

How can the Nordic countries improve emergency response and cooperation at home and abroad?



Kresten Breddam^{1,2}

¹*Nordic working group on Emergency Preparedness (NEP)*

²*National Institute of Radiation Protection, Denmark*

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Cooperation or collaboration in planning?

Cooperation: *is an informal arrangement in which the individual agencies maintain their separate mandates and responsibilities, but do some work together to meet a common goal.*

Collaboration: *involves agencies coming together and changing their individual approaches to a goal, to allow for the sharing of resources and responsibilities.*

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Collaboration: *emphasizes the joint effort of agencies, rather than the individual agencies. The most important part of coordination happens during planning*

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NEP: Nordic w.g. on Emergency Preparedness

Organization

NEP works under the auspices of the Nordic Chiefs Meeting and consist of representatives from all Nordic radiation protection and nuclear safety authorities.

Aim

Cooperation, coordination, exchange of information/good practice and assistance in the field of emergency planning, preparedness and response.

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Objective

Cooperation, coordination, exchange of information/good practice and assistance in the field of emergency planning, preparedness and response.

Additional tasks

Test and improve mechanisms and arrangements for notification, information exchange and assistance between the relevant Nordic authorities.

Communicate and coordinate the implementation of international standards/guidelines into national arrangements in the Nordic states.

Propose joint projects - and initiate if deemed relevant.

Activities to improve cooperation and response

Activity	Existing	Proposed	At home	Abroad
Nordic Flagbook	X		X	X
NORMAN	X		X	X
Joint/shared exercises	X		X	
NEPEX (& VCEX?)	X	X	X	X
Embassy cooperation		X		X
Nordic Exercise Pool		X	X	
Incident Action Cards		X	X	
NEP FAQ		X	X	X
NEP Website		X	X	

The Nordic Flagbook:

Protective measures in early & intermediate phases of a nuclear or radiological emergency

A joint approach to nuclear/radiological emergencies

Provides a joint Nordic (nationally flexible) starting point for the application of protective measures for the relevant national authorities (revised 2012).

Presents guidelines & recommendations on protective measures in early and intermediate phases of a nuclear or radiological emergency, based on characterisation and monitoring of the actual event.

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A system for applying a reference level - using operational intervention levels (OIL's) for each protective action in the early and intermediate phase of an event.

Covers all types of scenarios; accidents and intentional acts.

Goal: To keep the population exposure as low as possible and to recover living conditions and the environment to as near to normal as possible.

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The NORMAN

The Nordic Manual on Co-operation, Exchange of Information and Assistance between Nordic Authorities in Nuclear or Radiological Incidents and Emergencies.

Compilation of practical arrangements to fulfil bilateral agreements on notification and cooperation involving Nordic states - covering nuclear and radiological incidents/emergencies/threats. Describes e.g.:

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Compilation of practical arrangements to fulfil bilateral agreements on notification and cooperation involving Nordic states - covering nuclear and radiological incidents/emergencies/threats. Describes e.g.:

- Exchange of background information on Nordic emergency planning
- Comm. of assessments, protective measures, models & parameters
- Strive for harmonised decisions (Exchange of decision basis)
- Communication principles: 24h, simultaneity, in writing, without request, official contact points, with declaration verified/unverified
- Notification threshold
- Harmonisation of how media and public is informed

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The NORMAN could have been used much more during the Fukushima events.

NEP recommends better incorporation of the revised manual into planning and training on the national levels.

- Exchange of background information
- Comm. of assessments, plans and procedures
- Strive for harmonised definitions and parameters
- Communication principles: 24h, simultaneity, in clear writing, without request, to official contact points, with declaration verified/unverified
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What we have is enough; we just have to use it!

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Joint/shared exercises

Exercises with Nordic objectives

- REFOX 2012 Test and train the ability to obtain practical assistance from Nordic countries and to coordinate Swedish and international field teams in a radiological emergency.
Gain experience that can develop the handling of threats, detection and protection in a radiological emergency
- NB8 2013 Test cooperation, communication and coordination of actions between relevant organizations in the NB8 countries: Incl. the coordination of public communication; Flagbook intervention criteria and NORMAN procedures.

