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FINLAND



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Central Government Communications in Incidents and Emergencies

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FOREWORD

In April 2012, the Prime Minister's Office appointed a working group to examine the extent to which the 2007 Guidelines for Communications in Crisis Situations and Emergencies required reform and to prepare a proposal for updated guidelines.

The revised guidelines pay particular attention to seamless coordination of preparedness, management and communications activities as well as to effective flow of information. Reliable, efficient and timely internal and external communications are an inseparable element of incident management.

A number of recent large-scale incidents, such as the latest summer and winter storms, the volcanic ash cloud in Iceland, swine flu and the leak at the Talvivaara mine, have emphasised the significance of preparedness, management and communications in the handling of crises and in subsequent recovery from them. Experience has shown that the foundation for successful action and communications in various situations and circumstances is based on everyday cooperation, clear procedures, training of demanding communications situations, and lessons learned from earlier cases.

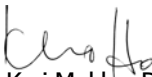
Practical cooperation and assessment of activities in situations like the Talvivaara mine leak enable central government and other authorities to examine and develop their procedures concretely.

The guidelines adopted by the Prime Minister's Office replace the Government Communications Guidelines for Crisis and Emergency Conditions issued on 10 September 2007. The guidelines are in force as of 20 May 2013, until further notice.

Helsinki, 13 May 2013



Jyrki Katainen, Prime Minister



Kari Mokko, Director-General, Director of Government Communications

INTRODUCTION

These Guidelines for Communications in Incidents and Emergencies focus on the intensified communications and coordination required by situations that take place under normal conditions. In incidents, authorities should manage the situation and communications by adhering to their normal organisation and normal procedures. The development of best practices takes place under normal conditions. In incidents, communications are managed in accordance with the guidelines given in the Act and Decree on the Openness of Government Activities and in the Recommendation on Central Government Communications. The Emergency Powers Act and State of Defence Act contain provisions on additional powers in emergency conditions.

Competent authorities have a key role at all levels of administration. The guidelines emphasise the close mix of management, situation-awareness activities and communications as well as the need for smooth flow of information between and within different branches of government. In addition to well-functioning cooperation and coordinated procedures, attention should be paid to the planning of communications and to post-incident measures. The authorities must also have ability to monitor and assess communications systematically. In the event of incidents and emergencies, the authorities must have flexible access to a wide array of communications channels and media.

The guidelines are based on the Government Communications Guidelines (2010), the Security Strategy for Society (2010), the revised Emergency Powers Act (2012), the Government Resolution on Comprehensive Security (2012), and the Government Guidelines on Coordinated Strategic Communications (2013). In the drawing up of the guidelines, particular attention was paid to society's increased vulnerability to technical incidents and to experiences gained from recent incidents directed at society. An effort has also been to standardise the terminology used in these guidelines.

The guidelines will serve as a basis for the preparation of administrative branches' and organisations' own and joint communications plans.

1 DEFINITIONS OF THREAT SCENARIOS, INCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES

These guidelines are based on the threat scenarios described in the Security Strategy for Society, scenarios for which contingency plans must also be made in communications. A threat scenario in these guidelines refers to a description of possible incidents in the security environment.

A threat scenario is a general description of incidents in the security environment. A threat scenario describes the impact mechanism, source and target of the threat, its impact on the target, its probability, and the most serious identified incidents associated with the scenario.

Threat scenarios include a number of incidents for which the ministries must be prepared. Incidents may occur both under normal conditions and in emergency situations.

An incident is a threat or event that endangers the security of society, its ability to function or citizens' living conditions, and whose management calls for more extensive or closer cooperation and communication between the authorities and other actors. Incidents occurring under normal conditions should be managed using the authorities' normal statutory powers or resources.

Systems and preparedness measures established under normal conditions create the foundation for action in emergencies. Emergencies have been defined in the Emergency Powers Act and the State of Defence Act.

The Emergency Powers Act contains provisions on the authorities' powers during emergencies and on preparedness for emergencies. The official powers laid down in the State of Defence Act can be taken into use to strengthen and supplement the powers granted by the Emergency Powers Act in a situation where national defence must be intensified and national security further reinforced in order to safeguard Finland's independence and to maintain legal order. The extra powers defined in the Act may only be adopted if the powers specified in the Emergency Powers Act are not sufficient and only to the extent that this is necessary for meeting the objective of the Act.

As defined in the State of Defence Act and the Emergency Powers Acts, **emergencies** are situations which the authorities cannot control using regular powers and resources. Under the Emergency Powers Act, emergencies include:

- 1) An armed or an equally serious attack against Finland and its immediate aftermath;
- 2) A considerable threat of an armed or an equally serious attack against Finland, to prevent the effects of which the immediate use of statutory powers in accordance with the Emergency Powers Act is required;
- 3) A serious threat to the livelihood of the population or to the foundations of the national economy, as a result of which the functions vital to society are at risk;
- 4) A major disaster and its immediate aftermath;
- 5) A widespread outbreak of a serious infectious disease, the effect of which is comparable to a major disaster.

The emergency powers granted to the authorities in emergencies require a government decree if the Government in collaboration with the President of the Republic conclude that the country faces emergency conditions.

2 INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

2.1 Management, situation awareness and communications

Management

Incidents are managed in accordance with existing legislation, principles laid down in the Security Strategy for Society and the Government Resolution on Comprehensive Security. In incidents, authorities should manage the situation by adhering to their normal organisation and normal procedures. Within the government, the Prime Minister's Office is responsible for the general coordination of incidents.

