



BENIN



Prevention and Civil Defence Directorate
(Direction de la Prévention et de la Protection Civile)

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1. Legislation :

- Decree No. 97 - 176 of 21 April 1997 concerning the attributions, organisation and functioning of the Ministry of Interior, Security and Territorial Administration (*Ministère de l'Intérieur, de la Sécurité et de l'Administration Territoriale - MISAT*);
- Decree No. 85-112 of 5 April 1985 concerning the National Committee for Civil Defence (*Comité National pour la Protection Civile - CNPC*);
- Ordinance No. 75-41 of 16 July 1975 concerning the status of refugees;
- Decree No.97-647 of 31 December 1987 concerning the National Commission for Refugees (*Commission Nationale chargée des Réfugiés - CNCR*) :
- Decree No.87-408 of 7 December 1987 concerning the "Plan ORSEC" (Relief Organisation Plan);
- Decree No. 92-57 of 6 March 1992 concerning the adoption of budget lines
- Decree No.98-263 of 1 July 1998 concerning the secondment to MISAT for action of the National Firemen Group (*Groupement National des Sapeurs-Pompiers -GNSP*);
- Order 1998 No. 124/MISAT/DC/SG/DPPC concerning the organisation and functioning of the Prevention and Civil Defence Directorate (*Direction de la Prévention et de la Protection Civile - DPPC*).

2. Mission :

The Prevention and Civil Defence Directorate (DPPC) is responsible for :

- taking throughout the territory all measures for preventing disasters and alerting the authorities and populations concerned ;
- drawing up plans for the safeguard and protection of the populations in case of emergencies or natural disasters,
- establishing the needs of stricken populations;
- centralising and co-ordinating the assistance to be given to the population.

3. Organisation :

To carry out its assignment the Prevention and Civil Defence Directorate is structured in four services :

- the Prevention, Training and Control Service (*Service de la Prévention, de la Formation et du Contrôle*);
- the Operations and Rescue, Equipment and Stocks Service (*Service des Opérations et des Secours, du Matériel et des Stocks*);
- the Refugees Protection Service (*Service de la Protection des Réfugiés*).

The Prevention and Civil Defence Directorate (DPPC) ensures within MISAT the Permanent Secretariat of the National Committee for Civil Defence (CNPC). It also ensures the Permanent Secretariat of the National Commission for Refugees (CNCR). It has a plan for the management of disasters called the "Plan ORSEC".

The "Plan ORSEC" is intended to allow the DPPC to organise rescue at both the departmental and lower levels. The Directorate must identify the factors allowing it to establish an action plan taking into account :

- the possibilities offered by various public or private services of the Department concerned;
- the special means which may be necessary for the success of certain operations.

The "Plan ORSEC" is activated in case of disasters, cataclysms or emergency situations. If the Plan is activated, the costs of the intervention operations are charged to the budget of the Department concerned (2/3) and the State budget (1/3).

3.1 Composition of the CNPC :

The National Committee for Civil Defence (CNPC) is the interdepartmental body responsible for the organisation and supervision of rescue operations in case of disasters. This Committee is composed of :

- President : Ministry of Interior, Security and Territorial Administration ;
- 1st Vice-President : Ministry of Public Health ;
- 2nd Vice-President : Ministry of Social Protection and Women's Condition;
- Members :
- Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MTPT);
- Ministry of Planning, Economic Restructuring and Labour Promotion (*Ministère du Plan, de la Restructuration Economique et de la Promotion de l'Emploi* - MPREPE);

- Ministry of National Defence (MDN);
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation (MAEC);
- Ministry of Culture and Communication (MCC)
- Ministry of Finance (MF);
- Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research (MENRS);
- Ministry of the Environment, Housing and Town Planning (MEHU);
- Ministry of Mines, Energy and Hydraulic (*Ministère des Mines, de l'Energie et de l'Hydraulique* - MMEH);
- Ministry of Rural Development (MDR);
- the Departmental Prefects.

The Committee is represented at the Departmental level (Departmental Committee for Civil Defence), at the Communal level (Communal Committee for Civil Defence) at the District level (District Committee for Civil Defence) and at the Village or Town District Level (Local Committee for Civil Defence).

In the course of implementing their assignment, the CNPC and its widespread services may call upon any persons or means to assist in the organisation of rescue.

The CNPC is assisted by a Permanent Secretariat, the DPCC, whose assignment is to implement the directives decided upon by the National Committee. It is responsible, in particular for :

- studying and organising the safeguard of populations and their property in peace as well as war time;
- planning and carrying out exercises;
- training managers from among permanent personnel and volunteer helpers;
- educating and informing the population on the dangers of different types of disasters and on the possibilities and means of prevention and protection.

3.2 Composition of the National Commission in Charge of Refugees (CNCR) :

The National Commission in Charge of Refugees (CNCR) includes :

- President : MISAT or its representative;
- Vice-President : MAEC or its representative;
- MPSCF or its representative;
- MDN or its representative;
- MJLDH or its representative;
- MF or its representative;
- MPREPE or its representative;
- MSP or its representative;
- MCC or its representative.

