

Minutes IPC Tønsberg August 30-31 2012 - DSB Headquarters

INITIAL PLANNING CONFERENCE (IPC), EXERCISE BARENTS RESCUE 2013

INTRODUCTION

As a first step in the planning process for the Barents Rescue 2013 exercise (BR13), the Norwegian Directorate for Civil Protection (DSB) hosted an Initial Planning Conference (IPC) in Tønsberg August 30 - 31, 2012. The overall aims for the conference were to present the project and introduce the selected scenario, to discuss the framework for the exercise, and to develop the scenario further within the different planning syndicates as well as within each sector.

Jon Lea, Director General DSB, held the opening remarks. He focused on learning points and the value of learning from findings and implementing new methods. Lea emphasized the importance of a downscaled and simplified exercise.

Tor Honningsvåg, Project Manager for BR13, welcomed the participants. He went through the overall aims and objectives for the Barents Rescue exercises, and presented DSBs expectations for the IPC. A skeleton planning organization was introduced, and the agenda for the IPC was presented.

Finland, Russia and Sweden all held their opening statements where the key take away was a positive attitude towards the exercise in terms of participation, the importance of the planning process, as well as the importance of learning from each other.

HISTORIC PERSPECTIVE

Bente Michaelsen, Ministry of Justice and Public Security, presented an historic perspective and the BEAC agreement.

June 2013 marks the 20th anniversary for the Barents cooperation and the Kirkenes II declaration will be launched. Michaelsen urged everyone to take notice and advised participants to visit www.beac.st where topics like information on health questions, risk issues, rescue cooperation and Barents exercises can be found.

Michaelsen emphasized the importance of learning from the findings of previous exercises, and also stressed the importance of making the Barents Rescue exercises less complex.

PLANNING, TIMELINE AND ORGANIZATION

Tor Honningsvåg went through the timeline for BR13 planning process:

April 19 - 20, 2012 – CDC (Gardermoen, Norway)
August 30 - 31, 2012 – IPC (Tønsberg, Norway)
December 3 - 5, 2012 – MPC (Tromsø, Norway)
May 22 - 24, 2013 – FPC (Place to be decided)
September 17 - 19, 2013 – EXERCISE BARENTS RESCUE 13
December 2 - 4, 2013 – PXD (Place to be decided)

The overall aims and objectives for the BR13 were covered:

- Improve communication, cooperation and coordination between all involved countries
- Improve preparedness and cooperation effectiveness of civil protection and joint emergency response
- Develop responders network
- Every nation is responsible for their own aims and objectives

BR13 will be planned and conducted within a strict budget and all participants are expected to cover their own expenses, including the cost of the major planning conferences. DSB will cover all joint expenses such as facilitation of the exercise scenario, project management costs and expenditures that do not belong elsewhere.

SCENARIO FACTS

The Nordnes mountain in Lyngen has a rock mass (the Jettan rock) that moves at a rate of 4 – 5 cm a year. The situation is being constantly monitored, and there are procedures in place to evacuate surrounding communities if a rock slide is deemed imminent. If and when the rock mass separates from the mountain it will cause a massive avalanche into the Lyngen fjord, and result in a devastating tsunami of up to 45 meters, that will take out infrastructure in the entire area. Secondary effects will be of great severity and affect all people living in and around the Lyngen area.

Lars Harald Blikra, a geologist from Åknes/ Tafjord emergency preparedness, held a presentation where he introduced us to the challenges on the Nordnes mountain. Blikra explained how they monitor the movement of the mountainside and also what consequences we are facing if the rock mass separates and causes an avalanche. Blikra also went through a historic perspective in terms of similar slides that have occurred in the past.

Hans Kristian Rønningen from The County Governor of Troms held a presentation where he emphasized the need to exercise this scenario. The system of preparedness for this disaster (basic principles) was presented, as well as local disaster management and the County Governors regional coordinating role.

MILITARY SUPPORT

Steinar Torset, from the Royal Norwegian Navy, presented some of the Navys assets and capabilities that could be useful in a scenario as planned for BR13. A recent exercise where the Navy had assisted in an evacuation exercise served as a good illustration. Torset stressed the

importance of a successful evacuation before the slide occurs, and pointed to the challenges involved in both decision making and communication in that perspective. He pointed out that no military resources have been allocated to exercise BR13 as of yet.

WORK IN THE SYNDICATE GROUPS

The participants were divided into working groups based on sector or professional background, across countries.

Assignment:

- Based on aims and objectives so far, compare these with own goals and give your suggestions about:
 - Scenario
 - Elements or functions you want to exercise
- Discuss topics that are relevant for educating the participating organizations and agencies during the exercise planning period
- Discuss a scheduled plan for seminars between the major planning conferences

Based on feedback from working groups, the following recommendations to the core planning group were noted :

- ALARMEX is useful, and must always be part of the exercise
- Border crossings are necessary and useful
- Training and education is an important part of the planning process
- The importance of a full scale FTX (Field Training Exercise) portion was stressed
- Tabletop exercises can be very useful in order to prepare players, and to train DISTAFF
- The scenario must include a search and rescue part, not just the evacuation.
- Possible secondary scenarios:
 - Tunnel fire/accident
 - International youth camp (cut off and isolated by landslide)
 - Tourist bus with foreigners involved in accident

It was stated that it is important to decide on the scope and size of the scenario as soon as possible in order to start allocating relevant resources for participation in next years exercise.

SUMMARY

The IPC was well attended, with some 65 participants from all four countries and all relevant sectors. The consensus of the conference was that the selected scenario is very interesting and realistic, but that it also presents some challenges in terms of making the exercise satisfy all the different requirements that surfaced during the conference. The storyline that is starting to emerge includes a pre-slide, and a post-slide part of the exercise, with secondary scenarios as suggested by the syndicates to fulfill specific exercise requirements. The core planning group at DSB will be working closely with HRS (JRCC Bodø) and the County Governor of Troms in the coming weeks and months in order to be able to present a more detailed scenario and storyline in time for the Main Planning Conference in Tromsø December 3rd – 5th 2012.

PARTICIPANT OVERVIEW

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