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Gain experience in handling of threats, detection and emergency

NB8 2013 Test coordination of actions by relevant organizations in the NB8 countries: Incl. the coordination of public communication; Flagbook intervention criteria and NORMAN procedures.

NEP finds it vital to continue support to early advertisement, coordination and sharing of Nordic exercises. [such as the NKS-B NordEx12 Project

facilitates]

Nordic Exercise Pool

Easy access to drills and exercise setups

The range of possible emergency scenarios does not change that fast, and they are mostly relevant to all the Nordic countries: Thus exercise setups does not become irrelevant immediately.

A range of tabletop and physical/practical must exist in the Nordic countries, many of which are most likely relevant for reuse in countries other than that in which they originated.

For ease of reuse across the Nordic countries, old & future exercise setups could be presented in a common language as a ppt.-template stating: objective, scope, technical/instrumental requirements, number of persons, etc.

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NEP recommends to establish and maintain a pool of Nordic exercises in order to facilitate sharing; using resources more efficiently.

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NEPEX (& VCEX?)

Alert and communication exercises

NEPEX Nordic Emergency Preparedness Exercises (tests)
Conducted regularly (5 times a year)
Objective: test & evaluate routines & response time (Fax/eMail)

Based on the experiences from the Fukushima events – including the internal and external eMail pressure as well as the identified needs for Nordic coordination, also in terms of media response...

- the NEP strongly endorses multilateral real time communication as an additional communication option in the future.

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NEP recommends to improve cooperation and response, by: establishing, testing and using video-conference as a means of real time communication in the future.

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NEP FAQ

During Fukushima, the FAQ lists were established as the accident developed, - perhaps with some inspiration from other FAQ lists...

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NEP recommends that the national public communication sections establish a joint brutto FAQ, ready to be posted during emergencies.

Incident Action Cards

Implementation of lessons learned – at hand

REFOX 2012 (example)

- REFOX 2012 comprised a large number of different, repeated "Moments"
- The moments were tackled in very different ways, by different national teams
- Some ways appeared more useful than others

Outcome

- The joint exercise was a huge success, providing a lot of lessons learned
- Will the lessons learned be embedded at the fingertips of the responders?

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NEP recommends to enhance focus on operationalization of lessons learned during exercises and real events: Joint action cards – serving as Nordic best practice.

Outcome

- The joint exercise was a learning experience for all participants
- Will the lessons learned be embedded at the fingertips of the responders?

A NEP Website?

The present NEP website is protected and restricted to NEP participants.

Not knowing what to get,
not knowing where to get it, and
not knowing how to get it...

...seems to be an obstacle for Nordic sharing of updated versions of documents, drills, exercises, action cards, etc.



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NEP recommends to establish a more formalized NEP web site, open to our community, with various degrees of access – maintaining updated versions of documents, lists, action cards, app's, etc.



Nordic embassy cooperation

Joint contingency planning and mutual representation are among the measures that are being used to develop embassy cooperation.

The Nordic embassies provide assistance to citizens of another Nordic country, if this country has no embassy or consulate of the country concerned

The embassies incorporate common Nordic cooperation in their emergency response plans and consider the possibilities for joint crisis management.

Among the potential for cooperation, for example: Joint crisis management centers, joint evacuation plans, joint exercises,

But – simpler things often does it...

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Joint contingency planning and mutual representation are among the measures that are being used to develop embassy cooperation.

The Nordic embassies provide information to their respective governments if this country has no embassy in the other Nordic country, concerned

The embassies incorporate information into their emergency response plans and consider the needs of the other Nordic countries in their emergency management.

Among the potential for cooperation are: crisis management centers, joint evacuation

But – simpler things often

NEP recommends to map out existing agreements between Nordic embassies (and MFA's), in order to assess if simple, pragmatic developments are within reach, e.g.:

*A Nordic Embassy Rad-manual?;
Better information exchange;
Travel advice cooperation...*