

Information to the Public

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Final Report
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Karin Viklund
project leader
Swedish Rescue Services Agency,
Information Department
Tel: +46 54 13 51 80
e-mail: Karin.Viklund@srv.se

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Introduction

The area information to the public has been part of the civil protection action programme for several years. A group of experts was created and made an inventory of information material in the Member States. This work was then continued and resulted in workshops, focusing mainly on media handling. This work continued up to 1999. The Directors-General of the civil protection authorities in the Member States then wanted information to the public to be one of the priority areas of the five-year rolling action programme, and accordingly the Commission presented a proposal to the Management Committee.

In June 1999 it was decided that Sweden, was to lead a major project, called Information to the Public. The contract was signed in May 2000. The project ended in April 2002.

The Core Group

The lead country, Sweden, according to the procedures, was to be assisted by a core group. The group consisted of Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, the UK and a representative of the Commission. Sweden also expressed a wish for close cooperation with Portugal, to balance the north/south influence on the project. There were some difficulties keeping the core group intact, especially at the beginning of the project. Greece joined the group during the Belgian presidency, while the Belgian member was working on other matters. Despite the shifting of members the core group made good progress and worked hard to achieve the aims of the project.

This final report includes the results and the essential discussions of the core group. More important, perhaps, are the conclusions and suggestions for the future, since the conclusions show what lessons have been learnt in the project and what the project leader and the core group consider could be done in the area of information to the public in the future.

One thing is very clear: information to the public is, and will be, of vital importance for the safety of the 300 million inhabitants in the Union

Three Workshops

- a Basis for the Project

Three workshops were arranged in 2000. These were decided on and financed within the framework of the old action programme, nevertheless they proved to be the basis, or platform, from which the core group decided to work. The following includes some of the main points from each workshop:

Finnish Workshop on Technological Aspects

- a common alarm signal
- devices for alerting people with special needs (elderly and disabled)
- tourists, students and migrants (how to enable them to take responsibility for themselves outside their native country)
- new technology for warning and informing the public

German Workshop on Psychological Aspects

- possible co-ordination with Seveso work in the area of information to the public (information before accidents)
- consideration of cultural, mental and religious differences and similarities

Swedish Workshop on Methodology and Training

- EU Safety Day/award
- safe schools
- emergency/health cards
- information to and training of carers (for the elderly and disabled)
- inventory, research & development

The Work of the Core Group

The results of the workshops formed the main area of work for the core group.

Signals and Sirens

The view of the core group is that there ought to be two common signals throughout the Union: **one for confinement, and one for evacuation**. There is a need for other special warning signals; such as for floods, avalanches and other dangers that cannot be connected to the two messages: “stay in” or “go out”. These can be local/regional warnings adapted to local risks and customs. It is, of course, desirable that Member States or regions with similar risks as mentioned above are able to use the same signals. One problem with a common signal is, of course, that some of the Member States already have signals, recognised by their populations, while others do not have a siren system for sounding signals at all.

The core group feels that a separate group, as a special project, should continue work on this issue.

See chapter on conclusions and suggestions p.9

Civil Protection Day

This issue took up quite a bit of working time for both the core group and the Council working group for civil protection.

The main idea is a common date for civil protection activities throughout the EU. A good idea, but, as it turned out, difficult to realise. Some Member States already have national or regional civil protection days. Others leave these types of events to NGOs. Some countries already have established dates for such days and there is strong resistance to change to a common day for the whole of the EU. Some countries are not interested in a common European Day at all while others are still open to the idea. But it seems, at the moment, impossible to succeed in establishing such a day.

See Annex 2 Policy Paper on Civil Protection Day

Emergency/Health Card

Such a card exists already in use commercially.

Furthermore there are plans in the EU to establish a health insurance card to show that you are entitled to health care in any of the Member States. Civil protection information could easily be contained alongside health service information on this card. But this would require contact and co-operation between the Directorates-General concerned.

