



## On the way to an institutionalized network of CBRNE stakeholders in the Baltic Sea Region: *progress and expected results*

### Call for support from the 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Directors General for Civil Protection in the BSR

The CBSS Civil Security team together with an engaged group of CBRNE experts from 7 Baltic Sea Region countries are working on a concept of a large-scale region-wide CBRNE stakeholder forum to establish continuity in the knowledge exchange between professionals in different sectors and levels working with CBRNE issues in the region. The forum will ensure better utilization of research and project results, as well as improve coordination and communication between, and within, different national authorities, agencies, and sectors, working with CBRNE throughout the whole emergency management cycle. An institutionalised network, which will emerge as a result of regular forums, will allow for exchange of knowledge and experiences, establishing connections between various sectors and levels, both within and between countries, and open up for easier access to information and results from projects and research. This will contribute to improving the national CBRNE capabilities, and to intensify international cooperation in areas where joint challenges can be found.

The Directors General support in establishing such a forum would help to anchor the concept within the national authorities, and increase the number of the potential beneficiaries of the forum.

### CBSS gathers a working group of BSR CBRNE experts

In response to the Joint Position's 3<sup>rd</sup> priority "*Strengthening cross-sectorial cooperation in CBRN(E) preparedness*" the CBSS Civil Security team gathered around 20 CBRNE experts from 7 BSR countries: representatives from civil protection agencies, research organisations, the private sector and networks for two networking meetings and workshops in February-April of 2018. The workshops were organised the scope of the project STAC-CBRNE – *Strengthening the Transnational Capacity of the Management of CBRNE agents related Emergencies*, funded by the Swedish Institute.

Among the participating organisations were: the European CBRNE Center (Sweden), Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), Norwegian Directorate for Civil Protection (DSB), Estonian Rescue Board, Finnish National Rescue Association (SPEK), the Finnish Border Guard, Emergency Services Training Centre of West Finland, CBRNE Suomi Association, Finnish Ministry of Interior, Federal Office of Radiation Protection (Germany), Hamburg Fire and Rescue Service, State Fire and Rescue Service of Latvia, Laurea University (Finland) and Lodz University (Poland).

Other partners in the STAC-CBRNE project are: Main School of Fire Service, Warsaw, Nuclear Security Centre of Excellence at the Border Control Management Board of the State Border Guard Service of Ministry if Interior (Lithuania), and the Arctic University of Norway.

During the first workshop, the participants shared their experiences in different CBRNE related initiatives and projects, identified gaps and capability challenges, brainstormed potential tools to address the identified needs, and screened potential funding opportunities.



### **Key outcome 1: Identified gaps and capability challenges**

Following issues (potential focus areas for future initiatives, based on capability challenges) were identified, and agreed upon, by the participants:

- There is a need for continuity in the knowledge exchange between CBRNE experts in the region;
- Research and project results should be better utilised and made available for practitioners (end-users);
- Coordination and communication between different national authorities, agencies, and sectors, working with CBRNE management, in different stages of the emergency management cycle, should be improved;
- A holistic view on CBRNE threats can improve prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

### **Key outcome 2: “Treff” – regular BSR multi-level and cross-sector stakeholder meetings**

In the second workshop, the group agreed that the next step would be the drafting of a concept for a **large CBRNE stakeholder networking forum (working name “Treff”)**, as a tool to address the issues and gaps identified earlier. The preparatory work has started with a mapping of all CBRNE stakeholders in the BSR, based on the report: *“Mapping of responsibilities for CBRNE Emergency Management in the Baltic Sea Region”*. All organisations participating in the STAC-CBRNE project are contributing to making the mapping more encompassing.

The participants in the second workshop outlined the most important elements for a sustainable CBRNE “Treff”:

- Such a forum can be organized annually, or once every two years, and should include the Baltic Sea Region CBRNE stakeholders, across sectors and governance levels;
- While providing space and time for general networking activities, the Forum should concentrate on showcasing CBRNE real-life cases or scenarios, which will allow easier identification of national and organisational capability needs and potential solutions;
- The forum should include presentations of project results, ongoing R&D from academia and private actors, as well as “match-making” opportunities between end-users, innovators, funding instruments, research, etc.

### **Next steps and expected results**

The experts, participating in the STAC-CBRNE workshops agreed to create a smaller working group to continue the efforts towards the realisation of the “Treff” idea and identified the following steps to be taking in the near future:

1. Draft a concept for the “Treff”.
2. Carry out a key stakeholders mapping – to identify potential participants of the forum.
3. Explore funding opportunities for the “Treff” (including such instruments as EC DG HOME, Erasmus+, national ISF funding, etc.).
4. Organise another meeting and workshop within the STAC-CBRNE project in October 2018 to discuss how to proceed with the “Treff”.
5. Depending on the interest of the stakeholders and available funding – form a consortium, draft and submit an application to a relevant funding instrument.
6. Organise the first “Treff” – preliminary in the second part of 2019.