to a large number of recipients. The use of electronic media is increasing. Today, it is possible for journalists at a press conference to publish new information directly on electronic newspapers. Thus, information is circulated at a speed that could get down towards one minute.

A wish to cooperate

Crisis journalism may be divided into three stages:

1. *The microphone stand phase*
2. *The knowledge accumulation phase*
3. *The investigation phase*

At the initial stage of a crisis, most editorial offices would like to cooperate with the authorities. This is due to the fact that the media at this stage are not in possession of much information. The authorities,

however, are often better informed about the course of events. On the other hand, the initial stage of a crisis is the stage with least available information (confirmed information). Nevertheless, at this stage the crisis management team is established. From experience, we know that the media will seek any information available – irrespective of the source.

If the authorities are well prepared for this initial stage, crisis management will benefit greatly. The development of trustworthy relationships before a crisis will contribute to better cooperation with the media in the midst of a crisis.

Create problems?

Well, the media are indeed able to create problems. As mentioned above, the picture of the crisis that emerges is part of the nature of crisis. This picture is highly influenced by the media, and for the authorities, it is a challenge to have their picture of the crisis correctly presented by the media.

Moreover, if the authorities are unable to respond to the media in a credible way, the media will seek alternative sources of information (and the agenda of these sources are likely to differ from that of the authorities).

The spreading of incorrect information through the media may, at worst, cause unnecessary loss of human life.

The challenges just presented could quickly result in an information crisis, which will be elaborated upon below.

crisis management plan
trustworthy relationships
the role of the media
credibility
metacrisis
the picture of the crisis
conflict of time

Information crises

The official report Information Crises (how the Norwegian authorities handled the Chernobyl disaster) deals with the fact that an information crisis may arise as a separate crisis. It is, however, usually described as a metacrisis, i.e. a crisis within a crisis. In other words, an information crisis arises in the wake of the primary crisis. According to the report from 1986, an information crisis is characterised as follows:

A vacuum of information

A vacuum of information will automatically emerge if the demand for information is greater than the information offered by the authorities. There are several examples of the impact this will have on crisis management. One example of a vacuum of information was experienced in Norway by Norwegian authorities during the Chernobyl disaster.

Speculations dominate the flow of information

In the case when absence of facts and the flow of rumours and speculations start to dominate, we are faced with an information crisis.

Uncertainty of how to act

During a crisis, experts who claim to have or actually have relevant information will usually start to pop-up (pop-up-experts). If different authorities are not coordinated and have in place their roles during the crisis, these experts can create uncertainty in the population about how to act and to whom they should relate.

An information crisis will typically occur when the authorities do not have a well-prepared

crisis management plan in place. In addition to the above-mentioned factors, we may imagine lack of or poor coordination between different parties and that the different roles of these groups are not clearly defined.

Latent conflicts between the authorities and the media

Conflict of time: The authorities need time to obtain information, analyse the situation and consider actions to be taken before making statements to the media. The media, on the other hand, want to get information to their public quickly. They have deadlines to meet and competitors to beat.

Conflict of sources: The authorities want their message presented in the media as the only correct one. The media, however, often want to uncover a variety of sources that either supports the authorities or have a different view of the situation.

The crisis management plan should include a separate plan for handling the media.

Conflict of responsibility: The authorities are responsible for not disseminating inaccurate information, for which they could be held liable at a later stage. The media are freer to leave the interpretation of information to the public.

Conflict of knowledge: This is a conflict between, on the one hand, official experts and their need to present the crisis in all its complexity and to indicate the uncertain aspects of their assessments, and on the other hand, the need of the media to simplify and popularise. The conflict is often caused by the failure of the official expert in explaining the situation in a manner that everybody understands and according to the experts, the journalists' lack of knowledge of the subject matter.

When the objectives and assessments by the authorities run counter to those of the media, experts call it a conflict of priorities. Often, the parties do not agree on what the public needs to and does not need to know.