The Use of New Technology for Warning and Information

This is a field that the major project dealt with mainly by keeping in touch with other DGs and other interest groups that were more directly concerned with technological issues. We have tried to follow the developments of new systems for mobile telephones, digital radio and television. And the idea has been to see if and how these new systems could be used for the warning of and the dissemination of information to people. (see below conclusions and suggestions)

New workshops

The work of the core group has resulted in two new workshops, which have been decided on by the Management Committee. In September 2002 there will be a workshop in Karlstad, Sweden, called "Information to our Children". The objective of the workshop is to take on board knowledge and exchange experiences on the factors that influence the behaviour of children within the field of Civil Protection, in relation to preventing accidents and limiting injury and damage. Learning from each other's experiences is an important part of the workshop. See appendix 3.

In March 2003 Portugal is arranging a workshop on "Learning through Playing" aiming at obtaining a list of guidelines and proposals to be taken into consideration in view of a future European Quality Certificate for products that deal with children's safety and a list of recommendations for future programs for children based on past and successful experiences. See appendix 4.

Conclusions and Suggestions for the Future

The project name “Information to the Public” can be said to comprise almost everything that has to do with information/communication with and education of the public.

But this project was not intended to deal with communication with the public through the media. The German project “Crisis Communication” deals partly with that subject. Nor was it to include communication directly with the public in a crisis situation.

It was understood that the major project should concentrate on information and communication as a preventive measure, that is, providing the public with the ability to avoid accidents, and when they do happen the ability to save lives and limit their consequences. It soon became apparent that this area was wide enough, and so the chairman and the core group spent a lot of time and energy on narrowing down the huge span of the project.

After extensive discussion the core group found that a new project on this issue in the future ought to be divided into several different sub-projects:

Sirens and Signals

The view of the core group is that there should be a special project or working group dealing with technical specifications for siren equipment and the standardising of two signals.

Several of the Member States are planning to install new systems or change their existing systems. Co-operation in this area could make use of the various observations and lessons learned on the subject. Cross-border co-operation could also be advantageous.

These issues must be dealt with at a high level in the Member States as they involve negotiations and decisions, which cannot be solved under the auspices of a project like “Information to the Public”.

The special project might also work on establishing the two signals, which would be understood all over the EU. This would be of great value for many millions of Europeans who work, study, and travel within the EU and could save lives in the event of emergencies and crises.

Co-ordination with Seveso work

One view from the German workshop was that the work of the major project Information to the Public ought to have been co-ordinated with the current information work on the Seveso Directive. At regional and local levels in several Member States the same group of people have the responsibility for both these fields of information, and apparently sometimes they feel that co-ordination would be a good idea both at an EU and a national level.

In 2000 the Civil Protection Unit of DG Environment was reorganised, and

the Seveso Unit joined the Civil Protection Unit. It might be an idea for the Commission to consider if and how such co-ordination could be achieved.

Vulnerable groups and Other Special Target-groups

Old and/or disabled people

This subject divides into several target groups such as old and/or disabled people. Also this work is divided into different parts. There is the issue of clear and understandable information - but also how to be able to perceive the information, for example, to see, hear and understand warnings and messages from authorities in the event of imminent danger. There is a need for an inventory of existing technical equipment and knowledge for these areas.

A project/workshop in this area should also deal with information to and education of the carers and helpers of these groups.

Children

Children and the young are probably the most important target groups for education and information on civil protection matters. Through children we can also reach their parents and grandparents. Already many of the Member States make great efforts to reach children mainly in nurseries, pre-schools, and schools. But we must also try to reach them using new technology, which is becoming a great part of children's lives, such as computer-games and video-games. To achieve this, there must be co-operation between the civil protection authorities in Europe and perhaps even with the companies that manufacture such devices.

This will be one of the topics of both the Swedish and the Portuguese workshops, planned for autumn 2002 and spring 2003. It is also part of the Swedish proposal for a new major project, accepted by the Management Committee in June 2002.

