



introduction

Danish CTIF hosted a joint Nordic/Baltic CTIF meeting/seminar from 24 to 26 January 2024. And in the following, a brief summary of the meeting's content and the questions in which, after processing the meeting's program items, may motivate the relation to the participating countries to further cooperation. This should not be stated as a final list of possible work items, as these can be expanded in future meetings.

The summary will not contain a specific input from the individual country, as these are available to all meeting participants in the created Teams group. Individual participants are free to use the countries' presentations for internal further work in there national CTIF work.

The main purpose of the meeting was as follows:

1. Support and develop close and relational CTIF cooperation in the region around the North Sea and the Baltic Sea, including exchanging basic knowledge about the individual countries' organisation of emergency response and fire services.
2. Share knowledge of flood management and the equipment available to each country.

In addition to the meeting/seminar, the purpose was also to create personal relationships between the participants from the individual countries' national CTIF organisations.

The meeting/seminar was conducted according to the attached agenda, where there also was planned time for social gatherings and a single cultural excursion/visit to the Danish castle "Kronborg", which also forms the setting for Shakespeare's play "Hamlet".

The following attended the meeting:

Estonia

Pia Kallas

Viktor Saaremets

Triin Bõstrov

Norway

Ole J. Hansen

Janne Hovdenakk

Ulrich Bergkvist

Per Arne Lindvik



Lithuania

Ieva Monika Jankuviene

Rimantas Ramanauskas

Latvia

Indra Pulka

Finland

Annika Rinne

Marko Hasari

Jari Sainio

Ari Keijonen

Taina Hanhikoski (on teams Thursday)

Denmark

Lars Robetje

Jesper Ingemann Petersen

Peter Soe

Sweden

Yvonne Näsman (on teams Thursday)

On both Wednesday evening 24 January and Thursday evening 25, all the participants met for a social dinner in Helsingør, where it was possible to discuss informal topics and create relationships across the participating countries.

First topic:

Support and develop a close and relational CTIF collaboration in the region around the North Sea and the Baltic Sea, including exchanging basic knowledge about the individual countries' organization of emergency response and fire services.



All countries had been asked in advance to make a presentation for the first topic of the day, which had to focus on:

- Organisation of CTIF at national level, including the primary goals of the national commission, meeting frequency, etc.
- Organisation of the each nation's national fire and rescue services and the civil defence. Municipality, regional or central/state?

Which ministry is responsible for the fire and rescue services and civil defence?

What are the main issues facing the local fire and rescue service and civil defence (eg budget, staff, training, training facilities, volunteers or ???) ?

Do the fire and rescue services and civil defence use volunteers, part-time or full-time employees or a mixture?

How the national hierarchy is or are the national/central emergency authority(s) superior, or at the same level, or subordinate to the local emergency authorities?

What risk analyses and scenarios are the contingency plans based on? Is it common occurrences, weather events, war, terror. Is there a national risk picture?

Because the individual countries only had 30 minutes to present their topics, several of the issues was only presented in headlines.

National CTIF commissions:

There is a relatively large difference between the individual nations' national CTIF boards and who are members in the individual countries. The boards consist of a number of people from 3 and up to 9 people. Members of the national CTIF commissions cover all levels of the public systems from ministries, national agencies and departments, regions and regional collaborations to municipalities and municipal collaborations. In addition, a number of countries also have members from private companies that work with firefighting, rescue services, prevention, and civil preparedness.

However, the primary goals of the national CTIF commissions are roughly the same, as these are also reflected in the context of international CTIF, where the tasks are to analyse, prevent, remedy and collaborate across authorities, national borders and companies to create the best solutions for firefighting, rescue service and civil preparedness.

Organization of the fire and rescue services as well as the civil emergency:

In all countries, the responsibility for the fire service and rescue services lies within the responsibility of the public authorities. However, there is a spread in both the organisational area and whether it is the state, the region or the municipalities that have the main responsibility.



The individual countries' primary operative fire and rescue services as well as civil emergency services are immediately organized in 3 different ways:

1. In some countries, the government have the primary responsibility, but have imposed a responsibility to the municipalities in certain areas with particularly high risk areas, dense population, special building types and other assessed risk factors e.g. These municipalities may be obligated to organise local fire stations. In these areas you will have a State fire and rescue service supplemented with municipal and voluntary units.
2. Regional authorities that among other task will handle the fire and rescue service. In addition to regional fire- and rescue services, will the state in these countries often make a number of special resources available as a supplement, e.g. CBRNE.
3. The municipalities have the primary responsibility, while the state alone provides support to the municipalities, in addition, the state in these countries can often make a number of special resources available, e.g. CBRNE. In countries where the municipalities are responsible, there is a tendency for several municipalities to work together on larger joint municipal fire services.