Summing up

It is possible for the authorities to prepare for all the challenges mentioned. The latent conflicts between the authorities and the media will always be present. However, action taken before the crisis will minimise the conflicts.

The crisis management plan should include a separate plan for handling the media. It is, however, important to keep in mind that the handling of the media should not be separated from the rest of crisis management.

As already mentioned, a well-prepared plan could minimise or even eliminate some of the challenges the enterprise is faced with. Such a plan should meet certain criteria.

*Mr. Carl-Erik Christoffersen
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The risks for emergency situations are increasing in northern areas. Due to the growing tourism industry and transportation, the traffic numbers are growing in the air and land transport as well as in shipping. The extreme climatic phenomena, such as winter storms and floods, have also become more frequent during the last years. Common features of the northern regions are long distances, sparse population and a rough climate, which make emergency situations severe in any season of the year. Borders and many languages make the operations even more demanding. Management of the risks caused by cold conditions is an important issue in emergency and rescue work in the north. A systematic approach to this is needed. There is a lot of expertise in the northern regions with focus on cold climate-expertise to be exploited in the development work.

Managing the Cold in Emergency Situations

A Systematic Approach

The Barents Region and its counties cover vast, sparsely populated areas with arctic/sub-arctic climate with limited resources, different languages, different communication systems, different ways of organising their rescue services and the chain of command requesting the assistance. Weather conditions can be extreme. There are long distances between the cities and isolated villages. For example, the existing operative rescue resources, including cold protective equipment, can thus not be placed just in a few centralised storages.

Assistance could be provided more efficiently, faster and at a lower operating cost by enhancing the cross-border activities. The effective use of the existing equipment and resources demands good logistics plans and strategies, cross-border information, education, training and development of equipment as well as international agreements on cooperation and border crossing. An enhanced emergency and rescue services cooperation in the Barents Region should be viewed as a county-based implementation of agreed international commitments, norms and standards adapted to the special conditions of the north. Due to the limited authority resources, there is also a strong need to develop new innovative activities, services, products and other practices for using the private sector's potential to support the authorities' work. The need is also recorded in the public funding programmes, such as the EU's Northern Periphery Programme 2007–2013.

Due to the limited authority resources, there is also a strong need to develop new innovative activities, services and products.

There are several collaborative activities in the region, such as common rescue trainings, development projects and working groups. Under the Barents Euro Arctic Council (BEAC), a Working Group for Emergency and Rescue Services Cooperation created a network between public authorities and

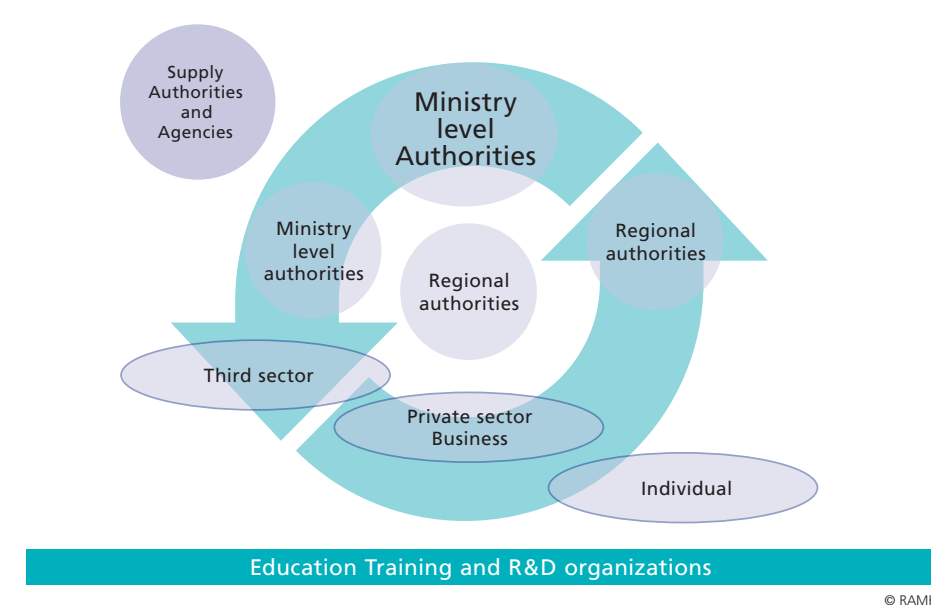


Figure 1. A model for cooperation between the actors (Narbro A & Risikko T 2007).