Private and Business Travellers

These groups can also be called vulnerable, in the event of a major incident/disaster that they are not prepared for. If you live in a region where earthquakes, avalanches or floods are likely to occur then you will probably be fairly well informed about what you are supposed and not supposed to do. But the tourist, the temporary worker, or student does not have that knowledge, and probably does not know the language well enough to understand warning messages, signals and the information that comes from the authorities when major incidents or disasters occur

One idea that came up during the project, is the www.112.eu site (of course this is an imaginary name of a non-existing Internet site)

This could be a "portal" with links to national sites translated into the languages that most people know. Principally it could be a site providing current information on risks in the region, and would be a site to consult before travelling to the area. It could also provide adequate information to

travel agencies sending tourists into the area, and companies with employees travelling and working there.

The financing of the portal and setting up rules and recommendations for the national sites might be a matter for the Commission. There should be some quality criteria for being allowed to be part of the portal concerning, for example, maintenance and updating of information. Such a portal ought to be a valuable contribution to the safety of these target-groups.

The national sites are of course a matter for the Member States. They have to be adapted to the different risks in different regions. The portal could also be of help for the national, regional and local authorities, in the event of a major incident/disaster, in that people could already know more about the risks and the right behaviour to adopt during the incident.

Networking

The core group identified the need of improving the dissemination of knowledge and best practise in the EU. Workshops and seminars in the field of civil protection are held all over the EU and often result in good ideas, inventories of best practise and recommendations, but very few people participate.

These results should be more widespread than they are today.

The national differences in the organisation of civil protection are one obstacle for efficient networking. In some Member States one ministry or authority deals with all aspects of civil protection, in others civil protection is divided between several different authorities and governmental agencies. Sometimes regional and local authorities are directly responsible for a large part of the civil protection organisation.

Promoting convergence of practises, methods through networking between the people and authorities concerned can be arbitrary; officers and administrators keep in touch with people they meet at workshops and seminars, but it often stops there.

In the new major project "Information to the Public" one of the main objectives will be to find ways of establishing networks at the appropriate levels in the different authorities working with information to children and the young.

Appendixes

1. Vision and goals for the major project “Information to the Public”
2. Policy paper on Civil Protection Day
3. Description of the Swedish workshop “Information to our children”
September 2002
4. Description of the Portuguese workshop “Learning by Playing”
5. Description of new major project “Information to the Public”
6. Emergency number 112

Appendix 1.

Vision and Goals of the Major Project Information to the Public

This is the second phase of the Major project on the Information to the Public conducted in 1998-99. *The vision* is of a European Union where, when facing an emergency or disaster situation, we can get hold of adequate information, when we need it, and even in our own language in order to protect ourselves more effectively. When we travel, work or study in a Member State, we should be able to understand information given i.e. signals, signs and other ways of warning and information. If in danger, whether it is an earthquake, a flood or an avalanche, we should understand what authorities and the people of the country want to tell us –in order to be able to take care of ourselves and those dependent on us.

There are differences in the geography, risks and culture in the Member States –but there are also similarities. And we can learn a lot from the existing, good examples in the EU, and, in co-operation, we can find ways of using existing and new methods and technology to move towards a safer Europe. For example, the digital techniques for broadcasting, already in existence, in both radio and television, will make it possible to use these media as well as the internet for warning and information in new and interesting ways.

On top of this there will be technology that we do not know of, developed during the next decade and this might also be tested and perhaps come of use in the field of warning and information.

Goal: A safer EU for its inhabitants when in travel within the Union

As we see it, there are two parallel paths to follow trying to achieve the goal:

- The Common Path after 112 (the community level). Lessening the national differences of systems for warning and information to the public could facilitate the free movement of persons in the Union. Our work and projects would contribute to making the EU-co-operation more visible to inhabitants in the Member States. Along this path we might find projects aiming at one, or a few, common signals for warning the public in case of accidents or danger. Projects aiming at finding similar ways of following up the signal with messages using possible channels (i.e. radio, television, the Internet) cf. the above *Vision*... Projects aiming at standardisation of signs, the symbols of warning and information (cf. the evacuation sign or the "i" for tourist information).