Responsibilities include:

- proactive preparedness (building up capabilities, guidelines, skills and training)
- action in the situation itself
- post-incident measures and assessment

The competent authority leads operational activities and is also responsible for associated communications. In the event of an incident, the responsible authority takes action and provides timely and accurate information in line with agreed procedures. Other authorities participate and provide executive assistance in line with existing statutes. In addition to operational activities, it is important to ensure information flows internally and between the various actors involved. Administrative branches must inform the state leadership about their decisions and measures. Depending on the situation, the state leadership includes Parliament, the

President of the Republic, the Government or an individual minister. As regards the provision of information to the state leadership, each administrative branch must have agreement on the measures to apply.

Situation awareness

Decision-making and leadership at all levels require access to correct information and reliable situation awareness, the competent authority's understanding of what has happened and the factors that influenced the event, and an assessment of possible alternative developments in the situation. In large-scale incidents, it is important to provide and communicate a cross-administrative, integrated picture of the overall situation. Public situation awareness forms a part of overall situation awareness.

It is important to ensure at an early stage that information flows unhindered among all actors involved – from the operational authorities all the way up to the state leadership. Those responsible for communications must also have access to situation awareness information.

The Prime Minister's Office has established for this purpose the Government Situation Centre, which produces real-time reports and a situation picture on the basis of information provided by the competent authorities. In short, it combines information from various administrative branches and reports to the Government and other authorities on this basis.

Communications as a management tool

Communications is part of management. Reliable, efficient and timely internal and external communications are an essential element of the management of incidents and emergencies. The prerequisites for reliability are that the information given is correct, clear and adequate, and that the information is given by the competent authority. Other key communications principles relate to

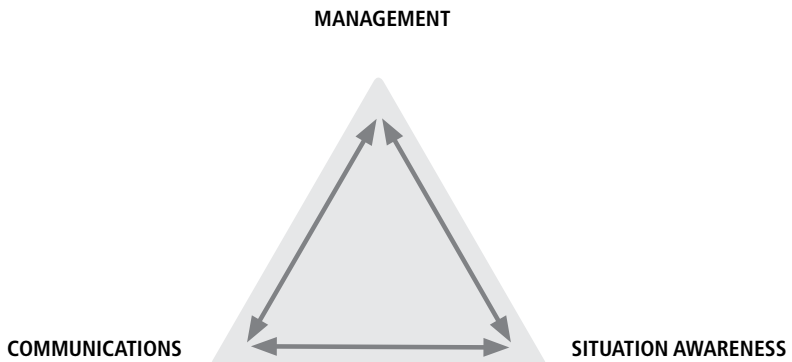
pro-activeness, openness, consistency, speed, comprehensibility, equality and interaction.

Management must be organised such that internal and external communications can be initiated immediately. The more serious the incident or situation threatening the security or health of the population, the more important the speed of communications. The staff responsible for communications must be involved in the organisation's alarm and on-duty arrangements. Communications specialists must also be represented in all groups involved in incident management and coordination.

The authority in charge of the situation must ensure consistent communications – both internally and in close cooperation with the other actors involved. Regional and linguistic equality must also be taken into account in communications and preparedness activities. The authorities must also make sure that the information provided is not misleading.

Constant close contact should be maintained between management, the functions responsible for the situation awareness, and communications.

Photo: Management, situation awareness and communications



2.2 Levels of management and communications

Competent authorities

A general principle is that the authorities responsible for running the operations and investigations are also responsible for communications and for informing other authorities and stakeholders. Other authorities provide support.

If the situation calls for action from several authorities and it is unclear which ministry bears the overall responsibility for leadership, the Government will make a separate decision on the matter in accordance with Section 10 of the Act on the Government (175/2003).

Most incidents are dealt with by local authorities, which are also responsible for communications and providing information to other authorities and stakeholders.

Municipalities, local authorities and joint municipal authority bodies, such as hospital districts and regional rescue departments, bear the main responsibility for local communications. In particular, the Regional State Administrative Agencies (AVIs) and the Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELYs) must create well-functioning communications links with other local actors already in normal conditions. In situations that extend to several municipalities, it is important to have coordinated communications. The authority in charge of the operations is also responsible for coordinating communications.

When necessary, regional authorities support the competent authorities and provide situation awareness information for the use of other authorities and key stakeholders. Provisions governing communications and any guidelines and recommendations issued by the ministries for their branches of government must be taken into account in regional communications.

Operational and communications support from central government, including the ministries and central agencies, is important to regional and local administration. Such support may include resources, consultation or shared use of communication

channels. In large-scale situations, the responsibility for communications may be assumed by a ministry or the government.

The authorities must agree on mutual division of responsibilities, provide information on any changes in it and ensure the consistency of communications.

In incidents, it is important that authorities, businesses, NGOs and CSOs work together. All necessary businesses and organisations must be involved in the activities and in the dissemination of information about the activities. It is particularly important that the authorities and businesses responsible for society's basic infrastructure exchange information right from the outset of the incident and that they agree on the coordination of communications in situations relating to citizens' basic services. In the planning of preparedness activities, it is necessary to examine how cooperation between different actors can be organised locally, regionally and nationally.

Government

Cabinet committees, meetings of Permanent Secretaries, meetings of the Heads of Preparedness, and other permanent inter-ministerial cooperation bodies can be used to support incident management preparations. Depending on the kind of incident, the Security Committee may also be consulted. Representatives of the Government Communications Department attend the meetings. Whenever necessary, a representative of the Communications Unit of the ministry leading the operations is also present.

By law, the competent ministry leads operations and, whenever necessary, any coordinated action among ministries. The state leadership may also initiate measures required by the situation. By the Prime Minister's decision or on the proposal by the competent minister, a matter is referred for discussion at a government meeting, in the manner agreed with the Prime Minister. If necessary, a government plenary session will resolve which ministry bears responsibility for a matter or handles a far-

reaching issue. Permanent Secretaries are responsible for ensuring the general security and preparedness of the ministry and its administrative sector.

