



COLOMBIA



Directorate General of Civil Defence (*Dirección General de la Defensa Civil*)

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1. Legislation :

- The Colombian civil defence stems from statutory order 3398 of 24 December 1965 which became the standing norm following promulgation of law 48 of 1968 which considered a protective corps of the collectively named « civil defence » as an essential part of national defence.
- The statutory order of 3 December 1971, modified by government decree 2241 of 14 August 1985, is thus given a final juridical framework in which the statutes of the Colombian Civil Defence are inscribed.
- The national system for the prevention of catastrophes, set up by law 46 of 2 November 1988, was set in motion by statutory order 919 of 1st May 1989.

2. Mission :

The Colombian Civil Defence Organisation's aims may be summed up as follows :

- to prevent and control disaster situations during the preliminary phase of prevention and throughout operations in the struggle when catastrophe or calamity occurs.
- to help maintain internal security and national sovereignty.
- to promote, for the collectivity, training and organization enabling the personnel to carry out their assigned tasks in the sphere of civil defence.

3. Organisation :

Colombia's Civil Defence has two levels :

- official level, directing and orientating the policy foreseen by the Government in applying the law.
- private or individual level composed of civil defense volunteers with or without legal identity.

This system is constituted by all the public and private bodies attached to the conception and launching of specific preventive and reconstruction programs, projects and actions concerning disaster and calamity risks.

The president of the Republic heads his national committee composed of relevant ministerial officials and humanitarian institutions. Regional committees extend the system's activities to the country's various regions. Colombian Civil Defence is an integral part of the system.

Official services come under the Board of Directors and the director general of Civil Defence, or, the case arising, by his delegate, and by the Ministers of the interior, finance, communications, public works and transport, or, likewise, by their delegate, the principal general of the armed forces and the director general of the national police. The director general of civil defence attends Board Meetings but has no right of vote. The Civil Defence Board's main function is to establish policy, plans and programs of the National Civil Defence Organisation in conformity with Government directives. The directorate general of Civil Defence includes the director general and his principal colleagues and the various officials who ensure the smooth running of the services. The director general is appointed by the President of the Republic.