



## European Emergency Response Capacity

ECHO FACTSHEET

### Facts & Figures

Available for **immediate deployment in response to natural and man-made disasters** as part of a collective European intervention

Activities coordinated and monitored 24/7 by the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC)

**Over 30 European teams** are expected to join the European Emergency Response Capacity before the end of 2015.

**Two teams were already mobilised during the Ebola outbreak**



Photo credit:EU/ECHO/Oerk

- The EU is stepping up its preparedness to respond to disasters by developing a European Emergency Response capacity (EERC – often referred to as the "voluntary pool").
- The EERC brings together a range of relief teams, experts and equipment, which Member States keep on standby for EU civil protection missions all over the world. A total of over 30 different teams – including search and rescue teams, field hospitals and medical labs, forest fire fighting aircraft, flood rescue and containment modules, medevac planes and many others – are expected to join before the end of 2015.
- The teams meet strict quality criteria and undergo a rigorous certification process to ensure quality and interoperability. They train and exercise together and are available to be rapidly deployed when disasters strike. In return, they benefit from EU financial support.
- In times of increasing disaster risks, the EERC allows for a more predictable, faster and coherent EU response to disasters. It also facilitates better planning and coordination at European and national levels. The European Commission's Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC)\* serves as the main coordination hub for the deployment of teams.

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## The European Emergency Response Capacity

Within the framework of the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism (EU CPM)\*, Member States and the European Commission have been working closely together to develop a European Emergency Response Capacity (EERC). The EERC is also open to Norway, Iceland and the enlargement countries that joined the EU CPM.

The EERC is the main innovation stemming from the 2013 EU legislation on the Civil Protection Mechanism. Interested countries can pre-commit different types of response capacities for participation in coordinated EU civil protection missions. When disaster strikes, the Emergency Response Coordination Centre will facilitate a coordinated deployment of these assets, in close cooperation with Member States. This will greatly enhance the availability of response capacities in times of need, bring more predictability in the assistance and significantly reduce deployment times. Member States and the Commission are working closely together to develop quality criteria and a certification process for the different teams, thus ensuring that all teams meet minimum quality and interoperability criteria and can effectively work together in the field. Trainings and exercises are available to test and further improve performance and coordination.

In return for commitment to the voluntary pool, participating states can benefit from EU financial support:

- The transport of teams deployed from the EERC is eligible for co-financing up to 85% by the EU.
- The costs necessary to upgrade existing national response capacities to make them deployable in an international context ("adaptation costs") can be financed up to 100% by the EU (provided they remain below a financial ceiling of 30% of the average development cost of the capacity)
- The certification costs, including training, exercises and workshops, are 100% covered.

In the first few weeks after its launch in October 2014, five countries immediately registered various response capacities in the EERC. This includes for example USAR (Urban Search and Rescue) teams, specialised Ebola medical air evacuation capacity and a mobile medical laboratory. A further 32 modules – including water purification, aerial and ground forest fire fighting, flood containment, flood rescue, heavy urban search and rescue, medical aerial evacuation of disaster victims and field hospitals – are expected to join the EERC in the coming months. To date there have been two deployments from the EERC, both in the context of the European response to the Ebola crisis.

## Examples of EERC deployments

### Belgian laboratory to fight Ebola in Guinea

Over thirty Belgian experts were deployed to N'Zérékoré, Guinea, from December 2014 to March 2015. Their efforts within the B-Life laboratory have contributed to saving lives and putting a halt to new cases in the region. The B-Life laboratory benefitted from the financial support of the EU FP7 Research Programme, the European Space Agency as well as from the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. It was supported with satellite capacity by Emergency.lu, while the Copernicus Emergency Management Service allowed for the preparation of epidemiological maps. © B-Life



### Luxembourg medical evacuation solution



Luxembourg was among the first EU Member States that decided to contribute to building a European Ebola medical evacuation capacity. The planes already used for routine medical evacuations were adapted, with EU financial support, to allow for the evacuation of Ebola patients. The resulting medical evacuation capability is since end-2014 part of the voluntary pool of response capacities. This capacity has already been used for evacuations from Sierra Leone to Europe. The entire operations benefitted from the financial support through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.