The meetings of Permanent Secretaries and the meetings of the Heads of Preparedness are coordination bodies for management at government level. The measures taken in the various administrative branches and, whenever necessary, by commercial enterprises and citizens' organisations are coordinated in the meetings. In the management of incidents, the Permanent Secretaries are supported by the Heads of Preparedness. Questions pertaining to the coordination of the government communications are discussed at meetings of the cooperation group for communications and also at the meetings held by the Heads of Communications, Heads of Preparedness and Permanent Secretaries of the various ministries.

Each ministry is responsible for communications about its own activities and for coordinating communications in its administrative branch. In administrative branches, particular attention must be paid to consistency in strategic and operational communications.

The Prime Minister's Office is responsible for the Government's and the Prime Minister's communications and for coordinating central government communications. If the scope of the situation extends to several branches of government or requires Government-level measures, the Prime Minister's Office may take a coordinating role in communications. The administrative branches managing the situation must ensure that the Government Communications Department and other cooperation partners involved have access to up-to-date and adequate information on any implemented or planned communications activities.

In large-scale incidents and emergencies during normal times, a Government Command Centre, based on coordinated action among ministries, can be established to support management at government level. The communications capacity of the Command Centre may be strengthened as necessary. The Command Centre's communications is organised under the Director of Government Communications.

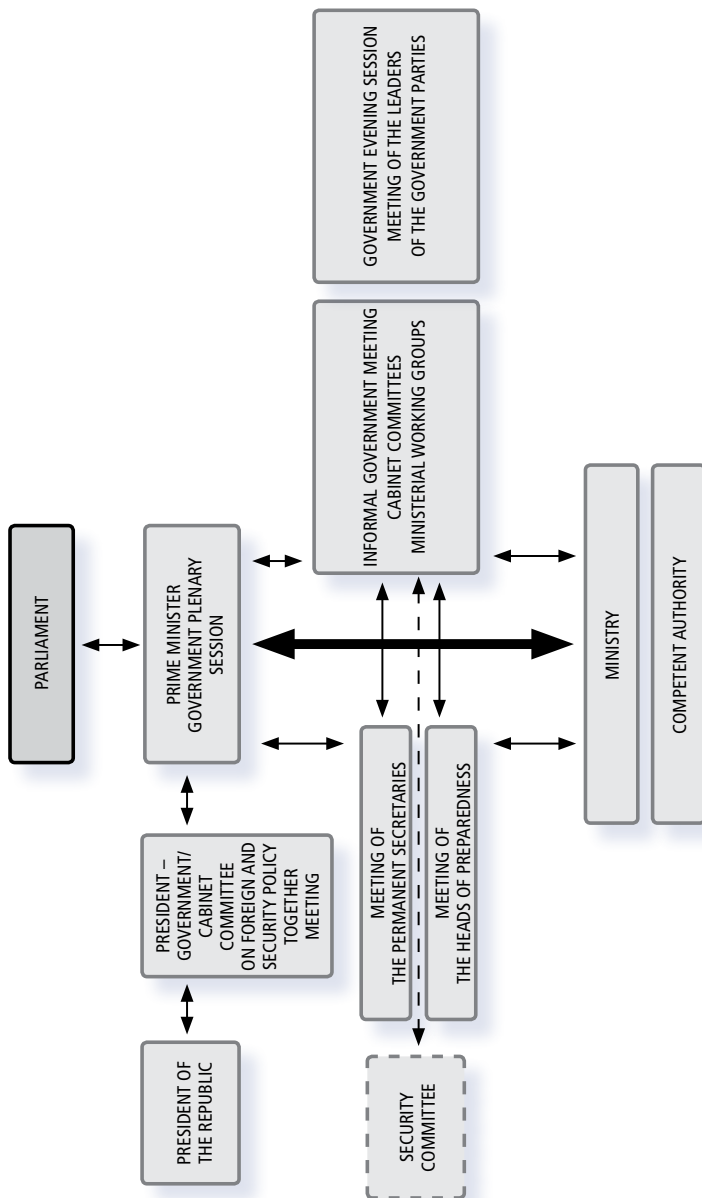
In international incidents, it is important that international cooperation bodies provide guidelines for communications by the authorities.

The organisation of communications was revised in connection with the reform of the EU Emergency and Crisis Coordination Arrangements (EU-CCA). In the event of an incident, special attention must be attached to communications from the very early stages and maintained during the entire political coordination process. Communications must be coherent and all actors must deploy a common communications strategy. Common objectives and messages are confirmed by COREPER. Member States and EU institutions must work in close cooperation to coordinate communications both at EU-level and nationally.

The competent authorities are responsible for providing timely information also to Parliament and the Office of the President of the Republic.

Photo: Management of disturbances

(source: Resolution on Comprehensive Security 2012)



3 COMMUNICATIONS PREPAREDNESS

Good communications calls for good planning and anticipation. Planning must be based on impact assessment and should take into account both the organisation's and recipients' needs. With more demanding communications objectives, we need a greater array of available communications tools. In incidents, the authorities are often faced with limited resources, which must then be put to the best possible use.

Communications may be divided into five phases:

- preparedness
- warning
- communications during an incident
- post-incident measures
- assessment

3.1 Preparedness

In preparing for incidents, attention must be paid to measures that raise one's own and other organisations' state of preparedness, increase staff competence, ensure functioning tools and adequate premises, improve the dissemination of information and keep related communications guidelines and plans up-to-date. Preparedness requires that all contingency plans include outlines for communications and that there are sufficient personnel allocated for related duties with adequate opportunities for training and exercising.

