



## ESTONIA



### ***Estonian Rescue Board***

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#### ***1. Legislation :***

The main legislation regulating Civil Emergency Planning (CEP) work is contained in :

- *The Rescue Act of 1994* which regulates the organisation of fire and rescue operations and defines the responsibilities, rights and accountability in this area ;
- *The State Reserves Act of 1994*, which defines various classifications of national reserves and how these are to be administrated etc ;
- *The Emergencies Act of 1996*, which prescribes the necessary measures to be taken in cases of natural disasters of catastrophes, and for the prevention of the spread of infectious diseases ;
- *The State Emergency Act of 1996*, which defines the conditions to be present in order to declare a state of emergency. As with the Emergencies Act, this Act defines the protectoral duties of the Government Crisis Committee should the constitutional order be exposed to threat.
- *The Emergency Preparedness Act of 2000*, which defines the duties and rights related to Civil Emergency Planning and Civil Protection in local, regional and national levels.

In the CEP field several other laws also apply : Peace Time State Defence Act, Health Care Act, Public Health Act, Border Guard Act, Police Act, etc., - as well as several laws relating to prevention - Act on Radiation Safety, Chemicals Act, etc.

## 2. Mission :

Civil Emergency Planning in Estonia is made up of two components: a Civil Protection System based on the Civil Protection Act, and a Crisis Management System based on the Crisis Management Basic Principles.

**The Civil Protection system:** Estonian Civil Protection is based on the measures that can be taken in order to protect human life, property and the environment in emergencies or war. The aims of Civil Protection are:

- to define possible emergency situations, and the possibilities of preventing them, or minimising their consequences
- to develop plans of action for possible emergency situations
- to prepare the forces and resources necessary for solving emergency situations
- to respond to crisis situations, and minimise their effects on the population and the environment
- to restore essential services in order to safeguard human life
- to organise early warnings and keep the public informed during emergencies
- to provide training in crisis prevention, preparedness and response
- to inform the public about how to behave in emergency situations

### **The Crisis Management System :**

Crisis Management is defined as a complete system, prepared and implemented by governmental organisations in co-operation with local governments and public organisations in order to guarantee public safety during a crisis or emergency.

Public safety is defined as the protection and uninterrupted function of state institutions and local governments, the physical and emotional well being of the population and the continual function of establishments that are necessary for sustaining normal everyday life during a crisis.

## 3. Regulation and procedure :

The organisation of functional responsibilities is distributed between the different ministries as follows:

Civil Management and Co-ordination	Ministry of the Interior/Estonian Rescue Board
Energy Supply and Supply of Industrial Goods	Ministry of Economic Affairs
Food Supply	Ministry of Agriculture
Financial System	Ministry of Finance

Public Order and Security, Civil Protection and Rescue Services, Data Security	Ministry of the Interior, Rescue Board, Police Board, Board of Border Guard, Security Police Board
Health and Medical Services, Social Insurance and Care	Ministry of Social Affairs
Labour	Ministry of Social Affairs
Telecommunications and Postal Services	Ministry of Transport and Communications
Transport	Ministry of Transport and Communications
Foreign Trade	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Protection of Cultural Heritage	Ministry of Culture
Psychological Defence and Public Information	State Chancellery

The responsibility for other areas is decided by the National Government.

#### **4. Organisation :**

##### At National level :

The Ministry of the Interior has the overall responsibility for Estonian Civil Emergency Planning. The areas of authority assigned to the Ministry of the Interior include the internal security of the state and maintenance of public order. The Ministry is responsible for Civil Protection, guarding and protecting the state border and the management of issues related to fire fighting and rescue work. It is also responsible for local government and regional development, citizenship and immigration, churches and congregations, and the preparation of appropriate draft legislation.

The co-ordinating department for Civil Emergency Planning in Estonia is the Rescue Board. In order to accomplish the CEP obligations, the Rescue Board shall:

- establish national development policy and programs
- compile, treat and analyse data concerning emergency situations, and present proposals to predict, prevent and settle them
- guarantee co-ordination and control in crisis situations at national level
- guarantee the work of the National Crisis Committee
- co-ordinate and accomplish the planning of crisis management at state and regional level
- present proposals for the development of communications and early warning systems
- establish CEP drafts, standards and normative projects
- organise and accomplish general post-observance within Civil Protection
- present proposals for the supply of rescue and defence equipment to Civil Protection and organise the state reserves
- co-ordinate local government and state department action
- plan and organise CEP training at state and local levels
- co-ordinate co-operation between fire/rescue services and defence forces

- plan additional CEP training
- co-ordinate and organise CEP work at an international level

The Government Crisis Committee co-ordinates CEP co-operation between the different governmental departments. The duties of the Committee are to establish a national policy on Crisis Management, to make proposals to the Government and to prepare, harmonise and present plans of action to the Government for resolving crisis situations.

