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**GLOBAL EVALUATION OF THE COMMUNITY ACTION
PROGRAMME IN THE FIELD OF CIVIL PROTECTION, THE
COMMUNITY MECHANISM TO FACILITATE REINFORCED
COOPERATION IN CIVIL PROTECTION ASSISTANCE
INTERVENTIONS AND THE MARINE POLLUTION FRAMEWORK**

**Case Study III – Report
Exercise EU Response 2003 – Florival II**

**The European Commission
Directorate-General for Environment
(DG ENV A5)**

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List of Acronyms

CBRN	Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear
CM	Community Mechanism
CIVP	Civil Protection
MIC	Monitoring and Information Centre
MP	Marine Pollution Framework
MS	Member State
DG	Directorate General

1. CASE STUDY III – EXERCISE “EU RESPONSE 2003” AND “FLORIVAL II”

1.1. Background

The EU Response 2003 exercise was proposed as a case study because of the focus of the primary data collection on the Community Mechanism. In-depth data was necessary to cover the key issues mentioned in the objectives of the global evaluation. According to EC staff, the exercises are in general good examples of the actions within the CM.

EU Response 2003 was the first part of the workshop “Florival II – one year after”, organised by the Belgian DG for Civil Protection and the CIVP Unit of DG Environment. It took place from the 1st to 3rd of February 2003 and consisted of a 2-day command post exercise based on multiple CBRN-scenarios in various Members States and a debriefing the day after at the workshop in Florival.

As a continuation of the former exercises, Common Cause 2002 (biological and chemical) and Euratox 2002 (Radiological and chemical) and complementarily, EU Response 2003 were based on a chemical and nuclear scenario.

1.2. Procedure and methods

Out of only three exercises carried out since 2002, the exercise EU Response 2003 was chosen representatively to be evaluated as a case study within the Community Mechanism because of its complexity as well as its integration of multiple actors. Additional representatives of the Member States were involved as members of the observation team as well as in the core groups. Data was collected through qualitative interviews from action organisers and participants and relevant national authorities. The interviews were done by telephone.

The telephone interviews (duration approx. 45 min.) were based on standardised interview guides for the respective interview groups (compare Annex A1.4).

1.3. Main conclusions

- In general terms, the EU Response 2003 exercise was very useful for the majority of participating countries because it provided valuable lessons learnt in areas such as:
 - o the establishment of bilateral networks, mostly with neighbouring countries;
 - o the improvement of internal operational procedures;
 - o in the case of Greece, the exercise contributed to a better preparation and preparedness with regard to the Olympic Games of 2004;
 - o the integration of aspects related to terrorism in CBRN emergency planning.
- In particular, for two MS the exercise had a substantial impact on the implementation and further development of their respective national crisis centres and on the improvement of national emergency plans.
- The “multiple exercise character” provided MS with an opportunity to identify deficiencies in their own national systems regarding large-scale multinational disasters, and broadened their views on the new dimensions of multiple events.

Points of discussion with regard to the execution of the exercise:

- Certain scenarios were deemed to have been rather unrealistic, especially in terms of scale, response time and sectors involved. In particular, the interviewees pointed to the scenarios in Germany and Belgium.
- Different MS acted on different operational levels. There was no common understanding among the participants and organisers regarding the operational level down to which the

MS should integrate their CIVP services into the exercise. Because of this, three MS were somewhat dissatisfied with the organisers of the overall exercise.

- During the exercise, the differentiation of the three alert points MIC, BICHAT and ECURIE within the EC was quite confusing for most of the interviewees, and led to problems in channelling information.
- Results at regional levels in the MS were too limited to be measured.
- The EC should be more active in the field of terrorism and should initiate more exercises in this emerging field for the MS.
- It is still unclear in how far the EC is supporting any distribution of material or lessons learnt, follow-up to exercises, or ex-post evaluations in order to prepare next steps and to continuously increase preparedness in the member states.

