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**WK 10057/2024 INIT**

**LIMITE**

**PROCIV**

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## **WORKING DOCUMENT**

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From: Commission services  
To: Working Party on Civil Protection

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Subject: Survey on CBRN preparedness

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Delegations will find attached a survey on CBRN preparedness that the Commission will present at the next PROCIV meeting, scheduled for 17 July 2024.

On that occasion, delegates will have the opportunity to ask questions in order to clarify any issue, where needed.

**Delegations are not expected to reply to the questions during the PROCIV meeting**, as the answers can be sent in writing:

TO: ECHO-A2@ec.europa.eu;

CC: Catalin-Marian.IVAN@ec.europa.eu.

The deadline to reply to the survey is **Friday 30 August 2024 COB**.

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## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EUROPEAN CIVIL PROTECTION AND HUMANITARIAN AID  
OPERATIONS (ECHO)

Emergency Response Coordination Centre

Contingency Planning, Analysis and Situational Awareness

### **State of play of CBRN civil protection preparedness and response measures under the UCPM**

a pathway to increasing anticipation, foresight and operational coordination at Union and  
Member States level

This note follows up on the Council conclusions of 2023 on strengthening whole-of-society resilience in the context of civil protection, including chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) preparedness <sup>(1)</sup>, by providing an update on the Commission's efforts to address the measures proposed in the Council conclusion and by asking the Council for feedback on the state-of-play on the measures proposed for Member States.

In addition to improving our common resilience to CBRN threats, the outcomes from this exercise may also be of use for the efforts of the integrated political crisis response (IPCR) arrangements of the Council, for the CBRN-related activities of the next Presidency of the Council and for ERCC's analytical efforts within the context of the six-month outlook regarding Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

#### **1. Introduction**

Understanding the sensitive and cross-sectoral nature of CBRN <sup>(2)</sup> events and in the context of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, there have been several developments and statements from the Council of the European Union, European Commission and Member States, on the urgent need to strengthening the **whole-of-society resilience** in the context of civil protection, including **CBRN preparedness**.

As a recognised key element for achieving collective and individual resilience, CBRN risk management has been added to the specific objectives under the Union's Disaster Resilience Goals, when it comes to enhancing the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM)'s response capacity and could trigger one of the most complex scenarios for cross-sectoral coordination and business continuity planning.

In this context, the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) has prepared *an Immediate gaps analysis in civil protection-relevant CBRN preparedness and response arrangements in the Union in the context of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine* <sup>(3)</sup>, complemented by the CBRN informal ministerial-level coordination meeting <sup>(4)</sup>, its outcome being echoed in the European Council conclusions of June 2023.

Based on the identified gaps and needs underlined by the Commission and Council, as well as by Member States, DG ECHO continued its focus to increase resilience to CBRN

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<sup>(1)</sup> 10048/2023

<sup>(2)</sup> chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear

<sup>(3)</sup> Carried out at the behest of the Swedish Presidency of the Council Working Party on civil Protection (PROCIV) and presented to the Member States in the meeting of April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

<sup>(4)</sup> Hosted by the ERCC in May 2023, to discuss concrete steps to increase the Union's collective preparedness to CBRN disasters.

threats together with Commission services, the European External Action Service (EEAS), NATO, IAEA and in strong partnership with Member States.

The purpose of this paper is to keep Member States updated about the actions taken by the Commission and, at the same time, exchange information regarding developments at national level, to increase common situational awareness, and contribute to the development of the ERCC's capacity for strategic anticipation and foresight, including CBRN threats, inside and outside the EU.

## 1. Anticipation and Foresight

To improve **anticipation and foresight** in case of complex CBRN scenarios with cross-border and cascading effects, the Commission relies on support from Member States for a more comprehensive operational picture in Europe regarding its preparedness and to enhance strategic and operational coordination at Union level in case of such events. While an informal Ministerial meeting took place in May 2023, such an information exchange may call for a systemic coordination between Member States and the Commission. This also entails thinking ahead about possible armed conflict scenarios.