other actors participating in rescue operations in the Barents Region. Based on the WG's suggestions, joint guidelines are being prepared, transnational agreements have been made and educational cooperation has been improved. Cold protection abilities and facilities have also been studied in various regions. A working group consisting of Lapland's search and rescue authorities and specialists has given regional recommendations for the joint use of equipment, and for municipalities' cold protection resources. Research and development work has also been carried out widely to improve the practices and products for rescue operations in northern regions as well as in the off-shore conditions. The effectiveness and sustainability of transport logistics and infrastructure in rural areas has been promoted in many transnational projects.

Despite the previous work, there is a need for a structured and well-coordinated approach to managing cold conditions in emergency situations. This will be created in form of operational cooperation models, legal and international agreements and rescue actors' capacity building and cold protection equipment procurement. A structure for the equipment use practices and information flow will be developed. The strategic equipment placement, resource maps and logistics will be planned. The private and voluntary sectors will be integrated into the work. All actors will be trained to know the common practices and act upon those.

It is important to establish coherent communication and cooperation between actors at local, regional, national and

international levels in order to reach the best results. The figure 1 shows a cooperation model between the actors.

Cold climate expertise in northern regions will be utilised. As one of the actors, the Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences (RAMK) provides multi-professional expertise in guiding the process for managing the cold conditions. RAMK has an active network with other cold environment R&D institutions in Northern Finland and internationally. One of the new innovations for training the common practices in emergency situations is the ENVI virtual learning centre of RAMK, which improves the possibilities for emergency and rescue professionals to develop, test and maintain their skills and know-how.

During the Barents Rescue 2007 Exercise, the management of cold conditions will be evaluated in three sub-exercises: in the alarm exercise, in the tabletop exercise and in the field exercise. The present status will thus be demonstrated in practice throughout the whole process. The experiences gathered from the BR 07 training will be utilised in project planning. I look forward to seeing vigorous results already in the following Barents Rescue training!

Ms Tanja Risikko
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Towards Balanced Information Sharing in Crisis Management

SHIFT

After the Cold War, NATO tried to find its role in the changed world and became more involved in crisis management. Twelve years ago NATO sent its troops to the Former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia to end the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina – a mission which UN peacekeepers had failed to complete. NATO's intervention was effective and the situation was brought under control. As a result of its self-evaluation and development work, NATO had created a vision of comprehensive crisis management in which all parties would work towards the same goal. All that was needed was coordination, and NATO wanted to test it in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

'It was like forcing wild cats into the same cage,' described an officer who was a member of the coordination group in Sarajevo. Actors involved in civilian crisis management, let alone different organisations, felt very distressed about all coordination attempts as they were afraid that soldiers would take over the control. In the worst case scenario the results gained from attempting to dictate crisis management organisations, international organisations and non-governmental organisations were possibly more chaotic than those gained from actions which were organised using random methods.

Problem and its solution

Almost everyone involved has gradually admitted that lack of coordination is one of the key problems in crisis management. Hundreds of independent organisations may be working in the same crisis areas without any knowledge of each other's actions or experiences. A great number of organisations have been established to coordinate relief work and development aid but none of them covers the whole scope of action. Furthermore, coordination is not understood in the same way by everyone, because many actors have well-founded reasons to act separately from each other. Organisations may also see each other as competitors, for example because of the same funding sources or a different ideological or religious approach.

The common denominator accepted by all actors is the open and voluntary sharing of information between organisations. It is considered to be beneficial to all parties. However, so far there has been no generally accepted concept and no user friendly ICT tool suitable for information sharing in crisis areas. Now Finland has taken on a leading role in this development work and provides its solutions to the international community. The Finnish solution to the international problem is called the Shared Information Framework and Technology, SHIFT. It is both an operating model and an Internet service together with programmes.