As regards communications, preparedness means that we have adequate information on the communications methods applied by citizens, the media and various stakeholder groups as well as the means to follow the development of these methods and

information. Preparedness also covers precautionary measures such as security guidelines, operating guidelines and communications campaigns with the aim of affecting people's behaviour. In terms of communications, risk assessments and awareness of society's attitudes are also an important element of preparedness measures.

The Government Project Register (HARE) has published examples of communications guidelines for incidents drawn up by ministries and government agencies. They can be found from HARE with number VNK004:00/2012 (in Finnish only).

3.2 Warning

The immediate task of communications in incidents is to warn and save people from an identified danger. A warning must be issued to all parties affected. Depending on the situation, the warning phase may be long or short. The need for active and anticipatory communications arises with the first weak signals of an incident.

Communications with citizens include the issuing of warnings and instructions and the monitoring of reactions. Warnings can be issued in the form of emergency warnings laid down by law, other information releases by the authorities, or by a combination of the two. In communications with the media, it is important to provide the media with initial information about the situation. The main task of internal communications and communications with the various stakeholder groups is to ensure that all parties involved in dealing with the situation are provided with sufficient and uniform information.

3.3 Communications in incidents

In the acute phase, the focus of communications is on providing instructions: important operating guidelines are repeated and an effort is made to ensure their delivery.

The aim of communications is to prevent additional accidents and support recovery from the situation. Communications also

facilitates a better understanding of what has happened and expresses sympathy to those affected by the situation. The opinions, attitudes and need for information of citizens, the media and stakeholder groups are followed and taken into account.

3.4 Post-incident measures

After an incident, communications is needed to provide information about recovery measures and to motivate relevant parties to participate in them. Information about the reasons and consequences of the situation improve understanding, support recovery and increase society's preparedness for incidents.

In the post-incident phase, communications aims to:

- provide information on post-incident measures
- explain the situation
- increase understanding
- map the need for information, follow opinions and attitudes and take them into account in the planning of activities

3.5 Assessment

In incidents and emergencies, monitoring and analysis of the media, open sources and feedback from the public are highly significant.

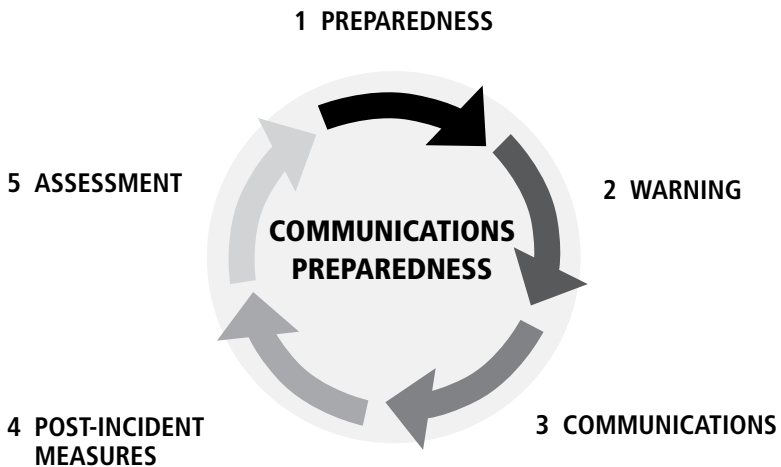
Systematic monitoring and analysis support the decision-making of the authorities and help prevent the emergence and spread of rumours as well as false or misleading information. People's ideas about the prevailing situation and its impacts can be investigated by means of opinion and attitude surveys.

The Government Communications Department bears the general responsibility for developing and implementing research activities that support central government communications in the event of different types of situations. Working in close cooperation with the Government Communications Department, each ministry

is responsible for the development of research preparedness supporting communications in its own branch of government.

According to the follow-up and assessment system set up for the central administration communications, the planning and assessment of communications include self-assessment, peer-assessment and external assessment – with self-assessment being the most important. The success of communications is examined against the set objectives laid down in a communications plan. Peer-assessment enables the dissemination of good practices. External communications provides feedback on communications capabilities in a broader societal framework. Communications impact assessments are based on research conducted in social and behavioural sciences and best carried out by external research institutes and businesses.

Photo: Communications preparedness



4 COMMUNICATIONS DURING INCIDENTS

Good daily communications practices in normal times create the foundation for communications during incidents. Communications is provided in line with the same principles and procedures as applicable in normal conditions.

4.1 Implementation of communications

Communications with citizens

In communications with citizens, the emphasis is on providing uniform information, reducing uncertainty and maintaining confidence in the authorities' expertise and activities. Citizens must have the opportunity to monitor the authorities' activities and their exercise of public power, and to discuss these.

In some cases, the occurrence and escalation of an incident can be prevented or stopped by clear communications. This is particularly the case in communications about environmental or health risks, for example. Often, experts and ordinary citizens will have differing opinions about the probability of a threat scenario. Unknown dangers may feel extremely threatening even though their probability might be very low. Threats that are difficult to understand can be illustrated by pictures giving an idea of the dimensions of the threat or by an easily understandable everyday metaphor. Clear and open information must also be provided about difficult and delicate situations and issues.

When the competent authority fails to provide adequate information about the possible risks, citizens' confidence in the authorities' activities is undermined, which may cause the situation to escalate further. It is important to anticipate when a slowly evolving situation is about to turn into an incident or a media crisis. Such situations require broad-based stakeholder communications as well as active and open dialogue.

In communications with citizens, a variety of communications means should be utilised in a diverse manner to reach all the parties concerned. The array of daily communications tools include press releases; information and discussion sessions with webcastings; mobile, web and telephone services; web communications, social media and e-mail; and in certain long-term situations also campaigns, brochures and other publications.