It can, if need be, co-opt other Ministries or structures.

In the context of the control of refugees, the Eligibility Committee and the Assistance Committee meet at the invitation of the President of the CNCR whenever the situation requires it.

The Representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees may be invited to attend the meetings as an observer and in a consultative role. During these meetings, the Committees plan appropriate actions for assisting each category of refugees in Benin.

4. Organisation at the level of other sectors :

The Ministry of Health has recourse, as regards the prevention and control of disasters, to appropriate bodies such as the :

- Department of Hygiene and Basic Health (*Direction de l'Hygiène et de l'Assainissement à la Base*) which supervises the enforcement of the Public Hygiene Code to protect the population and employees of firms from the carriers of various diseases by ensuring the cleanliness of the environment, the protection of foodstuffs and the promotion of corporal hygiene. This department is also in charge of the supply of sufficient drinking water to disaster victims.

- the National Sanitary Protection Department is responsible among other tasks of epidemiology, the surveillance of ports and airports and the management of the sanitary aspects of disasters.

The Ministry of Social Protection and Women's Condition intervenes through its services in the following fields:

- Attenuation of the consequences of disasters through by reinforcing capacities ;
- Collection and exchange of information, etc.

These provide assistance to stricken populations on the basis of an evaluation of the damages by the National Committee for Civil Defence (CNPC) : kitchen utensils, foodstuffs, clothing, mats and blankets, etc.

The following also play a significant role in the management of disasters :

- the Ministry of the Environment, Habitat and Town Planning;
- the Ministry of Public Works and Transport;
- the Ministry of Mines, Energy and Hydraulic;
- the Ministry of Rural Development;
- the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research;
- the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation;
- the Ministry of Planning, Economic Restructuring and Labour Promotion,
- the Ministry of National Defence.

5. Staff :

The Prevention and Civil Defence Directorate (DPPC) has at its disposal 5 specialised managers and 6 operations personnel.

- the National Firemen Group (GNSP) seconded for action to the Ministry of Interior, Security and Territorial Administration (MISAT) intervenes in three important fields:
 - prevention against fire risks and industrial or technological disasters ;
 - implementation of specific measures for reducing the consequence of disasters should these occur despite prevention ;
 - deployment of equipment and personnel to fight the disaster which has occurred.

The GNSP intervenes with the object of :

- assisting road accident victims;
- fighting against insects and dangerous animals;
- rescuing the drowned from wells;
- advising public establishments on prevention matters;
- assisting stricken persons,
- fighting fires and bush fires;
- controlling the mentally sick;
- watching over sporting events, etc.

To undertake its assignment, the GNSP has, in addition to its Central services, decentralised structures. It uses the services of about 100 personnel.

The GNSP decentralised structures are located as follows:

- in the Departments “ *Atlantique* ” and “ *Littoral* ” (coastal areas) : two Centres : a departmental fire brigade for the “ *Littoral* ” (coast) at Cotonou and the Cotonou-Akpakpa Centre;
- in the Departments of “ *Ouémé* ” and “ *Plateau* ” : a departmental fire brigade at Porto-Novo
- in the Departments of “ *Zou* ” and “ *des Collines* ” (Zou and the Hills) : a departmental fire brigade at Abomey;
- in the Departments of “ *Atacora* ” and “ *Donga* ” : a departmental fire brigade at Natitingou;
- in the Departments of “ *Borgou* ” and “ *Alibori* ” : a departmental fire brigade at Parakou;
- in the Departments of “ *Mono* ” and “ *Couffo* ” a fire brigade barracks is located in Lokossa.

6. Equipment :

The vehicle fleet available to the GNSP for its activities in the whole country is made up of :

- 13 “ACMAT INCENDIE” fire-engines;
- 4 MERCEDES vehicles;
- 6 ambulances;
- 1 lifeboat.

All this equipment is already very decrepit and requires immediate replacement which is still awaited.

7. Finances :

The national Budget foresees funds under two Chapters as follows:

- Chapter 53-71-001 Article 386 : “Emergency Fund” : the credits under which are intended to cover:

- important repairs to buildings and other infrastructures in the aftermath of disasters;
- repatriation expenses of citizens of Benin abroad;
- the rehabilitation of infrastructures in case of floods, etc.

- Chapter 53-71-001 Article 388 : “Assistance to victims” the credits under which are intended to serve for:

- the purchase of clothing, foodstuffs, and medicines for stricken populations;
- the cost of transporting in-kind donations to the stricken areas;
- ensuring the travel of CNPC Members in these areas and paying their subsistence allowances during these tours.

Non-governmental assistance is handed over either directly by the donors to the stricken populations or through the intermediary of the CNPC.

Mr. Alfred SOHOU

**Director of Prevention and
Civil Defence**