Finland aims to create such an environment that is not owned by any of the organisations involved but an environment that serves all of them. Only against this background can we try to achieve new unbiased and diverse synergy.

SHIFT – Shared Information Framework and Technology

Developing the SHIFT concept is part of the Multinational Experiment 5, MNE5, which is a programme focusing on multinational development and experiments. MNE5 pays special attention to the civil-military interface which is more of a problem at international level than it is in Finland. When developing the SHIFT concept, it is important to establish what the role of security authorities is as well as the need for information sharing between public authorities who carry out reconstruction work and develop democracy on a long-term basis. Furthermore, the solution is not credible unless, in addition to public authorities, non-governmental actors involved in crisis management make a considerable input to its development.

The SHIFT focuses on designing an operating model and developing a technology which supports the concept of open information sharing. At the same time, it encourages participants to transfer to a new kind of information management environment where open information sharing increases the added value to participants.

The SHIFT focuses on designing an operating model and developing a technology which supports the concept of open information sharing.

As a technology, the SHIFT examines information flows between different actors and the use of new Internet services, such as network meetings and user-created wiki pages, in crisis management. In addition, common graphics and a data model for visualising and sharing situation pictures of crisis areas at international level have been developed.

As an operating model, the SHIFT focuses on the fact that actors in crisis management inform

each other of their objectives and actions. The solution based on well-developed information sharing can also be applied at strategic-political level whereas research and modelling focus on field-level work. It is believed that common situational awareness helps to minimise overlapping functions, to identify common objectives or operational needs, to locate any gaps in action and to increase security.

The SHIFT environment promotes the situational awareness of all actors in crisis management, namely, military and civil authorities, international and non-governmental organisations and local actors. The SHIFT is not owned by any of the authorities or other interested actors. A SHIFT organisation, for example a particular organisation established to provide SHIFT services, does not have any operational ambitions; instead, it provides different actors with a forum for open information sharing.

The SHIFT is accessible via the Internet and it provides authorised users with a wide range of ICT services, such as a portal, virtual meetings and the Shiftpedia where up-to-date and user-relevant information is gathered just like in the Wikipedia. The SHIFT technology includes a situation picture which all actors complement. The situation picture is considered to be self-sustainable because it is, as a rule, in the interests of all actors that the picture is accurate. However, an open system may also leave the way open to misuse. That is why we need to examine carefully how to prepare for misuse in the right way.

At national level, the SHIFT principle and technology are used in preparedness exercises, especially when public authorities cooperate with each other. Also, steps have been taken to explore ways of using this technology when public authorities, Finnish actors in crisis areas and non-governmental organisations cooperate with each other.

The aim is to make an international breakthrough with utilising the current technology and translating it into practical action. The reality is that field-level crisis management does not clearly make full use of the possibilities available today. Potential steps in development are huge, which is, in fact, the biggest obstacle to development. People's working methods and ways of thinking have to change to improve the outcome. Finland can use the SHIFT to assist with international crisis management in a way that is expected from a country known for its high-level expertise and open social system.

*Mr Kalle Liesinen
Executive Director of
Crisis Management Initiative*

The Voluntary Rescue Service (known by its Finnish acronym Vapepa) is a network of organisations involved in various rescue activities which are unique to Finland and probably to the whole world.

Finland's Voluntary Rescue Service



Nearly 50 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are involved in the Vapepa Voluntary Rescue Service. Each of them is prepared to help and support public authorities whenever extra or specialist assistance is needed to cope with an accident or other emergency situation. The NGOs provide their own personnel, equipment, resources and specialist knowledge.