### **Consultative questions for Member States:**

- ✓ *Would you foresee a need to establish a Working Group to discuss specific challenges related to CBRN events and possible EU level solutions?*
- ✓ *What further initiatives do you foresee as needed under the UCPM regarding CBRN risk management?*
- ✓ *Would you foresee the need for a dedicated CBRN workshop for operational / policy experts to discuss the way forward at Union level? Which specific subjects should be addressed under such event?*
- ✓ *What arrangements would be needed for MS to deploy response capacities (ECPP, rescEU) into contaminated and/or high-risk areas (e.g. armed conflict)?*

## 2. Contingency planning and cooperation

DG ECHO has kickstarted discussions within the Commission to ensure cross-sectoral management of possible CBRN incidents. Actions taken include:

- An EU-level playbook for managing major CBRN incidents in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine (for internal purposes only): The **CBRN Playbook**, in its second version since September 2023, is intended to inform the joint Commission/EEAS response to any disruptive CBRN-related event that might occur in the context of Russia's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine.
- Discussions on the revision of the **2017 EU Action Plan to enhance preparedness against chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear security risks**: The CBRN risk picture facing Europe today is different from the one in 2017, warranting a broad-based and comprehensive EU-level approach to CBRN risk management. Although the CBRN-related preparedness and response actions undertaken by the Commission has helped strengthen the Union's capacity to prepare for and respond to major CBRN risks (e.g. rescEU and European Civil Protection Pool (ECPP) capacities), there is more that can be done. Consequently, the Commission services are considering the potential revision of the 2017 CBRN Action Plan.
- Commission **inter-service group on cross-sectoral CBRN-related matters**: The Commission has set up an inter-service group to serve as a platform for a structured and systematic exchange of information on CBRN-related matters between different Commission Services, as well as with the EEAS and European Medicines Agency (EMA).

- Cooperation and coordination with **international actors**: DG ECHO is in an open process of increasing cooperation and coordination with other relevant actors with responsibilities on CBRN risk management, such as NATO, IAEA, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and WHO. Such activities relate to common trainings and exercises (exercises PACE <sup>(5)</sup> IR 2024 and ConvEx-2025 <sup>(6)</sup>), common situational awareness, and coordinated response measures in case of emergencies.
- **Scenario development**: Under article 10 of the Decision No 1313/2013/EU the Commission and Member States worked together to improve cross-sectoral disaster risk management planning, which also includes scenario-building at Union level for disaster prevention, preparedness, and response. Consequently, DG ECHO, in consultation with Member States experts, the Joint Research Centre and a broad range of Commission Services, has developed ten disaster scenarios, designed to challenge, and further improve the UCPM. Four of the scenarios have a CBRN component (i.e., the severe nuclear accident, the terrorist attack, the severe pandemic and the inland water and coastal pollution scenarios).

#### **Consultative questions for Member States:**

- ✓ *What are the main CBRN risks / scenarios that could trigger a request for international assistance?*
- ✓ *Based on existing national response coordination mechanisms and the cross-sectorial nature of a complex CBRN scenario, how could the UCPM / ERCC better support relevant MS authorities/sectors?*
- ✓ *What type of capacities / in-kind assistance would be foreseen to be needed in a CBRN scenario overwhelming national capacities?*

### **3. Capacity building**

The situation regarding CBRN capacities offered by the Member States to the **European Civil Protection Pool** has seen a significant increase, however, not enough to reach the capacity goals, according to art. 19 of Implementing Decision 2014/762/EU. Currently the capacity includes:

- *CBRN-DET (detection and sampling) = 7 certified capacities registered in the ECPP; 3 capacities added since March 2023*
- *CBRN decontamination teams = 1 certified capacity registered in the ECPP*
- *CBRN-USAR = 2 capacities offered, but not yet registered in the ECPP*
- *One mobile biosafety laboratory*
- *One mobile laboratory for environmental emergencies*

As regards **rescEU**:

- *decontamination capacities* are under development and will be increasingly available as of 2026, including equipment and specialised expert teams for the decontamination of infrastructure, buildings, vehicles, equipment and critical evidence. These capabilities will be able to carry out mass decontamination. Grants have been signed with DE, ES and HR for a total value of approximately EUR 66.7 million.
- *22 rescEU CBRN and medical stockpiles* have been funded and are being developed by 16 different Member States. These stockpiles contain a wide range

<sup>(5)</sup> Parallel and Coordinated Exercise together with NATO. This year DG ECHO is lead Commission service for organising the exercise.