Some more concrete goals for the next few years: By using the results of the inventories of earlier workshops and the ones to be held in the spring of year 2000 we can develop means to make our different warning signs and signals recognisable to people who travel and work outside their own countries. This could be in **"information banks"** where travellers and the travel industry could find information and useful knowledge before the journey. And it could include information on all kinds of different risks –from dangerous currents for windsurfing, to the signs warning for avalanches at ski resorts). In this context, perhaps we could also discuss the idea of an **"Annual European Safety Award"** to be given to somebody who has contributed to the safety of a target-group, a country or, for that matter, for all the Member States.

- The Path of co-operation & exchange of knowledge (the national level). We cannot expect to find a wizard formula of standardising information to and education of the public in the different areas of the EU. But we can surely find more and better ways to co-operate and learn from each other. Through continuous meetings and contacts via e.g. the Internet, **create networks** among the different authorities in the Member States in order to **exchange knowledge and ideas** that can develop into concrete measures, useful at regional and national level; **promote convergence** of practises, methods a s o. We might find **common target**

groups, among others, children, old people, disabled persons. And we can work together to find the means and methods to reach these target groups with the kind of communication and information that will answer to the needs of the different groups. **Scientific research** in the field of communication could be a common project for perhaps, two or more of the member states, which share a cultural background, and which have problems in common related to the area of warning and information.

The new project should encompass both paths – sometimes they could be combined, and above all, the results emanating from both paths could interact, and thus give back more than the work put in to achieve the goals we set up.

The project is co-ordinated by Sweden assisted by a core group comprising Sweden, Belgium, Germany, Portugal, Finland and France.

Appendix 2.

Policy Paper on The European Civil Protection Day / Safety Day

Introduction

During its meetings on the 27th June and the 24th July 2001 the Working party on Civil Protection of the Council of the European Union discussed the draft resolution on the European Civil Protection / Safety Day. The Commission proposed to the Working group to consult on this matter the core group on the information to the public created in the context of the Civil Protection Action Programme.

The present document builds upon the previous version of the policy document that was circulated on the beginning of June to the members of the Core Group. In fact the establishment of a European Day with the aim of promoting civil protection issue among the citizens of Europe is now a generally accepted idea. There are however certain practical problems to be solved. This Policy Paper is an attempt to sort out the problems and give suggestions on how to solve them.

Why ? The need for a common civil protection day

There is a need for stimulating the self-protection of citizens by creating a greater awareness among European citizens about the risks of accidents. Citizens must be ready to take preventive action and be able to act correctly in case of accidents. It is a task for the authorities and organisations dealing with civil protection to improve public preparedness and provide information and training of the public to give them the tools of self-protection.

Every year approximately 100 million Europeans cross the internal borders of the Union, travelling as tourists, as temporary or migrant workers, and as students. In total, over several years at least $\frac{2}{3}$ of Europe's population i.e. approximately 250 million persons cross the internal EU borders. People do feel safe at home –but not when they travel (a 1999 Eurobarometer survey on safety showed that at least 65 % of Europeans feel unsafe when travelling in another EU country. Additionally a 2000 Eurobarometer survey showed that only one of every five Europeans knew the existence and use of the 112). There is a pronounced need for common information on safety issues

Large disasters and the threat of technological accidents may focus public interest but on the local level the most dangerous places for citizens are their houses, their places of work, and the roads on which they commute every day.

There are already national Safety or Civil Protection Days in many of the Member States - but there is an added value of a European Safety Day. The same day all over Europe should stress the importance of the citizens' possibility to protect themselves in case of danger or accidents and give some visibility to the co-operation between Member States that is already going on. Furthermore a

common day would lose its impact if it were not held on the same day or during the same period.