In addition, the Government Crisis Committee shall present proposals to the Government regarding each incident, and define pre-crisis and crisis factors. Another task is the analysis of information necessary for the prediction and resolution of crises, the results of which will be presented to the Prime Minister. Finally, the Committee shall attempt to resolve crisis situations in accordance with the law and other regulations, and according to Government guidelines.

#### At Regional level :

At the regional level, there are 15 counties and county governors directly responsible to the Government. The County Governor is the highest CEP authority at the regional level and chairperson of the County Civil Protection Committee.

#### At Local level :

At the local level, there are 254 local governments. The local Government Council is the highest CEP authority.

### **5. Staff :**

The largest assistance organisation is the rescue service. Local and regional rescue services - multi-skilled fire and rescue brigades operate as wide-ranging rescue institutions whose activities include fire extinguishing and rescue, transportation of patients, prevention of environmental damage and rescue operations on inland waters.

Each municipality must have either a full-time, a part-time or contractual fire brigade. In Estonia there are 3400 rescuers, among them 3000 full-time workers.

Estonian Rescue Board (ERB) is the central administrative authority for issues concerning rescue services and civil emergency planning. ERB field of activity also comprises issues of arranging decontamination after discharges of radioactive substance and explosive ordnance disposal.

ERB shall co-ordinate society's activities within the rescue services area and within the field of accident and damage prevention. ERB shall act in such a way that the organisation and acquisition of equipment regarding the rescue services are developed and that co-operation is established for increased efficiency.

Rescue Board has approximately 200 employees, out of which 100 work in the central administration in Tallinn headquarters consisting of :

- Fire Prevention and Supervision Department ;
- Civil Protection and Crisis Management Department ;
- Military Rescue Units Department ;
- Operative Services Department ;
- Emergency Centres Department ;
- Administrative Department ;
- Accounting Department.

### **6. Training :**

Rescue School in Väike-Maarja gives basic and advanced training to rescue professionals. The State Defence Academy Rescue College gives advanced training and education for senior staff (fire engineers).

Rescue Board operates a Civil Protection Training Centre for local authorities and officials who are responsible for civil protection activities and the emergency planning.

### **7. Equipment/appliances :**

The fire and rescue brigades have a total of 630 fire fighting, ambulance and rescue vehicles. The main equipment for fire fighting and rescue services consists of ca. 811 vehicles of different type that belong to ERB (and located in municipal and local stations). In addition, ca. 276 vehicles belonging to municipalities are at rescuers' disposal in case of rescue and relief operations.

More than a half of these 811 vehicles are so-called « base trucks » (ca. 419 units), equipped with fire extinguishing and vacuum pumps, extinguishing agent dosators, winches and other equipment. Other vehicles (276 units) are those with special equipment (like lifting equipment, water containers, etc.) or for special purposes (e.g. forest fires, relief operations, etc.).

ERB has also special equipment for spilled oil collection from the coastal territory, for counteracting of explosive items, etc. As ERB is responsive for co-ordinating all the rescue activities within the Estonian borders, special equipment (like helicopters, ambulance vehicles, etc.) may be rendered as its disposal on request, if needed.

### **8. Finances :**

Estonian Rescue Board is the central financing authority for issues concerning rescue services and civil emergency planning.

Its annual budget for 2002 will be ca. 450 mln. Estonian kroons (8 EEK = 1 DM). 86 per cent will be spent for operational activities, ca. 63 mln. kroons are designated at investments (purchases of vehicles and equipment, construction of emergency centres, etc), IT-development and for the purpose of integration to the European Union as well as for supporting of voluntary fire fighters and salvage workers.

All financing of fire-fighting and rescue works and activities on local level is arranged on centralised basis, that means that all local units and stations are financed from the state budget.

## **Mr. Mati RAIDMA**

**Director General**

Mr. Mati Iila, Head of the Civil Protection and Crisis Management Department  
Mr. Jevgeni Jutkevitch, Head of the International Relations Office