<sup>(6)</sup> Exercises designed to evaluate international emergency response arrangements and capabilities for a severe nuclear or radiological emergency over several days, regardless of its cause – organised by the IAEA.

of different medical countermeasures, personal protective equipment, CBRN response equipment and medical devices. Among the 22 funded rescEU stockpiles, 12 are already operational. In addition, the level of items in the rescEU stockpile warehouses is increasing on a regular basis and thus becoming available for deployment.

- *rescEU CBRN DSIM capacities* are under development and will be available for deployment as of 2026 and will include both equipment and specialised expert teams that will carry out detection, sampling, identification and monitoring activities. Grants have been signed with IT, PL and RO for a total value of approximately EUR 70 million.

**Trainings and exercises** have also taken place. In December 2023, during the Early Warning System group meeting, the ECURIE (European Community Urgent Radiological Information Exchange) and EURDEP (European Radiological Data Exchange Platform) systems were explained, together with the latest information on ECPP and rescEU. Also, the European Anthropogenic Hazards Scientific Partnership (EAHSP) introduced incidents involving nuclear power plants and nuclear weapons.

In the framework of **EU MODEX exercises**, one tabletop exercise and one field exercise with a CBRN scenario are organised in each cycle of EU MODEX. In these exercises, CBRN related modules have the opportunity to test the fulfilment of the quality requirements for deployments under the UCPM, in particular cooperation, coordination, interoperability, self-sufficiency, standard operating procedures (SOP), communication and reporting, safety and security. Furthermore, grant agreements have been signed for the **12<sup>th</sup> cycle of exercises** on Civil Protection Modules, other Response Capacities, Technical Assistance and Support Teams, and European Union Civil Protection Teams, *CBRN scenarios* being among key topics of interest.

A **Call for Proposals** under the *Knowledge for Action in Prevention and Preparedness (KAPP)* has been launched by the DG ECHO on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2024, with a general objective to improve civil protection preparedness and response to all kinds of disasters inside the Member States, *CBRN risk management* being underlined within the key topics of interest, for preparedness actions and full-scale exercises.

The ERCC is also supporting **capacity building in Ukraine**. Following the request for assistance by the minister of internal affairs of Ukraine consisting of a CBRN joint expert team and subsequent coordination exchanges with the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU), the ERCC launched a call for experts for an advisory mission to Ukraine with a general objective to strengthen Ukraine's ability to respond to CBRN hazards. The mission was organised from 8 to 23 March 2024, totalling 21 experts from 10 countries, including seven CBRN specialists, supported by a UCPM team in Poland and Ukraine. The Advisory Mission lays the groundwork for bolstering Ukraine's resilience against CBRN threats through strategic collaboration and capacity-building initiatives facilitated by UCPM and other EU institutions.

The ERCC has also developed **reach-back capacities with the European Anthropogenic Hazards Scientific Partnership (EAHSP)** to provide back office CBRN capabilities. As of August 2023, the EAHSP stands ready to provide back-office support to specific missions on *radiological and nuclear events* carried out by experts from the Commission or Member States. In that sense, the EAHSP provided back-office support to the UCPM CBRN advisory mission to Ukraine in March 2024. The ERCC is developing a similar partnership with EAHSP on the *chemical pillar* to provide the ERCC with scientific and technical advice and analysis on chemical related emergencies. It will aim to do so by translating scientific knowledge and data on chemical related emergencies into actionable information to enhance the ERCC's emergency and coordination response capabilities. The tender process to select the partner is almost completed.

**Consultative questions for Member States:**

- ✓ *Based on existing national CBRN capabilities what other resources should be added at Union level to support response operations?*
- ✓ *What incentives would be needed for MS to pre-commit more CBRN response capacities to the ECPP or for building other national capabilities that could be deployed on an ad-hoc / per-need basis?*
- ✓ *Based on existing needs which types of CBRN training opportunities should be delivered under the UCPM framework?*