

Annual report
Summary

2005



A safe and robust society – where everyone takes responsibility

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.



A safe and robust society – where everyone takes responsibility



Jon A. Lea
Managing
Director

Photo: Olav Heggø

DSB's vision reflects a basic principle of civil protection work – the principle of responsibility. This principle implies that the one who has responsibility on a daily basis also has full responsibility when an accident or crisis occurs. The principle regulates responsibility at public authority level but is also of relevance in other contexts, and is not identical in every circumstance.

It is the fundamental task of the State to safeguard the life and health of the citizen. However, no society can build a safety net that relieves the individual of responsibility for his or her own actions. The line between the public authorities responsibility and that of the individual varies. For instance, society wants to meet the older generation's wish to remain in their own homes for as long as possible, but 2005 has seen a regrettable increase in the number of elderly who have lost their lives in fires. Authorities must acknowledge that living at home represents an increased risk and preventive measures must be introduced. One such measure is training local municipal care workers in basic fire prevention, enabling them to incorporate this as a daily duty in their contact with the elderly.

On the other hand, the authorities can to a lesser degree protect the individual from the consequences of the imprudent use of fireworks or smoking in bed. Humans tend to seek out risk situations to a certain extent. Norwegians on holiday in exotic, far-away countries cannot, for instance, expect the same help from Norwegian authorities as if they were within Norwegian boundaries. Norwegian authorities have primarily the responsibility for handling incidents that

Main Strategies

1. DSB shall systematically identify and draw attention to hazards and vulnerability in society, especially in areas of critical importance for society
2. DSB shall reduce the risk of loss of life, damage to health, the environment, vital public functions and material assets through preventive work
3. 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
4. DSB shall be an unambiguous and guiding partner for other stakeholders in the field of civil protection and emergency planning
5. DSB shall contribute to placing Norway in a visible position in the international field of civil protection and emergency planning



We must be bold in our approach in the development of scenarios and exercises, and continue to give thought to improbable occurrences

occur in Norway. Correspondingly, other countries' authorities will bear the responsibility in their own land.

Trade and industry has the responsibility to ensure that enterprises do not introduce risk into their surroundings or to society in general. The public authorities' supervisory and monitoring role in ensuring that legislation is complied with does not relieve enterprises of their own responsibility.

The Royal Decree of 24.6.2005 regarding "DSB's general coordinating responsibility and the responsibility for supervision of activities, objects and enterprises with the potential for major accidents" establishes a more formal mandate for the Directorate's work. The Royal Decree determines how DSB shall undertake its coordinating role within the area of civil protection and preparedness and state of readiness and underpins the Directorate's legitimate role as the driving force at cross-sectoral level. Expectations in establishing DSB as a multi-faceted public authority are thereby affirmed. The area of responsibility includes both known types of major accidents and other major crises and catastrophes of deliberate and unintentional nature.

At national level DSB has initiated coordinating mechanisms with other responsible authorities regarding cross-sectoral challenges in protecting critical technical infrastructure, such as electrical plants and power supply; oil and gas safety and supply; transport and distribution systems; information and communication technology. DSB will establish common arenas for co-operation in each of these areas thereby facilitating the compilation of vital safety information in order to compare safety status in different sectors. Thus cross-sectoral challenges can be identified and dealt with.

By means of coordination DSB shall contribute to preventing incidents that can harm human beings, the environment and property and at the same time contribute to increased insight in developing a more robust society. In its utmost consequence it is a question of our national safety and security. This is a difficult balance as everything has its price. Enterprises strive for maximum profits, municipal councils shall finance the care of the elderly and privacy must be protected. A gap exists between the individual enterprise's own interests and society's collective needs. DSB wishes to contribute to a debate where, in the light of these dilemmas,

we reason that decisions that influence public safety and security must be based upon good insight into hazards and vulnerability.

Shifting external framework conditions and new threats generate new and unknown challenges. More extreme weather conditions, increased possibility of terrorist threats, changing forms in organization and ownership, the danger of pandemics and ever increasing dependency on advanced technology are trends which influence civil protection work.

The National Vulnerability and Preparedness Report 2005, prepared by DSB, concludes that Norway has good basic civil protection and state of readiness and that we are competent at preventing and handling incidents with which we are familiar. Well-equipped trained personnel in the emergency services backed by auxiliary resources from the Civil Defence, the Home Guard and voluntary organizations are well prepared to deal with most accidents and crises. Future needs are also best served by focusing on preventive measures and adequate preparedness measures.

There is, however, more uncertainty on how to deal with extreme incidents. A survey of emergency preparedness in Oslo in the wake of the terrorist bombing in Madrid revealed that there are inadequacies in both resources and organizational capacities in relation to dealing with such an incident. Exercise Oslo-06, to be held in autumn 2006, will practise dealing with such a scenario in order to identify which specific measures should be given priority.

Analyses and investigation studies are vital activities to gain an overview of which preventive measures should be given priority. The BAS-projects at the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment and our own work with the annual National Vulnerability and Preparedness Report are such examples. In addition, universities and research institutions must be stimulated to focus more on the field of civil protection.

