

FINLAND



Department for Rescue Services

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1. Legislation :

- Act on Rescue Services;
- Act on the technical requirements of the equipment of the rescue service and fire safety of the products;
- Proposed statute concerning the amendment of section 2 of the Mattress Fire Safety Statute;
- Regulation of the Ministry of Internal Affairs on portable fire extinguishers;
- Regulation by the Ministry of the Interior: Technical regulations for shelters built in rock and belonging to classes S1, S3 and S6 and for bomb shelters made of reinforced concrete and belonging to class S3;
- The design, installation, maintenance and inspection of fire alarms;
- Fire-safety of buildings E1, Regulations and guidelines, Fire-safety of production and warehouse buildings E2, Guidelines, Fire-safety of garages E4, Guidelines, Fire-safety of boiler rooms and fuel stores E9, Guidelines;
- Regulation of the Ministry of the Interior - the technical properties and placement of fire alarms;
- Ministry of the Interior Decree on Rescue Cars;
- Ministry of the Interior Decree on automatic extinguishing equipment;
- Ministry of the Interior Decree on S1 and K Class reinforced concrete air raid shelters.

2. Mission :

Fire fighting, emergency and rescue operations, fire and accident prevention and civil defence.

3. Regulation and procedure :

Final responsibility for the supervision and control of fire and rescue services and civil defence is the task of the Ministry of the Interior and its Rescue Department.

The Rescue Department activities include :

- administration of fire services
- coordination for peacetime rescue services
- leadership and supervision of civil defence.

Fire services include fire prevention, fire fighting and other necessary measures in case of fire.

Rescue services include measures necessary to rescue people and to prevent, mitigate or reduce damage or danger in other types of natural or technological emergencies, such as explosions, oil damages or pollution, cave-ins or construction collapses, traffic accidents, gas escapes or liquid leaks, floods, heavy rains or storms.

Civil defence means protection of people and property from dangers of war or other crisis situations.

As in Finland there is a very strong municipal self-government, municipalities are responsible for providing fire and rescue services in their own areas. Neighbouring municipalities may take joint measures to handle these responsibilities. Fire fighting and rescue operations are under the command of the fire chief of the municipality where the fire broke out or the accident happened. If the emergency impends to expand to a major-accident or have extensive impacts, Ministry of the Interior, or another authority by its appointment, may take the lead.

4. Organisation :

Rescue administration :

The nation's rescue administration aims at improving general safety by preventing fires and other accidents and by limiting damage when accidents occur. The primary function of rescue administration is to protect and save human lives.

The Ministry of the Interior's Rescue Department is responsible for supreme command of rescue administration. Provincial governments are responsible for fire and rescue activities in the provinces, whereas the municipalities are responsible for rescue operations in their respective areas. In practice, a municipal fire brigade takes care of fire, rescue and civil defence operations.

Many authorities and organizations work together as an integral Part of rescue services. The police, Frontier Guard, defence forces, health, aviation and radiation authorities are major partners.

Municipal fire brigades :

Fire 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 a contractual fire brigade.

Municipalities can also work together in carrying out their obligations concerning fire and rescue activities, in which case the quality and scope of these operations are agreed upon with the Provincial Government

Civil Defence :

The civil authorities are also responsible for civil defence. As preparations for civil defence municipalities must have plan to protect the population and to safeguard property.

Under normal conditions, rescue squads are responsible for operations In situations of emergency, these crews are complemented by staff with civil defence training.

During peacetime civil defence includes the construction and maintenance of bomb shelters, procurement of warning systems and special equipment, training, information and drawing up plans. Under normal conditions bomb shelters can be used for other purposes provided that they are ready for use as bomb shelters within 24 hours.

Emergency areas :

In order to organize emergency response centre operations, he country is divided into 13 alarm districts. By 2006, emergency response centre operations of the rescue services, the police and social welfare and health services, except those in the capital region, will be transferred to the Emergency Response Centre Authority run by the State. The new emergency response centres will replace the current emergency response centres maintained by the municipalities and those of the police.

Emergency response centres receive emergency calls in their district and alert the help required 24 hours a day. Since 1993, the emergency call number has been 112.

5. Staff and equipment :

There are over 4,600 persons working full time in rescue services. There are more than 4,300 part-time workers and over 10,000 fire fighters in the contract fire brigades.

The fire brigades have a total of 1,100 fire fighting trucks, nearly 500 tank trucks, 130 special rescue trucks and over 60 vehicles for the prevention of oil damages, 68 ambulances and 180 other vehicles for casualty transportation. Some 90,000 persons are reserved for wartime civil defence. There are shelter places for over three million people.

FINNRESCUEFORCE (FRF) (250 persons) is the Finnish rapid task force for international rescue operations. FRF is run by the authorities and is on continuous standby. FRF is listed in the UN's OCHA catalogue and is also in standby to take part in the UN's situation assessment and coordination groups (UNDAC STAND-BY TEAM) sent to disaster areas.