In particular, the various means of web communications and social media play an important role in communications with citizens. Web communications enables the transmission of information efficiently to a large public – it also enables citizen participation. The dissemination of information must also be guaranteed to those who do not have access to or do not use the internet or social media.

Essential material produced by the authorities must be available in the national languages of Finland – Finnish and Swedish. Material must also be provided in Saami when it mainly concerns the Saami population or there are other specific reasons for doing so. Material is also produced in English, as necessary. The communication needs of immigrants, foreign travellers in Finland, and other groups in special situations should be taken into account.

Media communications

The media play a central role in transmitting information issued by the authorities. Interaction with the media must be open, active and service-oriented. The goal is that, through the media, the public obtain as extensive and as varied a picture of the situation and the authorities' actions as possible. In incidents, it is important that the people responsible for commanding the situation as well as relevant experts are available to the media. This applies to all levels of action. All mass media are treated as equally as possible.

Any incident may turn into a media crisis as a result of unsuccessful action or if the operationally and politically responsible authorities fail to assume public responsibility right from the

beginning. A determined display of responsibility is required to maintain confidence in the authorities' ability to act.

Communications with stakeholders and experts

Stakeholders include both cooperation and target groups with which the state administration collaborates to achieve its objectives. Stakeholder groups pass on information provided by the state administration and they also provide feedback for improved action.

In communications with stakeholders, the central bodies are organisations, businesses and communities. The authorities must have working and close contacts with stakeholders that are important for their operations. The most important tools in communications with stakeholders are web communications and various kinds of events and meetings. Efficient communications with stakeholders supports, supplements and deepens communications with citizens in its various forms.

Central government organisations are expert organisations. Therefore, it is important that experts are capable of communicating effectively, exerting influence and appearing in public as professionals in their particular field.

International communications

Each ministry is responsible for the development of international communications in its own sector. Together with the ministry responsible for communications, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs may play a central role in situations that have an international dimension. These situations include, among others, a danger threatening the safety of Finns abroad or an event in Finland attracting wide international attention.

Organised by the Department for Communication and Culture of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, an international media centre is set up, whenever necessary, to provide communications services

for the representatives of the international media working and arriving in Finland. The communications of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs together with the protocol services also provide information for the foreign missions established in Finland. The missions are advised to follow communications produced by the competent authorities.

Finnish missions abroad are responsible for providing the communications services required by the situation for the authorities and media in their respective areas. The ministry responsible for communications, the Department for Communication and Culture of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and the Finnish missions abroad are together responsible for the international monitoring of the media, as required by the situation.

Internal communications and flow of information

Well-functioning internal communications create a foundation for successful external communications. With internal communications, it is possible to ensure that all parties involved in the organisation have access to information essential for the attainment of the set goals and relevant action. Management and supervisors play a central role in the running of an agency's internal communications and flow of information between authorities. Each public official participating in the management of an emergency situation is for his or her own part responsible for active and efficient internal communications. The principal means of internal communications are the telephone, instant messaging, SMS messages, e-mail, intranet, extranet, video conferences, protected authority networks, and various meetings among the personnel and with the authorities.

Within each organisation, the flow of information between management, those responsible for situation awareness, and communications must be unobstructed and close. Communications personnel must be able to follow the development of the situation picture in real time, to produce material needed for the creation

of situation awareness, and to utilise the material produced by information services from various sources.

4.2 Means of communications

The running of communications is based on the same means as in everyday situations – with intensified efficiency. The main tools are press releases, press conferences, web communications, social media channels and telephone service.

Press releases

Press releases are among the basic communications tools also in incidents. A press release by the competent authority is issued as soon as possible. It should contain information on the basic facts, contact persons and the time of the next round of information. In addition to wide-reaching media distribution, press releases may be issued to targeted groups when necessary.

Background information for media representatives can be provided efficiently by issuing information on the basic facts of the situation (statistics, definitions of relevant concepts, summaries of applicable legislation).

Proactive and rapid communications reduce the need for reactive measures. A suitable means is to provide information on a sentence-by-sentence basis – by issuing short written messages at short intervals. Based on the situation picture, the content of communications is determined by the information essential to take necessary action and which is of general interest to the public. When information is provided on a sentence-by-sentence basis, it accentuates the real-time interconnectedness of communications, situation awareness activities and management. It also calls for rapid decision-making with regard to communications.

Emergency warning

An authority may issue an emergency warning if it is necessary in order to warn the population in the event of a dangerous situation that may threaten the security or health of people or cause significant damage or destruction to property.

According to the Language Act, an emergency warning must be issued in Finnish and Swedish. If a dangerous situation or its consequences affect the Saami homeland, as defined in Section 4 of the Act on the Saami Parliament (974/1995), the emergency warning must also be issued in the Saami language.

The Finnish Broadcasting Company (YLE) has statutory responsibility for transmitting emergency warnings to the public. The Finnish Broadcasting Company transmits an emergency warning through all of its own channels. Simultaneously, the warning is transmitted automatically on commercial radio stations and, if so decided by the authorities, publicised on television channels. An emergency warning interrupts all programmes being broadcast.

An emergency warning may be issued by the following bodies: rescue authorities (as defined in Section 26 of the Rescue Act (379/2011)); police departments; border guard authorities (as defined in Section 4 of the Act on the Finnish Border Guard (577/2005)); the Emergency Response Centre Administration; the National Police Board; national police units under the National Police Board (as defined in Section 1(2) of the Act on Police Administration (110/1992)); the Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority; the Finnish Meteorological Institute; the Finnish Transport Agency; the Finnish Transport Safety Agency; the Finnish Food Safety Authority; the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health; the Finnish Medicines Agency; and all ministries.

Emergency response centres transmit the first information releases issued by the police and the rescue authorities, for example, in the event of accidents and crime.

