



STRENGTHENING CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL, RADIOLOGICAL AND NUCLEAR RESPONSE IN EUROPE BY ENHANCING ON-SITE COOPERATION BETWEEN SAFETY AND SECURITY ORGANISATIONS: A NEW ITALIAN PILOT PROJECT



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Abstract: This article has a two-fold goal. On one hand it aims at providing an overview of the ongoing project to increase the knowledge and experience exchange among researchers and practitioners. On the other hand it endeavours to disseminate the outcomes of both the desk-based research and the planned table top exercises.

CONTEXT

Aimed at implementing the 2009 EU CBRN Action Plan, the ISEC targeted call 'Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear ("CBRN")' bestows grants to projects aiming at improving the capabilities of Member States, alongside relevant International Organisations (IOs), to prepare for, detect and respond to CBRN incidents. In this framework, the EU has recently financed a specific project called 'Strengthening CBRN-Response in Europe by Enhancing On-Site Cooperation between Safety and Security Organisations: an Italian pilot project' (hereinafter 'Strengthening CBRN-Response in Europe') submitted by a partnership led by the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna (a leading public University located in Pisa, Italy) and including the University of Rome Tor Vergata and the Italian firefighters, i.e. Corpo Nazionale Vigili del Fuoco – Comando Provinciale di Pisa. ⁽¹⁾

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Recent studies on CBRN, funded by the European Commission, and EU-exercises (i.e. Cremex-2011) show that there is a need to further enhance the interaction between safety (first responders) and security (law enforcement, security services) at the response level as well as to strengthen the procedures to deliver cross border assistance in case of CBRN-incidents. In line with the key objective 'preparedness and response to CBRN incidents' outlined by the EU CBRN Action Plan, the project Strengthening CBRN-Response in Europe aims to enhance the response capacity of Member States should a CBRN-incident occur.

To this end, the project will use the Italian response framework as a case study. Since the Italian case presents similarities with the situation in place in a number of other European countries, the issues emerged and the results achieved can easily pave

(1) Associate partners of the project are the Scuola Interforze per la Difesa NCB of Rieti, the Special Unit of the Italian Carabinieri Corps for the Protection of the Environment, CRATI s.c.r.l. (Consorzio per la Ricerca e le Applicazioni di Tecnologie Innovative) and the Italian Department for Civil Protection.



the ground for a future European project. An upcoming transnational project would benefit tremendously from the activities carried out in this national project for the following reasons:

- many of the expected project outputs present a degree of relevance which goes beyond Italian national borders;
- the methodology which will be adopted to implement various project activities will be conceived and designed to be easily adaptable to a transnational project;
- during the implementation of the project, special attention will be constantly devoted to the adoption of a comparative European approach as this will be of crucial importance to properly identify best practices and lessons learned. Relying on the latter it will be possible to make sound, scientifically credible, politically sustainable and pragmatic guidelines to apply in different settings;
- the three project partners as well as the associate partners are part of wider networks of practitioners and renowned experts who will guarantee that the comparative approach is always taken into consideration.

The project, which started in 2013 and will last 24 months, aims at achieving the following specific objectives:

- Identify the existing national and cross border legal framework of response to CBRN security incidents (i.e. applicable rules at national (Italian), EU and international level, existing soft law instruments etc.). The final output of this analysis (a specific document outlining the legal framework) provides valuable input not only for Italy but also for all EU Member States; ⁽²⁾
- Identify the existing national and cross border operational frameworks of fire fighters response to CBRN security incidents (i.e. standard operating procedures, plans, training curricula, exercise calendars). Also in this case

the specific output of the project, although largely based on the Italian situation, will be useful and relevant to all EU Member States as well as to the EU;

- Identify critical issues discovered throughout the analysis of the Italian situation, in particular with regard to the coordination of law enforcement and security agencies for both national and cross border interventions;
- Define a sound approach to deal with cross border assistance and more specifically complement the existing EU-Host Nation Support Guidelines with a chapter on CBRN-assistance to security incidents. This specific activity might lead to the revision of the existing EU Host Nation Support Guidelines and therefore the project results could have an impact on a wider area of relevant actors; and,
- Draft the outline of a Common Training Curriculum for Italian actors involved in the response to CBRN events that can be used by the national training institutes of the different national actors involved in CBRN response. In order to foster and facilitate the interplay of the diverse stakeholders, this curriculum could be used, in the future, also by the Civil Protection Mechanism Training Programme and CEPOL.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The proposal will be implemented through the following set of activities, all of them aimed at achieving the above mentioned specific objectives:

- Analysis of the legal framework and of the rules regulating CBRN incidents and the delivery of international assistance;
- Mapping of practices at the national and regional level;

(2) The analysis of the legal framework carried out within the project is available at: http://cbrn.netseven.it/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/CBRN_Mapping_Report-FINAL.pdf



- Mapping of existing technologies available to deal with CBRN related incidents;
- Development of two scenarios / events for two table top exercises;
- Development of the exercises' evaluation;
- Identification of the participants to the table top exercises and establishment of a solid network. In fact, it is expected that relevant expert teams from other EU Member States (and more specifically teams coming from Estonia, due to the knowledge gained through the CREMEX 2011 exercise, and teams from The Netherlands) will partake in the exercises alongside the core members of the partnership and the other associate partners;
- Setting up the exercises' organisation;
- Table-Top Exercise 1;
- Table-Top Exercise 2;
- Workshop to review the results of the two exercises;
- Identification of gaps based on the two exercises and on the mapping activities carried out in WP 2;
- Defining and drafting procedures for CBRN assistance in HSN Guidelines;
- Validating procedures with the European Commission/DG ECHO and CBRN expert group;
- Drafting outline training curricula for HSN for CBRN incidents for Italian responders. This Curriculum could be used as well by CEPOL and by the Civil Protection Mechanism;
- Validating the outline in meetings with ECHO and CEPOL and delivering the outline to these organisations for further implementation;
- Presentations at Europol EOD-CBRN expert group meeting, EC CBRN expert group meeting and ECHO CBRN expert group meeting; and
- Dissemination of the project's results through the publication of articles in law enforcement and fire fighters' magazines.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Considering the increasing need across Europe (and even worldwide) to improve cooperation among the different stakeholders involved in prevention, detection and management of CBRN related incidents, it is expected that this project will offer new ideas and refined tools to strengthen the capacity of Member States in responding effectively and professionally to CBRN-incidents.