



Council of the
European Union

047916/EU XXVI. GP
Eingelangt am 14/12/18

Brussels, 14 December 2018
(OR. en)

14422/18

PROCIV 81
JAI 1156

'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From: Presidency

To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council

No. prev. doc.: 13559/18

Subject: Report from the Austrian Presidency on the main achievements at EU level in the field of civil protection

1. Delegations will find attached a Presidency Report on the main achievements at EU level in the field of civil protection.
2. COREPER is advised to invite the Council to take note of the report.

**Report from the Austrian Presidency
on the main achievements at EU level in the field of civil protection**

This report outlines the main achievements of the EU in the field of civil protection during the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Discussions in the Working Party on Civil Protection (PROCIV) focused on the legislative proposal to amend the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) Decision, as well as on disaster recovery.

In parallel, on 2 October the European Parliament and the Council adopted Regulation (EU) 2018/1475 laying down the legal framework of the European Solidarity Corps¹, the aim of which is to provide young people with more and better opportunities for high quality solidarity activities, which may include prevention of and preparedness for disasters.

Finally, the UCPM was activated a number of times in response to natural and human-made disasters around the globe, both inside and outside the EU.

¹ OJ L 250 of 4.10.2018, p. 1.

1. Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism

Following the Commission proposal of November 2017 for a decision amending Decision 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism² to strengthen prevention, preparedness and response in the EU, on 25 July Coreper approved the mandate for negotiations with the European Parliament³ in the context of the ordinary legislative procedure set out in Article 294 TFEU.

Political trilogues were held on 4 September, 8 October and 12 December, accompanied by a number of technical-level meetings.

At their informal meeting in Vienna on 27 and 28 September, Directors-General for civil protection held an exchange of views on practical aspects of the implementation of rescEU capacities.

On 18 October the European Council stated that negotiations on the EU civil protection mechanism proposal should be concluded by the end of the year.⁴

The Council mandate was revised by Coreper on 7 December⁵.

At the last political trilogue a compromise was provisionally agreed, pending confirmation by Coreper.

² 14884/1/17 REV 1; 14883/17.

³ 11283/18.

⁴ EUCO 13/18.

⁵ 14256/2/18 REV 2.

2. Disaster recovery

The Presidency workshop on disaster recovery was held in Vienna on 10 and 11 July 2018. Participants examined the current state of play in disaster recovery in the participating states and analysed the requirements for an up-to-date framework concept for disaster recovery within the specific European context.

The workshop helped create a shared view of resilient and sustainable recovery, taking into account its key elements and sub-phases, basic principles, good practice and critical success factors. Recovery was generally understood as more than back to normal (pre-disaster conditions) as the well-known 'build back better' principle clearly highlights. Key activities, roles and actors involved in recovery were also discussed. Participants clearly expressed a need for enhanced cooperation at EU-level, building on existing instruments, with the aim of supporting a holistic approach to disaster risk management which integrated all phases of the disaster risk management (DRM) cycle. Thus, the workshop contributed to a better understanding of recovery as an important element of disaster risk reduction.

A Presidency report on the workshop⁶ was presented and discussed in PROCIV and at the Directors-General meeting. The report may subsequently be used as a reference document for examining the topic in other working formats, for example in the context of peer reviews.

⁶ 11844/18.

3. Workshop on mass burn casualty disasters

On 4 and 5 October, Romania hosted a workshop, co-organised with the Commission and the European Burns Association, on 'Mass burn casualty disasters: way forward to a European response'. The workshop was attended by participants from 26 participating states, representing civil protection and health authorities, burns specialists and the World Health Organisation (WHO).

After the launch of the European Medical Corps in February 2016, the challenge of mass burn casualty disasters was identified as a key area for the medical corps to prove its added value. After the initial groundwork in 2016 and 2017, the workshop aimed to reach consensus on the way forward towards a European response plan for mass burn casualty disasters.

There was overall agreement on the role of the UCPM in European response, and in particular the coordinating and facilitating role of the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC). The added value of burns teams (B-teams) in performing secondary triage was clearly recognised, but participants felt a training programme was needed to ensure quality and a coherent approach for those B-teams and that European-level simulation exercises for mass burn disasters were also needed.