All the countries have a national level as an independently department or ministry for emergency preparedness. In all countries, the central level is responsible for drawing up central rules for fire and rescue services as well as civil preparedness.

Connection of fire and rescue personnel:

The Nordic and Baltic countries primarily use three forms of association/employment with the fire service.

1. Full-time employees.
2. Part-time employees/volunteers (called in case of fire and accidents and can receive payment for on-call time and callouts).
3. Volunteers who do not receive payment.

From a starting point, the organisations are rather uniform on the primary operational emergency response. Full-time firefighters are often used in big cities. Part-time firefighters who do not have to be at the firestation 24/7 but are on call out duty and have to be at the firestation in a certain amount of time are often used in large urban areas or in areas with special hazards. And finally volunteers who are often used in areas with very low population density or low fire risk.

Several countries combine the use of all 3 forms of association/employments.

All the participating countries are challenged with the recruitment of firefighters, especially the recruitment of part-time employees and volunteers. This challenge can be caused by a number of elements, but in particular the changes in the lifestyle of the younger generations seems to be a common reason.



The older generations have grown up in a society where personal contact with others is based on physical contact, because it was a basic element when you were at work, bought goods, took an education etc. similar.

The younger generations are not equally adapted and "trained" in daily close physical contact. Today, much work, shopping and training takes place via electronic media, where physical contact is reduced to an image on a mobile phone or computer screen. At the same time, like the need as before, there is no necessity to get physical help from a colleague, because many physical tasks are now solved by machines. The younger generations are not raised with the understanding of being dependent on others to be able to solve a task.

In addition to this, it is much more common that the younger generations change their jobs in relation of interests, which again affects the attachment to the fire service, and means that you are a firefighter as long as you find it interesting - it is no longer a lifelong commitment.

The Baltic and Nordic countries can therefore benefit from working together with a special focus on the recruitment and retention of part-time employees and volunteer firefighters.

Training of fire and rescue personnel:

In relation to education, the countries operate with:

1. Long education, which often lasts more than 1 year. As a general rule, the long training takes place from central educational institutions and contains subjects that are not subject-specific within the field of fire and rescue. These are centrally established educational requirements.
2. Short training that is subject-specific ver. firefighting, rescue efforts and emergency environmental efforts. The education is carried out either at central educational institutions or more locally at educational institutions with the right skills and facilities. Local educational institutions can supplement their own educational facilities by using central facilities or facilities at a neighbouring educational institution. These are often centrally prepared educational requirements.
3. Training that is carried out as modules, where the individual receives training in modules that collectively correspond to the training under 2, but where for the individual firefighter there is often a focus on the specific parts of the training that the individual firefighter is expected to solve with a given effort. The individual modules generally also follow centrally determined modules here. Ex. can it be a driver, pump attendant, smoke diver, etc.
4. Locally based training, where the local or central emergency authority assesses which competences the local fire service must have, seen in relation to local risks. Ex. training in handling forest fires in large forest areas, but no training in firefighting in apartment buildings.

The difference in the types of education means that in the individual country there could be a big difference at the level of education between firefighters employed in big cities or larger urban areas compared to the education level of the firefighters who solve the tasks in sparsely populated areas.



The large differences in the level of education both internally in the individual countries as well as across the countries can make it difficult to make direct comparisons. However, work can be done to highlight the advantages and disadvantages of the individual countries when using the different types of educational compositions and educational levels.

The Baltic and Nordic countries can advantageously exchange learning plans and information on the structure of the operational fire- and rescue training as well as reasons and experiences for the chosen approaches for central and local training levels.

Furthermore, the background of the long courses and their content can be advantageously exchanged. Is the content compatible across national borders and is there a basis for longer-term internships or secondments.



Civil preparedness and/or civil defence:

There was a discussion of the two concepts which could be perceived differently.

Civil preparedness was discussed as the ability of citizens and society to take care of themselves. Civil preparedness is thus largely based on the authorities' ability to provide the population with information about which risks or dangers a citizen must prepare for, as well as the impact citizens and society may face in connection with accidents, disasters, and war, including cyber war with a lack of infrastructure. In addition, the authorities must advise and guide the population and society in how best to prepare for possible accidents, disasters, acts of war and cyberwar.

Civil defence was defined as society's overall ability to protect both its citizens and the community against the same threats such as accidents, disasters, acts of war and cyberwar.

At the meeting, there was the greatest focus on civil preparedness and less focus on civil defence.