1.4. Recommended actions

Related to the exercise itself:

- Scenarios should be improved by putting more emphasis on realistic conditions as far as response time, scale and the integration of all sectors are concerned.
- Organisers should be more precise in the preparation and implementation of such a multiple event.
- The EC should also give thought to integrating additional regional and local levels into the exercises.
- Most MS requested follow-up exercises combined with a “Florival III” workshop. According to the MS, a follow-up exercise within a timeframe of two to four years would be quite helpful.

In general for the EC:

- There is a strong need for better coordination of interfaces within the rapid alert points within the EC.
- The EC should go further to train the MS in these multiple events. This would lead to a more effective harmonisation of European CIVP procedures and a better preparedness in the MS.
- The EC should initiate and mediate an initiative to define an EC minimum standard of common procedures and working standards within the field of EC CIVP – such as the databases to be incorporated into CECIS.
- The cooperation between civil protection and medicine (especially disaster medicine) and intelligence services should be taken into account and enforced more effectively.

2. EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT OF THE “EU – RESPONSE 2003” EXERCISE AND THE “FLORIVAL II” WORKSHOP

2.1. General presentation of the Community Mechanism in the field of civil protection

According to most interviewees, the majority of participants were mostly satisfied with the organisation and execution of the exercise itself and the following workshop.

The MS experienced some difficulties because of the unclear and intransparent use of the three alert point systems of the European Commission – “MIC, RAS-BICHAT and ECURIE”. The observers of the exercise also explicitly pointed out certain problems with this system, which persist until the present day. Some MS are rather dissatisfied with this situation and

have requested to merge these three alert points into one, claiming this would lead to a more unified response system for the EC and its MS.

2.2. Meeting the aims and objectives of the exercise and workshop

The majority of the interviewed participants (incl. organisers & core group members) judged the exercise “positively”, especially in terms of handling multiple events, clarifying internal and external operational procedures, and integrating the experience into their own systems.

Two MS stated that the outcomes of the exercise had what could be considered a “kick-off effect” on their own structures and on the establishment and further development of their respective crisis centres for CIVP. In addition, Greece also used the exercise to further advance its preparation for the Olympic Games of 2004.

Five MS identified partial weaknesses in the organisation and execution of the exercise, such as the unrealistic scenarios in Germany and Belgium, and the time constraints during the exercise. With regard to the unrealistic scenario in Germany, one interviewee argued that the exercise had not fulfilled its objectives at all. The interviewee pointed out that the cooperation between CIVP and “radiation people” tends to create problems, because mentalities and working languages are very different.

2.3. Specific results that have been achieved

Overall, the achieved results are very satisfactory. Specific results range from learning from others’ experience, information sharing, and sensitising the MS on EC instruments (especially the MIC), to establishing new formal and informal networks between the MS.

Beyond general lessons learnt, some MS integrated specific aspects of the exercise into their own national CIVP systems. These include:

- One MS integrated the workshop and exercise results into their national manual “common guidelines for first responses”.
- Two MS improved their national emergency plans in terms of “treatment of drinking water” and their Anthrax procedures.
- One MS improved the overall alert plan for / within its government.
- Two MS used the outcomes of the exercises and the Florival II workshop to restructure and develop their national crisis centres, including aspects such as: staffing for multiple events, equipment of crisis centre, messaging system, and internal structure (branches).
- Three MS reported an improvement of networking within multinational exercises and in case of future interventions.
- Four MS reported better networking with other services such as the police – e.g. exchange of information about protection against radiation.
- Four MS reported an improved organisation of high-level coordination – e.g. with other ministries and decision makers within their national CIVP systems.

Generally, this exercise led to better preparedness of the MS against CBRN threats in Europe.

2.4. Practical utilisation of the project results at the national level

Overall, the results achieved within this exercise are reported to be useful.