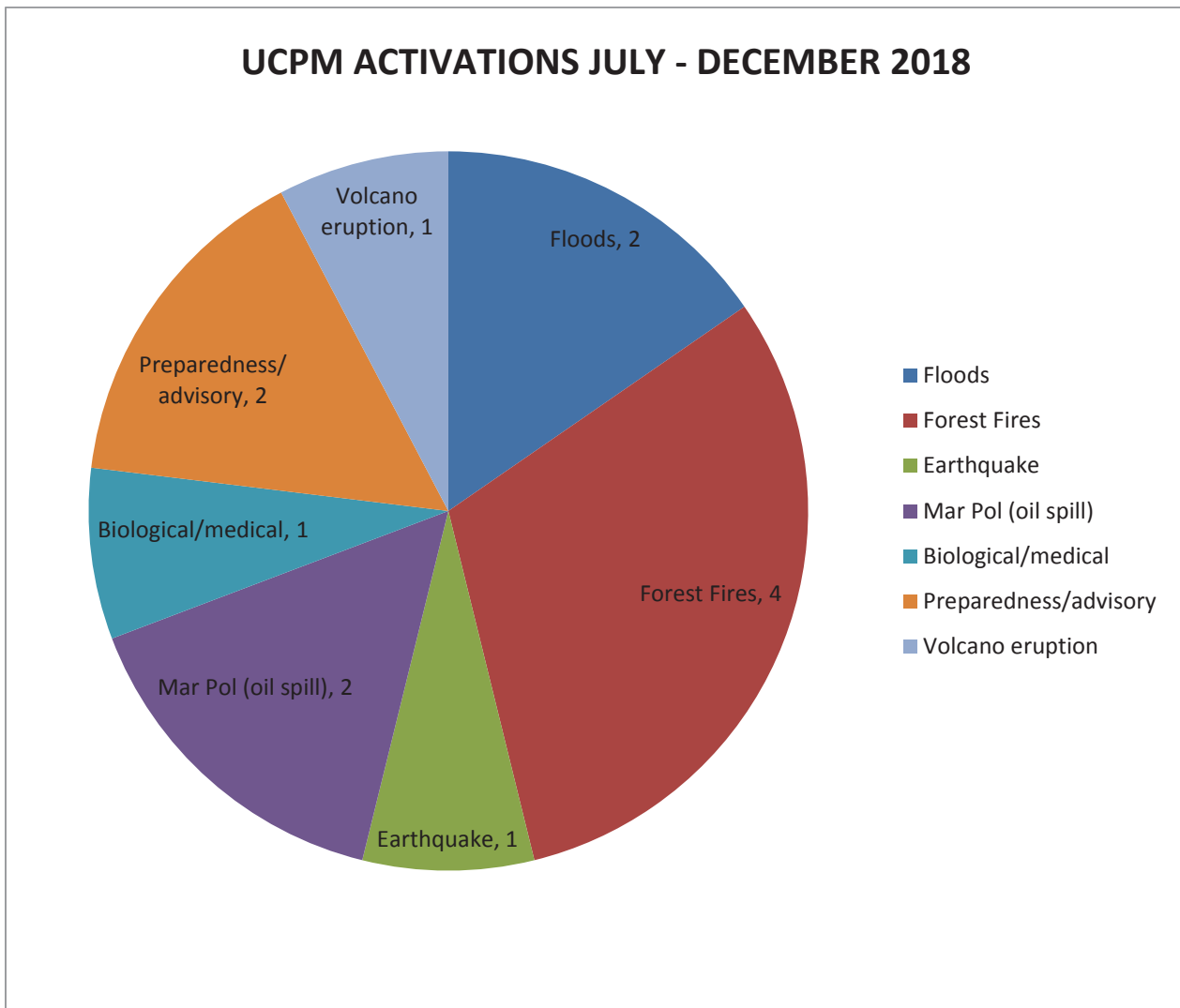
The workshop recognised that medical (aerial) evacuation of burns patients requires the accompanying physician to have specific expertise. Collaboration with NATO for medevac in mass burn disasters was suggested. The coverage of the costs related to the long-term treatment of burn victims is a major challenge that needs to be resolved prior to disasters.