When? *The choice of the date*

Different possible dates for a Civil Protection Day have been discussed. At first glance it seems difficult to fix a date. The following is a list of some of the points mentioned in the discussions:

- Schools should be at work –school children have an important part to play in carrying out different activities on such a day –also children is one channel through which we can reach the grown-ups, especially parents. This means the Day should be during school-terms.
- To reach and involve working people the day should be at a weekend. This also makes it easier for voluntary organisations to organise activities with their members involved.
- There are already national Safety or Civil Protection Days and other days connected to civil protection in many of the Member States–(European First Aid Day - 16th September), Confederation of Fire Protection Associations - CFFA, Europe with CTIF (European Fire Safety Day, 13th October), Finland organises its own Civil Protection Day on 11/2 and also uses the 1/12 for fire prevention information.
- Maybe other initiatives that we are not aware of also exist.
- On 1/12 or 11/2, it has been, pointed out that it is quite cold - which is bad for outdoor-activities.
- Friday the 13th should not be considered, because of cultural differences and because some years we may have 3 such days.
- Late spring might be good, schools are open and the holidays and travelling season is near, a fact that involves large movements of tourists around Europe.
- A problem, though, is that a lot of other activities and celebrations are going on in society. And spring is the time for school tests and examinations. And (at least in northern Europe), there are special Days scattered through May: from religious celebrations to Mother's Day, which makes it difficult to find a "free" day.
- In view of this early autumn could be better (between 30 September and 14 October; the first Saturday of October when is celebrated the Safety at work day and sirens are tested in Austria; 12 October day of the fire brigades, the police and the army in Spain) but if we want to involve school children they must be able to make their preparations Before the Day – which is difficult, if not impossible, when the term just started.
- Finally the Commission has now decided to permanently organise the Green Week every year on April. This is an important gathering covered by the Press and with the presence of the Commissioner - any Prize distribution or other event related to the Civil Protection/ Safety day will receive an amplified attention.

When we have taken all this into consideration our suggestion is end of April or the beginning of May on a Saturday or Sunday expressed like this: The European Civil Protection / Safety Day takes place on the second/last Saturday of April or the first weekend of May.

Following the discussions in the Council Working group it seems that the day should be outside the winter period but during the school term. The date should be decided upon in the context of the Resolution and not by a Committee presided by the Commission.

The name of the Day ?

The objective of the day is to promote civil protection issue among the citizens of Europe. The name of the day and the messages conveyed should be clear and straightforward. However several semantic problems have been underlined with the proposed title of the day i.e Civil Protection / Safety Day. Firstly there will be problems in translating the title in the various languages. «Safety» is often translated as «Security» while «Civil Protection» is often perceived as a rather technical term. Furthermore as we know, the organisation and build-up of civil protection in the Member State differs from country to country and this raises additional problems.

The title of the day proposed by the Commission is **European Day for the protection of citizens against risks**.

What?

Furthermore the following points can be made concerning the **Aims and Priorities**:

- As mentioned earlier, there are already local, national and organisation-arranged activities. And the European Civil Protection Day should clearly show the European dimension of civil protection.
- But it is very important that the Day involves local authorities and organisations dealing with local, regional and national risks and needs. We must avoid the feeling that the Day is something “they’re doing far away in Brussels”

Some big activities should be arranged at Community level such as involvement of Commissioner, Parliament and so on. National contests could lead up to finals at Community level. Exhibition of drawings by school children, Community conference on the theme of the year, can be examples of community level activities. At this level there can also be a special Prize awarded to organisations or activities that during the year has promoted civil protection in some special way.

The Community activities should be tied to events that could create media interest and thereby good publicity. It might be a good idea to connect Community “campaigns” repeated every year e.g campaigns on the 112 number, campaigns for safety during holidays, etc. It should also be a day for testing the common European alarm signals (and the national ones before we are able to establish these common signals). An internet website should be opened where information is available; it should be interactive so local and regional activities can easily be added and exchange of information and ideas is easy.

