

ANNUAL REPORT



dsb

2007



A SAFE AND ROBUST SOCIETY

– WHERE EVERYONE TAKES

RESPONSIBILITY



Foto // Trond Isaksen

DSB SHALL ENSURE THAT EVERYONE TAKES RESPONSIBILITY

Modern society is characterized by interdependence. Incidents that occur in one sector of society can quickly lead to consequences in other sectors. It is therefore necessary to have good coordination.

Modern society demands good interplay between all parties before, during and after crises in good keeping with the traditions of fellowship and communal efforts. The overriding principles of responsibility, proximity and equality are the basis of all national safety, planning and protection work. The authority, enterprise or ministry that has the daily responsibility for a certain field, also has the responsibility in the event of major accidents or catastrophes. However, crises may occur that cannot be handled by the individual enterprise or public department alone and where several sectors and interests must interact.

The Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police has the coordinating and supervisory responsibility in the area of civil protection and emergency planning. DSB supports the Ministry's coordinating and supervisory role in the said area in the civilian sector. The Royal Decree of 24th June 2005 gives DSB the responsibility for coordinating supervision of activities, objects and enterprises that have the potential for causing major accidents. This coordinating responsibility covers all sectors including both those that come under DSB's special area of jurisdiction and those that are covered by other legislation.

The coordinating role does not, however, relieve the respective ministries and their subordinate directorates of their professional responsibilities. The coordinating role implies that DSB make certain that public and private sectors attend to preventive safety measures in a responsible manner; that defects in preventive safety and emergency preparedness measures are identified; and that necessary corrective measures are considered. Based upon learning points they may then take action to improve the situation thereby ensuring that surroundings are satisfactorily safeguarded.

During 2007 DSB has followed up this coordinating role by identifying areas with a special need for coordination, and suggesting joint action areas where cross-sectoral cooperation should be formalized. DSB compiles an annual National Vulnerability and Emergency Preparedness Report (NSBR) that focuses upon civil protection within certain areas. NSBR-08 looks at the challenges posed by a possible pandemic outbreak of influenza, a scenario that will challenge many sectors besides the health sector. A number of supervisions have been undertaken and a number of exercises carried out that have revealed the need for further follow-up. Amongst other, DSB has compiled new guidelines for emergency information management and guidelines for the ministries' work concerning civil protection and emergency planning.

Following the tank explosion at the Vest Tank company in Sløvåg in May 2007, DSB took the initiative to evaluate the authorities' handling of the incident to identify possible unclear lines of responsibility between the authorities that were involved and to identify possible points of improvement for handling any similar incident should it occur sometime in the future in Norway. Likewise, DSB chose to compile a report following fire in a cable trench at Oslo S railway station in November 2007 with a view to defining roles and areas of responsibility and furthermore to identify important learning points.

During 2007 the Office of the Auditor General of Norway examined to which degree the Ministry of Justice and the Police fulfilled its coordinating role within civil protection in accordance with the decision made by the Norwegian Parliament. Given the principles of responsibility, sufficient collaboration and cooperation is a natural challenge. This is reflected in the Office's evaluation in its report of 15th January 2008. The report from the Office of the Auditor General indicates that there is some room for improvement at departmental level regarding the main overview of risk and vulnerability. It is therefore of importance to concentrate future efforts on further developing the coordinating roles of both the Ministry of Justice and the Police and DSB.



Jon A. Lea
Director General
DSB

MODERN SOCIETY

DEMANDS GOOD

INTERPLAY BETWEEN

ALL PARTIES

ABOUT DSB



VISION A SAFE ROBUST SOCIETY
– WHERE EVERYONE TAKES RESPONSIBILITY

OPERATIONAL CONCEPT

The Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning (DSB) shall maintain a full overview of risk and vulnerability in society in general. We promote measures, which prevent accidents, crises and other undesirable incidents. We shall ensure sufficient emergency planning and efficient management of accidents and crises.

MAIN STRATEGIES

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DSB shall systematically identify and draw attention to hazards and vulnerability in society, especially in areas of critical importance for society

DSB shall reduce the risk of loss of life, damage to health, the environment, vital public functions and material assets through preventive work

DSB shall take initiatives to strengthen society's ability to handle accidents and crises and also lead and further develop the Civil Defence as a national reinforcement resource

DSB shall be an unambiguous and guiding partner for other stakeholders in the field of civil protection and emergency planning

DSB shall contribute to placing Norway in a visible position in the international field of civil protection and emergency planning

2007 IN BRIEF

EXERCISE ACTIVITY DURING 2007

DSB conducted a number of exercises in 2007 ranging from complex field exercises to table-top exercises. Exercising the Government Ministries and their subordinate departments was given highest priority. At regional level exercising the posts of County Governor and the County Emergency Planning Advisory Councils was the main focus. Together with the Norwegian Institute for Public Health, DSB was responsible for several exercises where the scenario was large-scale vaccination in connection with pandemic influenza.

ASSISTANCE TO MACEDONIA

During Summer 2007 Macedonia was hard hit by forest fires and requested help from Europe. DSB dispatched relevant equipment that was transported by a Hercules from the Royal Norwegian Air Force.