Other issues discussed during the workshop included the crucial importance of strong national preparedness plans, the verification/certification of national burns centres by the European Burns Association for quality assurance purposes, and collaboration with the WHO.

The Commission will further follow up on the recommendations of the workshop, in close collaboration with partners such as the European Burns Association and interested participating states.

4. Response to emergencies

Since the beginning of July 2018, the UCPM has been activated 13 times (six requests for assistance inside the EU and seven outside the EU).



The emergencies which resulted in activation of the UCPM were as follows:

- Biological/medical: Democratic Republic of the Congo – Ebola outbreak (17 August)
- Earthquake: Indonesia (2 October)
- Floods:
 - India – post-disaster needs assessment (12 September)
 - Nigeria (23 September)
- Forest fires:
 - Sweden (14 July)
 - Latvia (23 July)
 - Greece (23 July)
 - Portugal (1 August)
- Preparedness/advisory:
 - Bolivia disaster risk reduction (8 October)
 - Bangladesh assessment and preparedness (22 November)
- Volcanic eruption: Guatemala (15 June)
- Marine pollution:
 - Bulgaria (20 August)
 - France (9 October)

The ERCC also monitored and shared information on the Haiti earthquake, Philippines tropical cyclone Mangkhut, Laos floods and forest fires in Norway and Finland.

Copernicus Emergency Management Service (EMS) satellite mapping was activated in response to 40 requests for satellite mapping. In addition, the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) responded with specialised oil-spill satellite mapping to four requests for satellite maps in cases involving marine pollution.

UCPM activations inside the EU

a. Sweden - forest fires – July/August 2018

On 16 July, Sweden requested aerial and ground assets for forest firefighting through the ERCC for one of the most intense forest fire seasons it had experienced in modern times. Assistance was provided by seven Participating States (7 aircraft, 6 helicopters, 67 vehicles and more than 460 people). Three ERCC liaison officers were deployed. The Copernicus EMS produced 40 satellite maps.

b. Latvia - forest fires - July 2018

On 17 July, a large fire was registered in Talsi district, Valdgaile civil parish. National capacities were overstretched and aerial forest firefighting was the only way to extinguish the fire. Germany offered three helicopters against payment but the offer was declined. Bilateral assistance from Lithuania and Belarus was deployed. Copernicus EMS was activated by Latvia and 10 satellite maps were produced.

c. Greece - forest fires - July 2018

Greece requested assistance on 23 July in the form of two aerial forest firefighting modules consisting of airplanes and two ground forest firefighting modules. Assistance was deployed by Cyprus, Italy, Spain and Romania. Several other Participating States made offers of assistance which were declined. Copernicus EMS was activated and eight satellite maps were produced for the Attica region.

d. Portugal - forest fires – August 2018

Portugal requested assistance through the UCPM on 1 August in the form of one aerial forest firefighting module with planes, as its assets were deployed at the time in Sweden. The ERCC mobilised the buffer capacity from Italy. The offer was initially accepted, but later declined due to the early return of Portuguese assets from Sweden. Spain supported the operations with three planes provided on a bilateral basis until 10 August. Copernicus EMS was activated and 11 satellite maps of the Monchique area produced.

e. Bulgaria – oil pollution – August 2018

An oil leak from a cargo ship which sank in 1921 was discovered on 12 August. On 20 August, Bulgaria requested assistance through the Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS) Marine Pollution in the form of oil-spill satellite imagery. It also requested 18 tonnes of dispersant which was provided by EMSA. Due to bad weather Bulgaria stopped the operations in November and informed the ERCC that it would consider resuming in the spring of 2019.

f. France – oil pollution – October 2018

A collision between two ships off the coast of Corsica on 7 October created a 22 km-long oil spill. On 9 October, the French maritime authorities made a request through CECIS Marine Pollution for satellite imagery and an oil recovery response vessel, both of which were provided by EMSA.