How?

The Commission, e.g. the DG environment and the Civil Protection Unit must play a very active part in the beginning, before the Day is established throughout the Union. It will not be one year's work to get things going –there must be continuity and perseverance from the Commission.

The Civil Protection Day could be a “Major project” by its own or a project within the Major Project “information to the Public” – with a lead country and a core group working for three or more years only with the Civil Protection Day. Financing should thus be ensured in the context of the Community Action Programme. In this case the Management Committee of the Civil Protection action programme may decide on the theme of the year on the basis of a proposal by the Commission.

Appendix 3.

Description of the Swedish Workshop September 2002

At the EU-workshop "Training and information of the public" in Sweden in May 2000 all participating countries agreed that children are an important target group for information and education in the field of civil protection.

The result of the workshop showed that many countries have different activities directed at children on how to prevent accidents and limit injury and damage. But it also showed that there is a need of more knowledge on how to educate children and about factors that influence the behaviour of children within the field of Civil Protection.

At a meeting with the core group "Information to the Public" different themes for workshops concerning children and safety were discussed. Portugal is interested in organising a workshop about "Means and ways to give the children a safety culture." After discussions with Portugal the Swedish Rescue Services Agency, in the context of the major project "Information of the public," proposes the organisation of a workshop about important points to consider when educating children, and about factors that influence the behaviour of children within the field of Civil Protection. The two workshops are to be seen as complements to each other.

The Swedish workshop that will be held in May 2002 will take on board current knowledge in the member states and be based on an inventory and a questionnaire. Speakers from different countries will be invited. The objective of the workshop is to take on board knowledge and exchange experiences on the factors that influence the behaviour of children within the field of Civil Protection, in relation to preventing accidents and limiting injury and damage. The inventory and the questionnaire are been conducted in order to collect this kind of information. Learning from each other's experiences is an important part of the workshop.

An inventory will be carried out. The objective with the inventory is to take on board existing knowledge in the member states and to learn from each other's experiences. The inventory will be presented and used as a support for discussion at the workshop in Sweden in May 2002.

Children playing with fire are a major problem in many countries. Sweden has conducted a study about children and fire. The result shows how often children are playing with fire, why they do this and what we as adults can do to prevent this behaviour. It would be very interesting to compare these results with another EU country and the Swedish Rescue Services Agency would like to carry out a questionnaire in Portugal. By using the existing method and questionnaire the results will be comparable. Discussions have been held with Portugal. The result of the questionnaire will be presented at the workshop and be a base for discussions about similarities and differences.

The result of the workshop will be a clarification of current knowledge, and also show possible future ways to continue the work with children and safety within the field of Civil Protection.

Appendix 4

Description of the Portuguese Workshop “Learning by Playing” March 2003

Children are one of the most vulnerable groups and at the same time the one that gives the best multiplier effect since they then teach adults what they have learnt. The Portuguese National Service for Civil Protection was one of the members of the core group of the Major Project on Information to the Public that just came to an end. The idea for this workshop sprung from this major project and is intended to tackle with the issues of information to the children and the exchange of best practices on how to pass information regarding self-protection measures to them. We will also work to define quality criteria for products that deal with children’s safety, be it CD Rom’s, theme parks, video-games.

This workshop should be regarded as a complement to the Swedish workshop that will take place in September of 2002, and we shall use their conclusions as one of the basis for our work in analysing the concept of learning through playing. Though complementary to the Swedish workshop, the Portuguese workshop stands alone as it deals with subjects, which are independent from those that shall be analysed in the first workshop.

This concept emerged after successful experiences in different EU countries. We have the examples of Lisbon’s Municipal Service for Civil Protection with their project “Growing in Safety” and their CD-Rom Tinóni & Companhia, Scuola Sicura in Italy, Streetwise Safety Centre in Bournemouth, etc.

This workshop is in line with the new proposal for a Major Project on Public Information to be presented by the Sweden.

Appendix 5.