EXERCISES FOR THE CIVIL DEFENCE

Of the Civil Defence's 10 000 personnel and officers just 4 000 were exercised in 2007. The Norwegian Support Teams, Mobile Cleansing Units and Radioactivity Patrols were given priority.

IMPROVED PRODUCT SAFETY IN EUROPE

The number of notifications concerning dangerous products (Rapex notifications) increased by over 30 percent in 2007 compared to the previous year. The increase is not only due to an increase in dangerous products but also to more focus on product safety in Europe.

DSB HOLDS THE SECRETARIAT FOR THE NORWEGIAN CLIMATE ADAPTATION PROGRAMME

In 2007 DSB completed a survey on the public's view of climate adaptation and also affirmed status in climate adaptation work at county and municipal levels. The survey showed that the public is aware of the situation and relies on the authorities to take appropriate measures to combat climate changes. Investigation of the status of county and municipal efforts showed that adaptation work is being carried out in several areas.

NORWEGIAN FIRE-FIGHTING HELICOPTER TO GREECE

In August 2007 DSB sent a fire-fighting helicopter to Greece in response to the Greek authorities request for assistance in extinguishing forest fires.

CIVIL DEFENCE STUDY 2007

In November 2007 DSB presented a Study of the Civil Defence's Societal Task to the Minister of Justice and the Police. The Study gives the Directorate's professional evaluation and advice concerning the Civil Defence's future tasks and organization. Attention is drawn to configuration of the Civil Defence to meet tomorrow's societal challenges. The Study is a contribution to the Government's work with the White Paper on Civil Protection that will be presented in Spring 2008.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES MUST BETTER IDENTIFY RISK AND VULNERABILITY

Each year DSB investigates the local municipalities' status in the area of civil protection and emergency preparedness and response. The 2007 review confirms deficient analyses and the need for greater attention to the question of land use, spatial planning and administration. The figures show that 39 per cent of local municipalities have completed a risk and vulnerability analysis for spatial planning.

REPORT EXPOSED DEFECTS FOLLOWING FIRE AT OSLO S RAILWAY STATION

The fire at Oslo Central Railway Station in November 2007 led to a 20 hours stop in all railway traffic in the eastern region. 80 000 passengers were affected. In addition, a large number of customers lost their telecommunication for approximately 10 hours. DSB's report exposed defective emergency electricity provisions and insufficient fire preventive measures. The incident at Oslo S is a good example of how vulnerable modern society has become. The experience shows how important it is to be prepared and have good back-up provisions. This applies not only to Oslo S and railway traffic but to every critical societal function.



Photo // Scampix

IMPROVED PREPAREDNESS FOR RESCUE EFFORTS AT SEA

DSB entered into a 2-year contract with four of the country's local fire services (Oslo, Larvik, Bergen and Salten) regarding special emergency response when fires or other accidents occur on board ships at sea.

FEWER DEATHS CAUSED BY ELECTRO MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

The number of deaths caused by electro medical equipment has been halved since the turn of the century. The average annual death toll was 15 during the 1990s but has decreased to an average of 8 from the year 2000.

NEW GUIDELINES CONCERNING THE TRANSPORT OF INFECTIOUS BIOLOGICAL SAMPLES

Each year thousands of patient samples are sent to laboratories for testing. The patient samples are defined as infectious biological material and are considered as dangerous goods. The safety requirements for the dispatches are regulated by several different regulations. The issuance of new guidelines is amongst measures taken to make the rules more easily available.

PROPOSAL FOR STEERING-PIN ROCKET PROHIBITION

155 people were injured by fireworks during the New Year Celebrations of 2007-2008, mostly due to rockets. Presumably this was the last occasion allowing private citizens to use steering-pin rockets and fireworks that resemble toys. A survey undertaken by Synovate MMI for DSB immediately after New Year's Eve revealed that 70 per cent of the public support a ban on rockets.

SUPERVISION EXPOSES FAULTS AND DEFECTS

DSB's annual Supervisions Report exposes areas with the potential for improvement and contributes to rectifying faults and defects. Experiences gained from 1 000 – 1 500 supervisions in Norway each year show that on the average the safety level is good, but that there is a potential for improvement.



SERIOUS FAULTS AND DEFECTS IN PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

During 2007 DSB conducted supervision of playground equipment in several local municipalities. The supervisions exposed a number of serious deviations from the demands in prevailing regulations and revealed the need for intensified focus on the local authorities' responsibility in maintenance matters.

NEW FACILITIES FOR THE EMERGENCY SERVICES

The State is in the process of developing a separate communication net for the emergency services that shall facilitate better coordination between the Police, Fire and Health Services. DSB is co-ordinating the development of the new net on behalf of the Fire Service and is also making preparations to enable the Civil Defence to use the system.

STRENGTHENED SUPERVISION FOLLOWING THE VEST TANK ACCIDENT

On 24th May 2007 two tanks exploded at Vest Tank's plant in Gulen Municipality in the county of Sogn and Fjordane. The explosions were violent but no lives were lost. However, lesser injuries occurred and there was extensive material damage. Following the accident the local inhabitants experienced illness, the feeling of being unwell and nausea. DSB worked closely with the Police to find the cause of the explosion. Vest Tank is still under police investigation in 2008.

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