



Plenary meeting of Committee 2

Terceira, Açores-P, 23rd October 2007

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AER EMERGENCY PLANNING NETWORK DRAFT MANDATE

Aim

The aim of the network is to create a platform where regions can exchange knowledge and experience on risk prevention and crisis management and contribute to the development of regional, national and EU policies in this field.

Objectives

- Raise awareness and disseminate knowledge on successful strategies and tools for risk prevention and crisis management.
- Collect information on best and worst practice
- Encourage cooperation between AER member regions and with external partners
- Stimulate the development of instruments and services specifically for emergency planning and response.

Themes to be discussed

- What is the added value of the regional level in emergency planning? What are the regions' strengths and weaknesses in this context? What opportunities and what threats do regions need to respond to?
- How can regions best organise crisis prevention and management in their territories? Who are the actors that need to be involved and what is the infrastructure required? What is the potential contribution of the private sector?
- How can regions work together across Europe, to develop joint prevention strategies and share their resources when responding to emergencies? How could services that are either based in regions (but subject to national competence) or managed by regions be interconnected? How can regions share equipment and assist each other in responding to emergencies?
- What is the best strategy (contingency plan) for preventing and/or responding to specific types of disasters (e.g. floods, fires, earthquakes, accidents at sea...)?
- How can the regions best educate their citizens about how to react in an emergency and how should regions communicate during crises? What is the role of the media?
- What steps should regions take in order to help their citizens and territories recover from a disaster and regenerate?
- How can regions use ICT in order to establish early warning/alert mechanisms, prevent disasters or prepare to respond to them?
- How can the regions contribute to initiatives at European Union level?

Issues to be explored

- Mapping the resources (in terms of expertise, institutions, equipment) that regions have in their territories. Identifying the shortages within regions and developing cooperation among regions to share equipment and organise joint responses to emergency situations.

- Identifying examples of current regional (cross-border) cooperation in emergency planning. What are the main obstacles faced by regions in this context? What are the best means (in law and in practice) to overcome these?
- How can the AER contribute to improving regional capacity? What is the potential of the European Training Institute in helping regions train their actors in the best ways to prevent, plan for and respond to emergencies?
- Encouraging and assisting regions to develop cooperation projects for the exchange of best practice and identifying potential funding opportunities for these projects.

Membership

All AER member regions are welcome to join the network.

Participation of external organisations is subject to approval by the Chairperson of the network.

Chair of the Network

The network will be chaired and represented by a politician of an AER member region that is active in the field of emergency planning and willing to commit the necessary resources to promoting the group's work.

Councillor John Smith (Devon, UK) has taken the lead in this network.

Working Methods

Meetings

The network will meet at least once per year, at the occasion of the meetings of the AER "Social Policy & Public Health" Committee.

Network meetings and seminars can take place at separate occasions, should the members so wish and subject to the availability of financial resources.

The emergency planning network will operate within the framework of the AER "Social Policy & Public Health" Committee (Committee 2). The documents and policy positions it adopts will be forwarded for approval to the members of Committee 2.

Working Languages

The working language of the network will be English. No simultaneous interpretation is provided during network meetings nor are documents translated.

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