UCPM activations outside the EU

a. Democratic Republic of the Congo – Ebola outbreak in Beni, North Kivu

On 17 August, the WHO requested assistance through the UCPM consisting of a specialised medevac support team to train on medevac procedures using the EpiShuttles already donated by Norway for the previous outbreak in the Equateur region. Three Norwegian doctors were deployed to Goma between 21-29 August to train staff from the Ministry of Health (MoH), the WHO, United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and other partners involved in the response. Regular and ad-hoc flight services provided by DG ECHO are supporting operations in the affected areas. DG ECHO specialised personnel were deployed to improve coordination with local WHO, MoH and other partners, and staffing was increased at DG ECHO offices in Kinshasa and Goma. The UCPM was deactivated on 3 September and the ERCC is continuing to follow developments in monitoring mode.

b. Guatemala – volcanic eruption

Volcán de Fuego, 40 km of Guatemala City, erupted on 3 June, provoking pyroclastic flows with ash clouds up to 10 km high. A request was issued on 15 June for experts on lahar monitoring, the installation of an infrasound monitoring network, risk management and early warning/alert management. On 14 July, a second request was made to extend activation of the UCPM. An EU civil protection team of seven experts and two liaison officers (in rotation) went on mission from 23 June for 14 days. The team provided recommendations to strengthen Guatemala's capacity to monitor and react to volcanic activity, and contributed to the post-disaster needs assessment process and reporting. A second team of four experts, joined by an ERCC liaison officer, was deployed on 22 July for one week. It installed two infrasound-monitoring arrays on existing seismic stations, donated by Italy; trained National Institute for Seismology, Volcanology, Meteorology and Hydrology of Guatemala (INSIVUMEH) staff; organised logistics and contacts with local partners; and liaised with DG ECHO field experts/the EU delegation on site. Copernicus EMS was activated and produced 18 satellite maps of the affected areas.

c. Nigeria – floods

Serious flooding affected at least 12 states in Nigeria at the end of August. On 23 September the ERCC received a request from the UN Environment/OCHA Joint Unit (JEU) for one environmental expert to be deployed for three weeks as part of a larger UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team. One day later, an additional request came from the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) in Nigeria.

An environmental expert was deployed through UCPM as an associated expert to the UNDAC team on 26 September. In addition, one DG ECHO field expert (regional Rapid Response Coordinator) supported the UNDAC mission for a period of nine days.

The Joint Research Centre of the European Commission produced emergency reports on the floods. Copernicus EMS was activated and produced five delineation maps.

d. India – floods (post-disaster needs assessment-PDNA)

Between 1 June and 18 August 2018, the State of Kerala received a higher cumulative rainfall than average and was struggling to recover from severe floods. On 12 September, the UN Development Programme requested expertise from the UCPM on water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), in the framework of a post-disaster needs assessment (PDNA), along with two additional experts on 25 September to analyse water management systems. The ERCC deployed three technical experts (two water management and one WASH) who supported the PDNA efforts to identify the causes of the disaster and to provide more comprehensive analysis.

e. Indonesia – earthquake

On 28 September a series of earthquakes hit the island of Sulawesi in Indonesia, including the strongest of 7.5 Mw magnitude. The earthquake triggered destructive tsunami waves that hit the northern parts of Sulawesi island. On 2 October the UCPM was activated following an official request for assistance from Indonesia. Eight participating states had offers of teams or in-kind assistance accepted. An EU civil protection team composed of four experts and two ERCC liaison officers was deployed to Indonesia to support the UCPM contributing states and the local authorities. Copernicus EMS was activated and 18 satellite maps were produced.

f. Bolivia – disaster risk reduction advisory

On 8 October, the UN Environment/OCHA Joint Unit (JEU) made a request to the ERCC for one environmental expert to join the UN team to support an assessment of national and local capacities to manage disaster risks across socio-economic and environmental sectors, with a view to developing a national disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategy and action plan for capacity development in key sectors. Shortly after the request for assistance, the JEU informed the ERCC that the Bolivian government had decided to postpone the mission until early 2019.

g. Bangladesh – fire prevention and preparedness mission

On 22 November, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) made a request for assistance through the ERCC for fire safety experts to support the IOM as well as the Site Management and Site Development Sector in strengthening their fire prevention and preparedness programming in the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar. Upon agreement with the IOM, three fire experts arrived in Bangladesh on 8 December. The mission is planned to end on 22 December.