We must be bold in our approach in the development of scenarios and exercises, and continue to give thought to improbable occurrences. We must continue to develop flexible and robust emergency preparedness systems that are adapted to a wide range of possible incidents – and not restrict ourselves to familiar situations. It is also necessary to evaluate the need for new regulatory measures in critical sectors of our society. The follow-up of the report from the Government-appointed Commission for the Protection of Critical Infrastructure that will be published in spring 2006 will be significant for DSB.

We do not know the nature of the next crisis, where or when it will occur. Increased knowledge, preventive work, the testing out of emergency preparedness and response measures and appurtenant plans are all vital in the concerted efforts towards a robust society.



Photo: Olav Heggø

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Insights - 2005

Tsunami catastrophe



Photo: DSB

Many different official relief organizations and volunteers are involved in handling the tsunami catastrophe. DSB's task is to help ensure that those responsible for these efforts accomplish their work in the best way possible. The DSB has an operative involvement, including two camps for relief personnel in the disaster area on Sumatra and providing assistance at the airports when people return home to Norway. (2 January 2005)

Fire prevention - wooden buildings with historical value

The work of mapping densely built historic wooden buildings worthy of preservation to achieve better fire safety started with a survey to be conducted by fire departments around the country. (26 January 2005)

Formal opening of new main office



Photo: DSB

Construction of the new main offices in Tønsberg took just one year. Minister of Justice Odd Einar Dørum presided over the official opening ceremony. (15 February 2005)

HazMat - training tool for hazardous materials

There is a need to train for situations involving hazardous materials. Such accidents are relatively rare, but they can have dramatic consequences. The HazMat training program is offered to Norwegian fire and rescue services to better prepare them for dealing with accidents and rescue operations where hazardous goods are involved. (3 February 2005)

Cabin comforts



Photo: DSB

An important part of a traditional Norwegian Easter is spending time in a cabin with candlelight, a roaring fire in the fireplace and gas cooking. DSB wants everyone to have a good time on their cabin holidays, but urges people to remember the dangers associated with candles and open flames. (21 March 2005)

Emergency preparedness day



Photo: DSB

19 April was "Emergency Preparedness Day" all over Norway. Nearly 1000 ninth-graders participated in the event organized by the County Governor and the Norwegian Women's Public Health Association. The objective of the event is to increase the students' awareness of civil protection. (20 April 2005)

Course in systematic audits

During the year, DSB will hold ten one-day courses providing basic training in systematic audits for the local electrical supervisory authorities (DLE) and fire departments. The course is primarily intended for supervisory personnel who plan to take the four-day course in systematic HSE audits. Other supervisory personnel in fire departments and DLEs are also welcome to attend. (20 April 2005)

Reinås Committee Report reveals many challenges for the authorities

DSB's comments regarding the Reinås Committee's report on how the authorities handled the tsunami crisis indicate that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the diplomatic service must strengthen their emergency response work by developing plans based on risk and vulnerability analyses and a scenario-based approach. (3 May 2005)

DLE to continue under stronger supervision

The local electrical supervisory authorities (DLE) will be continued as part of the electricity distribution companies. The previously announced return of authority from the DLE to DSB's regional organization will not be implemented. To ensure that the electricity distribution companies discharge their duties, the Ministry of Justice has planned stronger supervision and control of the companies. (13 May 2005)

Safety conference for major industrial enterprises

DSB and the Petroleum Safety Authority Norway organize a conference for major industrial enterprises to reinforce and expand the cooperation between the authorities, management and employee representatives. (24 May 2005)

Better fire preparedness at sea



DSB has submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Justice and the Police for the establishment of a nationwide emergency

preparedness system for the fire departments' rescue efforts at sea (RITS). The goal is to get help on site faster in critical situations. (7 June 2005)

Clearer coordinating role in prevention of major accidents

DSB has a clearer formal mandate following Royal Decree of 24. 6.2005 regarding DSB's general coordinating responsibility and the responsibility for supervision of activities, objects and enterprises with the potential for major accidents. (15 July 2005)

Beware of unskilled electricians



DSB urges the public not to use unskilled persons to perform electrical installation work - this is both illegal and risky. All

enterprises that carry out electrical installation work in Norway are required to have documented competence and be registered in DSB's central list. (29 July 2005)

Stricter requirements for securing explosives



As a consequence of significant theft from explosives storehouses in recent years, DSB will introduce more stringent requirements

to reduce the risk of burglary. The proposal that was sent out on hearing raised questions about requirements for both alarm systems and measures to protect against theft. (22 August 2006)

Funding for new emergency telecommunications system



The Storting (Norwegian Parliament) allocates NOK 330 million for a new digital radio link for the police, fire and medical services.

Development in central Eastern Norway may commence. (14 October 2005)

Mapping of landslide and flood risk areas

DSB will conduct a systematic mapping of the county and municipal overviews of areas at risk of landslides and flooding based on this autumn's occurrences in Western Norway. The Directorate aims to develop a better overview of the actual situation, and encourages all municipalities to conduct thorough risk and vulnerability analyses in their land planning activities (7 December 2005)

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