6. Training :

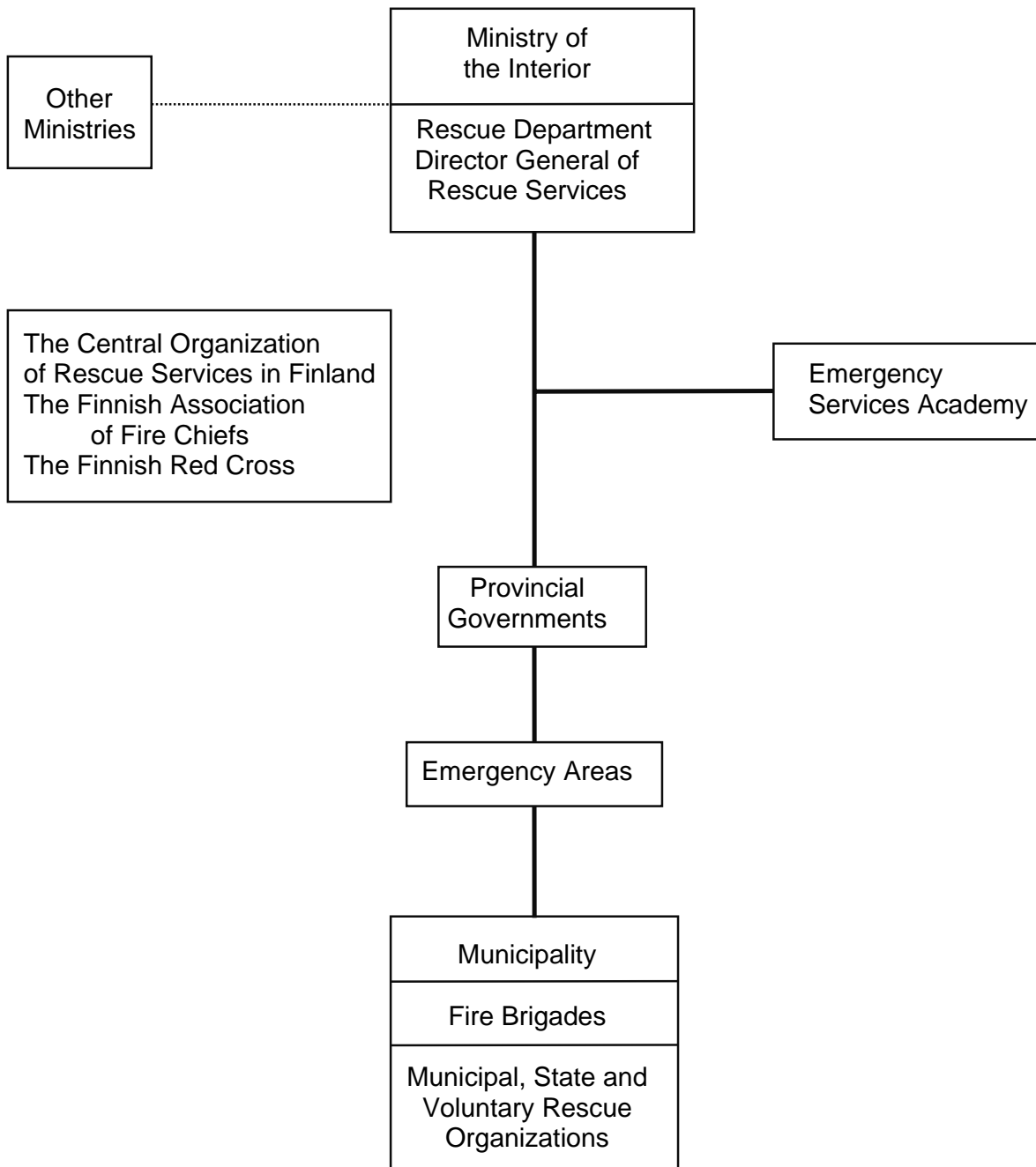
The state is responsible for the professional rescue services training and for training civil defence leaders and special staff. Basic training is given at the Emergency Services College in Kuopio. The basic diplomas are the Staff Diploma (1.5 years) and the Sub-Officer's Diploma (1 year). In 2000, the Fire Officer's Diploma became a polytechnic degree, which can be taken in 3.5 years. The college has 350 boarding places and a training ground for practical exercises.

7. Finances :

The authority responsible for the measures is responsible for rescue costs. The state compensates municipalities for firefighting or rescue costs if these are exceptionally high given the financial capacity of the municipality concerned.

Annual state and municipal expenditure on rescue administration amounts to FIM 1.6 billion / 269,100.00 €. Property owners spend some FIM 230 million / 38,700.00 € each year on building bomb shelters.

DISASTER RELIEF IN FINLAND



Mr. Pentti PARTANEN

Director General, Rescue Services



Age: 54
Married, 2 sons

Education:

BA, University of Stockholm, 1972 MA (pol.sc), University of Helsinki, 1981

Job career:

- 1972-1973: National Union of Finnish Students
- 1973-1974: Secretary of training and organisation, Acting Secretary General, Finnish Red Cross, Helsinki and Uusimaa District
- 1974-1977: District Manager, Ministry of the Interior, Rescue Department
- 1977-1978: Inspector, Chief Inspector, League of Red Cross Societies
- 1978-1985: Delegate in Bangladesh, Ministry of the Interior, Rescue Department
- 1985-1986: Chief Inspector, Head of Preparedness Office National Civil Defence Administration, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- 1986-1989: Advisor in civil defence and rescue services, Ministry of the Interior, Rescue Department
- 1989-1991: Head of Preparedness Office, Finnish Red Cross
- 1991: Head of International Department, Ministry of the Interior, Rescue Department
- Since 1991: Head of Preparedness Office Director General, Rescue Services-