Swedish Proposal on the major project Public Information (section 3.4 B.2 in 2002 Call for proposals)

The objectives of the Major project on Information to the Public are:

- To identify, collect and disseminate the best methods and practises to reach and inform the public. Children and youth will be the main target group. In these times of continuous flood of stimuli and information coming through the media and other channels, it is vital to determine the best possible ways to communicate.
- To suggest guidelines and quality standards on information and learning when using new techniques and new channels, which might be connected to commercial interests.
- To promote communication and information that will give the tools to children, youth and their parents to identify risks and prevent accidents. In case of an accident they would be able to better protect themselves. The project will take on board the important issue of conveying appropriate messages to children, and ensure that teachers and parents are involved in new ways of training the children.
- To collect and disseminate best practise concerning safe schools. The above mentioned should also apply to Safe school projects. Examples are to be found in e.g. Italy and France, those models could be adapted to other Member states - the major project should work for safety in schools through the Union.
- To pay special attention to information concerning NBC. It is of vital importance to reach children with appropriate information without creating panic or unnecessary worry.
- To create networks among the different authorities in the Member States, dealing with Information to the Public, especially aimed at children and youth. These networks should, in a more systematic way than today ensure the dissemination of existing knowledge and methodology. These networks will play a key role in transforming the results of workshops and other activities arranged within the previous project « Information to the Public » in the framework of the Community Action Programme in the field of civil protection. This would promote a bottom-up perspective. The network could pick up existing and planned activities in the MS and then spread the best practises to other MS. It is suggested that a workshop or other activity is arranged to establish the forms for such network building. A workshop or other activity could also be useful in finding ways of keeping networks alive, for example by using modern techniques.

The work of the major project « Information to the Public » should also aim at establishing the methods through which such networks could spread this knowledge in the different Member States to other national and regional authorities and NGO:s.

- To investigate the possibilities of establishing an annual EU wide prize to encourage innovative safety related projects. The prize could be presented in the context of the (Green Week). There are already some prizes in the Green Week arrangements, mainly related to environmental problems. This prize should be related to civil protection and safety ideas.

The project will be assisted by a core group for implementing the long-term orientation of the project, taking into account the diversity of needs according to the different conditions, situations and interests of the Member States.

A chairman will be appointed to, in close cooperation with the core group and the Commission, lead the Major Project “Information to the Public”.

The new major project « Information to the Public » is to be more target-oriented and have a more practical approach than the preceding project, ended in April 2002. The narrowing down of both target groups and goals, is a result of the work in the former Core group. The proposal builds on results of the earlier workshops within the old project -and relates to the workshop in Sweden this autumn, and the one which will be proposed by Portugal for next year dealing with guidelines and quality criteria for theme parks for training the children such as the Tínoní park in Lisbon and Streetwise in UK and also look at the possibilities and problems with interactive media for children

Results expected:

- A network among the different authorities and organisations in the Member States, dealing with information to the public, especially children, in civil protection matters.
- Guidelines and quality standards for the use of new ways and techniques for information to the target groups
- If different, find the special methods on information to children on NBC risks
- Investigate and if appropriate, initiate and suggest to the Commission an annual Prize on good initiatives in the field of civil protection
- A final report on achieved results.
- Reaching children as one of the most important target groups. Habits and behaviour patterns are formed early on in life and it is easier to teach children, than grown-ups about safety awareness and how they are to behave in the event of an accident. Children will take this knowledge home and spread the message to their parents and grandparents, thus providing a more long-term effect.

Appendix 6.

Emergency number 112

Since September 2001, the Directorate-general has launched an information campaign about the emergency number 112 for a period of 2 years on national and European level, for a global cost of 150.000 Euros. The European part of it is subsidized in the frame of the EU Action programme in the field of civil protection. In this campaign, the three targeted groups were the travellers coming into Belgium, the Belgians travelling in other EU countries, and the mobile phone users. A website has been created for the campaign: www.112sos.be