The authorities can also use the VIRVE authority network for informing each other.

Press conferences

Press conferences are held when necessary, even at short notice and sometimes several times a day. Press conferences are suitable in situations when there is a great demand for information, the issue has relevance to several actors and there is a need to reach as wide an audience as possible. Press releases may also be targeted at the most important stakeholder groups. In between press conferences, information on the situation may be updated by issuing press releases.

Interviews and comments on the situation

Interviews and comments provided by management and experts are a key means of communication by public authorities. The media enables wide audiences to be reached rapidly and comprehensively. The competent authority decides on which expert (or experts) provides information to the public. The coherence of messages is ensured by well-organised internal communications and flow of information.

Organisations must encourage management and experts to participate in performance training and offer opportunities for practising public performance.

YLE text TV by the Finnish Broadcasting Company

In incidents, YLE text TV plays a prominent role in transmitting information by public authorities. Currently, it is more reliable than the internet and it reaches a greater number of people. The Finnish Broadcasting Company provides a 24/7 news service on its text TV.

Certain authorities (the rescue services, the Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority, the Finnish Meteorological Institute and the Defence Forces) have their own pages on YLE text TV. In incidents, the authorities may use the text TV pages to issue operating guidelines for citizens.

Web communications and social media

Press releases and instructions are published on the web as soon as they are issued. In the case of long-term situations, it is useful to draw up a list of frequently asked questions with answers and place it on the web. The drawing up of such a list in advance is part of good preparedness procedure.

The foundation for the use of web services and social media channels in incidents is laid down during normal conditions. Well-functioning communications on the web and social media call for familiar and established channels.

Web communications enables fast and equitable dissemination of information. The government web service provides links to key material produced by different authorities. The press releases and topical material prepared by all ministries are transmitted to the public through the news service on the government website.

In the event of incidents, social media should be utilised from the very start, because discussion on the web will begin immediately. Social media facilitate increased interaction with citizens and provide guidance and information about authorities' web services. Rumours and false information must be corrected as soon as possible, as they have the tendency to multiply and live a life of their own on the web.

The ministries and agencies in the various administrative branches are responsible for the functioning and content of their own websites. The functioning of web communications must be ensured with sufficient capacity and good cooperation. If necessary, social media may serve as a back-up system and reduce dependence on one particular communications system.

Telephone service

In large-scale and long-term situations, a telephone service for citizens may be set up to support other forms of communications. The Prime Minister's Office is responsible for the technical maintenance and introduction of such a service. A telephone service may be run by one particular branch of government or serve several actors. In addition, there should be a contingency plan for setting up a telephone service providing psychological help.

A telephone service is used to transmit and collect essential information related to the situation. When a telephone service is organised, the primary focus should be on the needs of people affected by the situation and their family members.

Back-up systems

In incidents, electronic means of communications may not be available; preparations should be made for this, too.

Radio serves as the primary back-up system for the authorities in the event of a serious power outage. Other back-up systems include loudspeakers, foot patrols and printed material. The possibilities and procedures offered by mobile services must be developed.

The government security networks ensure communications for the state leadership and security authorities.

5 COMMUNICATIONS IN EMERGENCIES

5.1 Preparedness responsibility

Under the Emergency Powers Act, the government, state administrative authorities, state businesses and other state authorities as well as municipalities must ensure, by means of emergency plans, prior preparation of emergency operations and other measures, that their duties will be performed with the least amount of disruption also in emergency conditions.

Preparedness for emergency conditions is managed, supervised and coordinated by the government and by each ministry in its field of operations. Preparedness is also coordinated by each ministry in its own sector. Separate provisions apply to the coordination of preparedness within the government.

In emergencies, citizens' need for information concerning their security and health increases considerably. Authorities must be able to address the situation by means of sufficient emergency communications (emergency warnings and official instructions) and efficient background information.

Preparedness plans for situations that require enhanced communications and additional communications staff must be made during normal conditions and they must enable gradual increases in the number of staff involved in line with the seriousness and scale of the situation. In emergencies, it is necessary to be ready to make use of all communications channels and means required by the situation in an efficient, flexible and diverse manner.

5.2 Responsibility for communications and coordination in emergencies

Even during emergencies, central government communications is based on the legislation for normal conditions, supplemented by

certain provisions in the Emergency Powers Act and the State of Defence Act. The general principle is that the direct management of central government communications is vested in the Prime Minister's Office.

Emergencies have a wide impact on society as a whole. The significance of rapid information dissemination and clear division of communications and coordination responsibilities are emphasised in such situations. As a rule, each branch of government is responsible for enhanced communications within its own field of operations. Communications preparedness is raised and operational capacity is heightened as gradually as possible when the situation becomes more severe.

Responsibility for communications in emergencies:

- Prime Minister's Office
- each ministry within its branch of government
- the commanding authority at local and regional level

When the severity of the situation so requires, the government may set up a cooperation group for coordinating communications among various authorities. In such events, the Prime Minister's Office is responsible for the coordination of communications among the different branches of government. In practice, the responsibility rests with the Government Communications Department. All relevant branches of government are involved in the cooperation group. The group steers and coordinates the authorities' nationwide communications in accordance with the government's policy outlines and separate decisions. The Government Command Centre under the leadership of the Prime Minister's Office is also reinforced with communications services for emergencies and with supporting research and liaison activities. The Command Centre's communications is organised under the Director of Government Communications.

As the situation deepens, responsibility for communications may have to be transferred, either in part or in full, from the specialised authorities to the Government Communications Department. In accordance with preparedness legislation, the Government decides on the time when responsibility for communications is transferred and on the scope of the transfer.