In May 1963, a 5-year-old girl got lost in the wilderness of Finnish Lapland. Despite the fact that search parties combed through wide areas, the girl died before she was found. This sad case made people realise that Finnish authorities need assistance from volunteers. Taking the initiative, the Finnish Red Cross suggested that a voluntary rescue service be set up to aid the authorities. The Ministry of the Interior agreed, and the Voluntary Rescue Service was founded in March 1964. So, decades of tradition back up today's Vapepa Voluntary Rescue Service, and since the sixties, its operations have developed and grown enormously – but so have also the challenges the service faces.

To date, the Vapepa member organisations have set up around 1,400 emergency groups to assist the authorities, and in total they have a resource of some 20,000 volunteers. As the linchpin organisation of the Voluntary Rescue Service, the Finnish Red Cross coordinates all the rescue efforts in which Vapepa is involved. The Air Rescue Association Finland and the Finnish Lifeboat Society each coordinate search and rescue efforts in their respective areas. Among other things, this coordination entails dovetailing the efforts of all the relative NGOs and authorities, promoting conditions of rescue preparedness on local and provincial levels, and arranging training sessions and practical exercises.

Every year, Vapepa assists the authorities in some 400 emergency situations. Recently, the

Voluntary Rescue Service has helped the police search for missing persons. Volunteers also transport people and supplies, give first aid and psychological support, arrange temporary accommodation, help to arrange the provision and distribution of vital services such as food, water and dry clothes, and provide practical assistance. Volunteers have also been called upon to fight forest and other big fires, keep order in general, to provide services for rescue workers, and to give first assistance to families made homeless, and to help at traffic and other serious accidents.

In 2006, Vapepa was called out to assist 425 times, including: 196 missing-person searches, 28 fires, 7 traffic accidents, and 139 other situations. The 'other situations' handled by Vapepa in Lapland include those where

*Efficient work
requires regular
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psychological support was needed along with patient transport in the wilderness. In total, the Voluntary Rescue Service helped 1,233 people, and Vapepa volunteers logged in a total of 25,131 hours of rescue assistance.

The Voluntary Rescue Service can call on the help of hunters, scouts and guides, people with working dogs, orienteers, volunteer road patrols, fire fighters, amateur radio users, as well as members of first-aid groups and various women's and other preparedness organisations.

As its name indicates, the Voluntary Rescue Service consists of volunteers. However, the level of emergency preparedness of individual volunteers or groups does not equal that of the authorities. Volunteers are usually called on to help in prolonged situations, such as after serious accidents, in searches and situations that require first assistance services. In sparsely populated areas, the Vapepa Voluntary Rescue Service can make a significant local addition to the resources of the authorities. The Voluntary Rescue Service is specifically intended to assist the authorities, not to replace them. Vapepa volunteers are always called in by the authorities. Their work is altruistic, and they are not paid to participate in rescue or aid work. The Voluntary Rescue Service is organised to enable volunteers to provide the authorities with swift, efficient and well-trained assistance.

Efficient work requires regular training and maintenance of emergency preparedness. Vapepa and its member organisations offer training courses which form the basis of the rescue service. Smooth-running cooperation

is particularly important. Vapepa member organisations train together at local and regional levels and collaborate in practical exercises with the authorities. During these joint exercises, different operations are fitted together, and the participants get to know one another, their resources and the principles they adhere to. To keep the volunteers motivated, it is important to recognise their input in collaborative efforts and exercises with the authorities and their vital role in the full rescue services. These joint training sessions and exercises improve everyone's preparedness at both individual and team levels but also facilitate their working together in a real emergency.

The Vapepa Voluntary Rescue Service offers people an opportunity to help, whether it be on land, at sea, or in the air.

*Mr Markku Grip
Head of Preparedness
for the FRC Oulu district*

*The Finnish Red Cross coordinates
all the rescue efforts in which Vapepa
is involved.*

In the spring of 1987, the Finnish Red Cross (FRC) initiated a nation-wide fundraising collection to support their work in Finland.

Nineteen Years of Rescue Service seminars

The Finnish Red Cross coordinates the Voluntary Rescue Service network, which covers all of Finland. There are some 1,400 alarm groups and more than 20,000 volunteers. The work of the Voluntary Rescue Service is financed by Finland's Slot Machine Association (RAY) and the Finnish Red Cross.