Most of the participating MS integrated the lessons learnt into their national systems, at least partly. Other MS went further and emphasised the so-called “kick-off” character of the exercise. In detail, the following practical utilisation of results at the national level was identified:

- Three MS mentioned that they gathered valuable information, especially during informal meetings, including much practical experience concerning terrorist attacks (e.g. awareness of the danger of a second bomb, to be expected in all terrorist attacks).
- According to the participants as well as to observers, in the majority of the interviewed MS operational procedures were improved. The extent to which this is true depends on each state.
- Better awareness by all MS as to the channels through which information flows during exercises as well as during potential interventions.
- Greece stated that the exercise contributed significantly to its preparation process for the Olympic Games. The exercise substantially increased the level of preparedness at the national and regional level.
- Three MS reported that they identified relevant contact persons in other / neighbouring MS.
- Two MS reported no tangible effects on their respective systems.

2.5. Contribution of the project to objectives laid down in the Council Decision

- **Increasing the degree of preparedness at national level:**

More than two thirds of the interviewees stated that the outcomes of the exercise had improved the degree of preparedness in their countries. In particular, they emphasised and valued positively the following aspects: “Joint learning process”; “The exercises made MS think”; “The EC initiated a process to unify the overall CIVP system”.

Furthermore, three MS explicitly noted an improved preparedness in the field of CBRN, while only a few interviewees were dissatisfied and / or did not perceive any improvement of preparedness in their respective MS.

- **Establishing a network permitting more effective cooperation between MS in case of emergency:**

The majority of the interviewees recognised a more effective cooperation between the MS. However, some of the participants added that the networks were much more firmly established bilaterally, rather than multilaterally between all participating MS. A minority of the interview partners established only informal contacts.

- **Contributing to a better common understanding between different involved services:**

Yes, with a main emphasis on the common understanding between the respective national services. One MS stated more explicitly “between the “federal ministries and the states”, another MS diagnosed a better understanding between CBRN experts.

- **Improving the effectiveness and response in case of emergencies:**

Partly yes, partly no. Due to the occurrence of only very few emergencies in Europe, this is difficult to measure. Some MS pointed out communication aspects.

- **Assuring more effective intervention**

Only an indirect contribution through means of prevention. Nevertheless, better communication within a well-operating network may mean this objective can be met over the longer term.

2.6. Modifications of national approaches or policies through EU response 2003

It is important to point out that the regulations in the EU member states are often very divergent from each other, thus limiting the possibilities of modifying policies with a view to their unification. To date, only a few countries have reported minor changes:

- Greece reported new national approaches, especially in the context of the preparation of the Olympic Games.
- Two MS adapted and improved their national emergency plans in terms of “treatment of drinking water”, and in terms of their Anthrax procedures.
- One MS elaborated an overarching and integrated alert plan for its governmental level.
- Inspired by the variety of disasters included within the exercise, two MS developed new ideas for more integrated approaches on CIVP.

2.7. Obstacles at the national or regional level for the further use of the exercise / workshop results

- Four MS predicted that the lack of time and funding is likely to lead to mere routine work in the MS and on EC level.
- Three MS stated that the two parallel alert systems in the field of radiation protection are contradictory (EUCURIE & IAEA).
- One MS pointed out that in its own different emergency system, disaster medicine is separated from CIVP.
- Four MS complained that the results of the exercise were not at all distributed to the MS.

2.8. Dissemination of project outcomes / Follow up of the exercise

The majority of the participating MS reported they had no clear idea about how to use the results of the final report, and had not made plans for any kind of follow-up at the national level. One MS disseminated the results throughout its national system.

2.9. Added value of the exercise

- One participant stated that she / he liked the idea of unified response.
- Three MS mentioned that every exercise would have its own benefit.
- Two MS mentioned the sensitisation of authorities.
- Four participants reported a better understanding of the MIC.
- Two MS also emphasised the lessons learnt within multiple event disasters.
- Four MS pointed out the positive effects in terms of networking and cooperation.