

Exchange of Experts in Civil Protection

Case studies: Preparedness through sharing skills and expertise



EXPERT EXCHANGE ON HIGH ALTITUDE SEARCH AND RESCUE IN COLD CONDITIONS

Search and rescue in winter conditions takes on a new level of difficulty when it has to be carried out at high altitude.

An expert group from the search and rescue Finn Rescue Team (Finland), specialised in working in cold conditions, took part in an exchange in the Savoie region (France). In return, they learnt from the long experience of the Savoie Fire and Rescue Services of working at high altitude.

During the exchange, the experts spent several intensive days exchanging knowledge through realistic scenarios of the types of challenges faced by mountain rescue teams.



EMERGENCY FIRST AID: BEING READY TO PROVIDE CARE

First responders are ready to react to whatever faces them in emergencies. As well as their own specialist services, being first on the scene also includes providing life-saving care until other services arrive, and supporting a coordinated response.

A team of firefighters from Palestine Civil Defence attended training on emergency medical first aid hosted by the Romanian General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations. The course, a mix of theory, practical training and field operations, allowed the team to be ready to provide this emergency care and transfer their knowledge to other colleagues.



CANINE SEARCH AND RESCUE: DOGS SHARE THEIR KNOWLEDGE TOO!

Specially trained search and rescue dogs help save lives when disasters such as earthquakes or avalanches trap people under debris or snow. When speed is of the essence, the dogs can find human scent and alert the rescuer they are with.

Specialist training helps the dogs to hone their natural instincts and use them in a rescue situation, working safely and quickly with their handlers.

A canine search and rescue training event took place near Budapest in Hungary. Search and rescue dog Kevlár and his handler from the German Red Cross shared their expertise in operating safely and efficiently in search and rescue operations.

(Photos: © European Union)



SHARING EXPERIENCE FOR BETTER PREPARATION FOR FOREST FIRES

Effective response means being prepared for whatever comes your way and adapting to new or increasing risks.

Forest fires are an example, with the season starting earlier and regions of northern Europe facing a far greater risk than they have traditionally seen. Firefighting services from southern regions of Europe are sharing their long experience with colleagues from northern Europe, to support them as they prepare for the next forest fires season.

The Skien Fire Service in Norway invited a firefighting expert team from the Government of Catalonia, Spain, to share their expertise in forest fire management. The exchange focussed on prescribed burning, a technique used to help prevent forest fires from taking hold and spreading fast through large areas. Sharing expertise in such a practical way has a direct effect, helping forest fire troops be more prepared for the next fire season.

(Photo: prescribed burn exercise Spain ©EU)



TAKING KNOWLEDGE SHARING FURTHER THROUGH EXPERT EXCHANGES

Exchanging knowledge in civil protection has immediate benefits for the experts, but also helps spread and multiply this knowledge across teams and borders.

The State Fire and Rescue Service of Latvia welcomed a group of experts from Hamburg Fire and Rescue Service, Germany to an exchange of information and good practices in emergency interventions, with a focus on preparedness for CBRN incidents (incidents with chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear risks).

A particular area of interest was working under conditions requiring breathing apparatus, especially relevant for CBRN emergencies. Gaining from the expertise shared by their Latvian counterparts, the firefighters participating in the exchange could go on to further share this knowledge back at their home services, in their role as trainers.

(Photo ©SFRS)

The **Exchange of Experts in civil protection** programme gives civil protection experts from Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) countries the opportunity to share experiences, gain valuable knowledge and strengthen their skills through exchanges. Experts from eligible third countries can also take part.

Experts can apply to go on an exchange, or civil protection organisations can invite experts to be hosted with them. Expert exchanges are on a wide range of topics like firefighting, floods, chemical accidents, crisis communication or search and rescue techniques.

Visit: www.exchangeofexperts.eu