Under the Emergency Powers Act, a government decree may be issued for the setting up of a State Communications Centre. The Prime Minister's Office and the State Communications Centre may issue regulations on the content of communications to state authorities. In such cases, the Prime Minister's Office and the State Communications Centre may require that central or local government authorities publish a given message or prohibit the publication of certain messages.

To promote cooperation between state authorities and the media during a state of defence, the government may appoint an advisory board that includes representatives from periodicals, web publishers, broadcasters and authorities responsible for the management of the emergency situation.

During emergencies, each ministry is responsible for ensuring that communications within its branch of government is effectively coordinated and that information runs smoothly between various actors – from the operational level to the state leadership.

At local and regional level, the commanding authorities ensure the coordination of communications with their own cooperation partners. It is also necessary to assure efficient flow and exchange of information between the central government and businesses responsible for society's basic infrastructure.

5.3 Responsibility for publication of information

Under the Emergency Powers Act, publishers and broadcasters are responsible for transmitting free of charge information that must be made quickly accessible to the whole population or people living in a certain area and which relates to the application of or adherence

with the said Act when the information is provided by the following bodies: the government, ministries, regional state administrative agencies, centres for economic development, transport and the environment, municipal boards, the police, and military or rescue authorities.

Such information must be published as such, without delay, in the periodical, web publication or programme in question.

5.4 Powers in emergencies

The Emergency Powers Act contains provisions on the division of powers in emergencies. Based on the proposal of the Prime Minister, the Government resolves disagreements concerning the mandates of state authorities in particular matters. Ministries resolve any such disagreements within their own branch of government.

In emergencies, the Government and ministries may decide the central government agency that is to deal with an issue or task intended for the implementation of the Emergency Powers Act, when the issue or task relates to the mandate of more than one operating unit and when there are no specific provisions on the issue or task in question.

6 PSYCHOLOGICAL CRISIS RESILIENCE

Changes in the security environment affect people in a number of ways. Unanticipated and unusual events cause uncertainty and anxiety. In the event of an environmental disaster, for example, people want information on its impact on health, living environment, nature and sources of livelihood in the future. Authorities must provide answers to these questions and worries with their own action and communications in cooperation with their stakeholders.

Communications must be open, truthful and active. The opinions, attitudes and need for information of citizens, the media and stakeholder groups are followed and taken into account. Information on the reasons for the situation or events facilitates increased understanding, expresses sympathy to those affected by the situation, promotes recovery and improves society's preparedness for incidents.

The Security Strategy for Society highlights the significance of psychological resilience to crisis in terms of the nation's capacity to endure the stress caused by changes in security situations, overcome their effects, and speed up recovery from crises. The nation's psychological resilience to crisis is preserved by parenting, education, research, communications, religious activities and protection of cultural heritage.

In severe incidents and emergencies, the state leadership, including the President of the Republic, Speaker of Parliament and Prime Minister, plays an important role in maintaining and enhancing the nation's psychological resilience to crisis.

Psychological resilience to crisis can be divided into the following categories:

- state leadership, functioning of the political system
- population's well-being and capability to function
- functioning civic society
- functioning religious services
- functioning communications
- functioning education and research system
- functioning cultural services
- protection of cultural heritage
- the will to defend the nation
- the nation's and its people's ability to recover from long-term incidents and emergencies.

7 STATUTES, GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Constitution of Finland (Perustuslaki 731/1999)

Administrative Procedure Act (Hallintolaki 434/2003)

Personal Data Act (Henkilötietolaki 523/1999)

Language Act (Kielilaki 423/2003)

Act on Electronic Services and Communication in the Public Sector (Laki sähköisestä asioinnista viranomaistoiminnassa 13/2003)

Act on Television and Radio Operations (Laki televisio- ja radiotoiminnasta 744/1998)

Act on Emergency Warnings (Laki vaaratiedotteesta 466/2012), effective from 1 June 2013 onwards

Act on the Openness of Government Activities (Laki viranomaisten toiminnan julkisuudesta 621/1999)

Act on Cooperation in Government Agencies and Public Bodies (Laki yhteistoiminnasta valtion virastoissa ja laitoksissa 651/1988)

Act on Yleisradio Oy (Laki Yleisradio Oy:stä 1380/1993)

State of Defence Act (Puolustustilalaki 1083/1991)

Saami Language Act (Saamen kielilaki 1086/2003)

Communicable Diseases Act (Tartuntatautilaki 583/1986)

Act on Security Research (Turvallisuustutkintalaki 525/2011)

Emergency Powers Act (Valmiuslaki 1552/2011)

Non-Discrimination Act (Yhdenvertaisuuslaki 21/2004)

Decree on the Openness of Government Activities and Good Data Management Practices (1030/1999) and subsequent amendments

Security Strategy for Society (2010)

Resolution on Comprehensive Security (2012)

Government Communications Guidelines (2010)

Guidelines for Emergency Warnings (2013)

ANNEX: CHECKLIST ON THE MANAGEMENT OF INTENSIFIED COMMUNICATIONS AT GOVERNMENT LEVEL

These guidelines will serve as a basis for the drawing up of more detailed communications plans within organisations. This checklist is intended particularly for ministries. It is not exclusive and each branch of government should draft its own and more detailed lists based on its special characteristics and needs.

1 Preparedness

Prepare in advance and identify the situation at an early stage

Make preparations for possible incidents. Identify the incidents and threats that may occur in your ministry's branch of government and the related division of duties and responsibilities between the ministry's units. As part of preparedness measures, make a survey of the ministry's key domestic and foreign stakeholders and investigate opportunities for cooperation and support.

Responsibilities in communications matters must be agreed in connection with securing society's vital functions in such a way that various actors and administrative levels are clear about their responsibilities in large-scale incidents. Preparedness can be made more effective with intersectoral communications guidelines.