Basically, only a few of the participating nations have over a long period of time/several years had a fundamentally well-founded focus on civil preparedness, while the other nations have only just begun the process of establishing/reviving the prerequisites for a strong civil preparedness. Some of the countries also lack the political awareness and understanding of the necessity to ensure a strong civil preparedness, where both citizens and companies can both manage themselves and continue to ensure the day-to-day running of the entire nation.

The Nordic and Baltic countries can greatly benefit from the plans, information, and experience available in the countries that have worked actively with civil preparedness for many years.

The Baltic and Nordic countries can also work together to great advantage on the development of information campaigns on civil preparedness as well as assessments of necessary training for citizens and businesses.

The Baltic and Nordic countries can advantageously support each other in choosing solution models for central measures such as siren alerts and push notifications on mobile phones.

Budgets and finances:

All the participating countries could report that, unfortunately, not enough money has been allocated nationally to carry out all the tasks. In particular, a number of countries lack finances for the upcoming work with civil preparedness. In addition, there is often not the necessary finances to ensure a good and robust well-trained fire and rescue service in the areas that are often staffed with volunteer personnel.

Since the fire and rescue services in all countries are paid for by the public authorities and since in most countries volunteers are used for a long time, it is often difficult to get extra funding for a stronger fire and rescue service or civil service.

Unfortunately, there are no immediate points of cooperation in this area.



Another topic:

Share knowledge about flood management and the equipment available for each country.

On Thursday 25 January, the Danish Metrological Institute had a presentation on the weather of the future. Unfortunately, the institute could only support many of the already known effects of increasing pollution with greenhouse gases.

The main message was that especially the very heavy and sudden downpours will come more often and often contain more water.

Sea level rise will have a major impact at the bottom of the Bothnian Bay and the Baltic Sea, while the impact in the northern part of the Bothnian Bay would be relatively small.

Unfortunately, not all countries had managed to prepare a presentation on the meeting's second topic.

In addition, the topography in the Nordic and Baltic countries has major differences. These are thus areas that are difficult to compare. There is no doubt, however, that here too we can benefit from a strong and well-informed and well-trained civil preparedness, as it is often the individual citizens and businesses themselves who have to protect themselves against floods.



Wednesday 24 January

- Arrival until 18.00
- Dinner at 19.00 and then socializing

Thursday 25 January

- At 09.00 to 09.15 Welcome, practical information and review of the program.
- At 09.15 to 12.00. Each country talks about what the individual country focuses on, based on the following headings:
 - Regarding the national CTIF. Presentation of organization. What are the primary goals of the national commission? How often do all members of the commission meet?
 - Regarding the individual nation's national fire and rescue service and civil defence. How is the local fire and rescue service and civil defence organized? Municipality, regional or central/state? Which ministry is responsible for the fire and rescue service and what about the civil defence? What are the main problems for the local fire and rescue service and civil defence (ex. budget, employees, education, training facilities, volunteers or ???) ? Do the fire and rescue service and the civil defence use volunteers, part-time or full-time employees or a mixture used?
 - Regarding the national/central emergency authority. Is this authority superior, on level or subordinate to the local emergency authorities? Which risk analyzes and scenarios are your plans based on? Ordinary events, weather events, war, terror or do you have a national risk picture with a number of incident types that must be planned for?
- At 12.00 to 13.00 lunch, emails, fresh air and a short walk to Kronborg Castle.
- At 13.00 to 14.00 special tour of Kronborg in English regarding Hamlet.
<https://www.kronborg.dk/hamlets-castle>
- At 14.00 to 14.20 Back to the meeting.
- From 14.20 to 18.00 This year's special theme = climate challenges for fire and rescue preparedness in the Nordic and Baltic countries.
 - 14.20 to 14.30 introduction to and introduction to the theme.
 - 14.30 to 15.30 presentation from DMI (Metrological Institute of Denmark) carried out as a virtual post.
 - 15.30 to 18.00 submissions from the first 4 national participants
- At 18.00 to 19.00 Return to the hotels for short relaxation and refreshment
- At 19.00 dinner and social gathering.



Friday 26 January

- 09.00 to 11.00 continues this year's special theme
 - 09.00 to 10.30 presentation from the last 3 national participants.
 - 10.30 to 11.00 collection and summary of the presentations held.
- At 11:00 to 12:30 What would we like to focus on at the next Nordic/Baltic meeting. And presentations from candidates for the positions of chairman, deputy chairman and secretary in the Nordic/Baltic CTIF working group. Then election of chair, vice chair and secretary. We cannot choose 2 from the same country. The newly elected get the floor.
- At 12.30 to 13.00 Rounding off / collection and checking of train times and transport home etc.
- At 13.00 to 13.45 lunch.
- At 13:45 p.m. to 14.00 goodbye.