The Ivalo branch and the Lapland District of the FRC unanimously decided to request that some of the donated money be earmarked for rescue work in the fjelds, or mountains, namely to develop and purchase the tools and equipment necessary for rescue operations in the mountains of Lapland.

The aim of the Fjeld Project was to create a rescue unit fit for the fjelds and wilderness areas of Finnish Lapland, a rescue unit that could operate in any and all circumstances. In the early stages, the most important task was to develop the right equipment: a series of six rescue sleds were designed and built and the Saariselkä Fjeld Rescue Units were equipped. (In 1990, the most distant Fjeld Rescue Unit was the one sent to Iran to equip aid workers from the International Red Cross.)

Early on, the project group realised that improving cooperation between volunteers and the relevant authorities would require the two groups to get together for several days at a time. At such gatherings, both parties could hone their skills and get to know one another, thus making their collaboration in the field easier and more natural.

The upshot of this was that the Pelastuspalvelu-seminaari 1 or First Rescue Service Seminar was arranged in Saariselkä in October 1988. The response to the seminar was very positive and a decision was made to hold such a meeting annually.

The theme of each seminar has always focused on rescue work in Lapland and the difficulty of patient transport. Either in lectures or practical exercises every seminar has also touched on protection against the cold, something that can be a problem in any season. The various methods of transporting patients in the field are another recurring seminar theme. Often discussed, too, are the particular difficulties encountered by rescue workers in relation to tourism, whether there is a fire at a hotel or an accident on mass transport. Practical exercises are often motivated by what is a common difficulty in Lapland, that is the long time it can take to transport a patient and how best to pick up patients in hard-to-reach areas.

The aim of the practical exercises is to create as realistic a situation as possible. Experts from several fields are brought in to help plan and realise the exercises and to ensure the simulated situations are realistically demanding.

When the seminars were first begun, the planning committee thought the event would be primarily for people living in Lapland. However, since the first seminar there has been considerable interest from volunteer rescuers and authorities throughout Finland. Some 20 per cent of the participants in the seminars have come from outside the Province of Lapland.

The theme of each seminar has always focused on rescue work in Lapland and the difficulty of patient transport.

The programme and rescue exercises of the seminars have been well received nationally. Matters raised and practical know-how gained through the exercises have been used in rescue operations throughout the country. Experience gained in the exercises has been of great assistance in drawing up local rescue plans and they have increased collaboration between the authorities and volunteers.

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The responsibility for planning the Barents Rescue 2007 Exercise rests with the Crisis Management Centre Finland and the State Provincial Office of Lapland. The Regional Emergency Services of Lapland together with the Voluntary Rescue Service have placed their knowledge and experience of local resources at the disposal of the organisers.

Project website: www.cmcfinland.fi



CMC Finland
Working Papers

Participating organisations Ministry of the Interior | Ministry for Foreign Affairs | Ministry of Transport and Communications | Ministry of Social Affairs and Health | Ministry of Defence | Prime Minister's Office | Heads of Preparedness | The Finnish Defence Forces, Northern Command | The Border Guard of Finland, Border Guard District of Lapland | Emergency Services College | Crisis Management Centre Finland | Emergency Response Centre of Lapland | National Defence College | Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences | Finnair | Aeronautical Rescue Co-ordination Centre | Finavia | State Provincial Office of Lapland | Regional Rescue Services of Lapland | Finnish Red Cross | Voluntary Rescue Service with its member organisations | Aleksanteri Institute | Accident Investigation Board | Swedish Rescue Services Agency | Ministry of Defence/Sweden | Civil Aviation Authority/Sweden | County Office Norbotten/Sweden | Defence Forces/Sweden | Ministry of Police and Justice/Norway | Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Norway | Directorate for CEP/Norway | JRCC Bodø/Norway | Armed Forces/Norway | Emercom/Russia | Observers