Ensure the availability of key communications staff through on-call and alert systems.

Put in place deputy arrangements and map out the possibility for additional communications resources within the ministry's branch of government. The aim is for resources to move flexibly within the government branches. Make an inventory of the available communications channels and tools, including backup systems, and ensure their functioning. As part of preparedness measures,

it is necessary to make sure that information also reaches people that have no access to web services or social media.

Be prepared to provide information in Finnish and Swedish and, when necessary, also in Saami and other languages. Find out about the availability of 24-hour translation services.

In your ministry and its branch of government, maintain the communications guidelines and plans as part of contingency planning. Ensure capabilities through regular training and exercises. Keep regular contact with the organisation's Head of Preparedness and Preparedness Secretary. Plan annual communications training for the leadership and other key members of the staff.

An important element in web communications is to test the capacity of the organisation's web service. It is necessary to build up measures, for example a reduced version of the website, to ensure the functioning of the web service in case of a sudden and sharp increase in visitors to the service.

Draw up a list of the ministry's experts, heads of government agencies and public bodies in the ministry's branch of government, and other key experts. It is good to mention each person's field of expertise and responsibilities. Make sure that the list is always updated and assign a person responsible for its maintenance.

2 Warning

Organise and start up communications in your ministry

Already at the initial stage, contact the leadership and the officer on duty/preparedness officer of your own ministry, the Government Communications Department and, in matters attracting international attention, the Department for Communication and Culture of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Without delay, create channels through which you receive up-to-date and sufficient information about the situation.

Inform those in charge of your ministry's web services, such as the ministry's information management, about the situation so that they can ensure the functioning of web services. Make plans to

distribute information from your website for publishing on several independent websites within your ministry's branch of government or on the government website. In this way, access to published material is not dependent on one particular website.

When necessary, keep contact with those responsible for maintaining situation awareness within your ministry's branch of government or the Government Situation Centre. Make sure that communications staff can participate in meetings concerning the management of the situation when they make decisions about communications policies, responsibilities and channels. Even though the authority leading the operations is responsible for general communications, the media will also want information and comments from the ministry very soon after the initial information. Remember also to inform translators, the telephone exchange operator and in-house attendants.

3 Communications in the event of incidents

Ensure rapidity, consistency, continuity and follow-up

Agree on the division of duties and responsibilities within the Communications Unit. Keep a record of the communications tasks and activities undertaken.

Assess communications needs, channels, tools and necessary resources for the following categories: internal communications, communications with stakeholders, communications with citizens, media communications and international communications.

In prolonged situations, find out about the availability of additional communications resources and translation services also outside office hours. When necessary, summon additional resources for the Communications Unit.

Make sure that experts in your ministry and key directors and experts in your ministry's branch of government are aware of the situation and are prepared for contacts from the media. Provide the media and key stakeholders with a list of the contact details of experts. Include in the list information on each person's area

of responsibility and expertise and possible deputies. To ensure consistency, designate a person who will be primarily responsible for giving comments and information to media.

Collect necessary background material, such as summaries of applicable legislation, statistics, definitions of relevant concepts, photos or graphics.

From the very beginning, follow news about the situation in the media and discussions in the social media – react when necessary. Make sure that false or misleading information is rectified without delay and that incomplete information is supplemented with new information.

Draw up a press release and/or organise a press conference so that all parties are equally informed of the situation. Make sure that different authorities do not arrange press conferences simultaneously. Ensure also that photographers' needs are taken into account and that journalists have the necessary working space at the location.

Provide information about public web and telephone services. Also be prepared for contacts from the international media. In the organisation of press conferences, it is necessary to take into account the needs of the international media, including translations of press releases and interpretation arrangements when necessary.

Contact other communications officers and stakeholder groups in your ministry's branch of government

For consistent communications at all levels of administration, contact the communications officer of the authority leading the operations as early as possible and ensure that information passes unobstructed and rapidly within the administrative branch. Information about any changes in the division of responsibilities among the authorities involved must be provided without delay. Establish well-functioning contacts also with the investigating authorities, such as the Accident Investigation Board.

Set up a communications network with stakeholders involved in the management of the situation. Agree on regular contacts and communications procedures with them. Networks and jointly agreed procedures help in creating an overall picture and in synchronising communications.

Civic society networks enable efficient dissemination of information for different kinds of target groups. Make sure that you have working and close contacts with organisations and communities that are key to your operations.

When an incident or emergency results from a major accident in a company's production plant or facilities, set up channels for exchange of information with the company in question.

Keep the Government Communications Department and the Department for Communication and Culture at the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs updated and make communications decisions in consultation with them

Make sure that the Government Communications Department has been informed of the incident. When the scope of the situation extends to several branches of government or requires measures by the Government, consult the Government Communications Department for communications procedures. If the Government Communications Department coordinates the communications, notify the communications officers of your administrative branch accordingly.

If intensified international communications is needed, ensure that the Department for Communication and Culture of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has been informed of the event. Agree with the Government Communications Department and the Department for Communication and Culture of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on how the information material needed for international communications is produced, how the monitoring of the international media is organised, and what other aspects need to be taken into account when providing services for the international media.

Also remember to inform the Office of the President of the Republic and the Parliament Information Office.

4 Post-incident communications

Provide information on post-incident measures and support recovery

In communications after the incident, it is important to give instructions, explain the events, increase understanding and monitor the need for information by citizens, the media and key stakeholders. Agree with your cooperation partners on the required measures.

5 Assessment

If necessary, revise the guidelines and incorporate lessons learned in future training

After the situation, evaluate how well your communications succeeded. If necessary, revise guidelines, plans and procedures. Also ask your cooperation partners to give an assessment of how well communications succeeded. Remember regular training and exercises.



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