



Possibilities of cross-border activities of Fire Rescue Service of the South Bohemian region

Možnosti přeshraniční spolupráce Hasičského záchranného sboru Jihočeského kraje

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Abstract:

The paper „Possibilities of cross-border activities of Fire Rescue Service of the South Bohemian region“ reflects the theme of possibilities of cross-border cooperation and activities which is focused to the fire protection, civil protection and crisis management. International cooperation is dealt with in the border regions of the South Bohemian Region, especially on the basis of examples of international cooperation. The cross-border cooperation is perceived as supporting and additional instrument of national system of civil protection.

Keywords: *Fire Rescue Service of South Bohemia, Civil Protection, Cross-border Cooperation*

Abstrakt:

Príspevok „Možnosti přeshraniční spolupráce Hasičského záchranného sboru Jihočeského kraje“ reflektuje problematiku přeshraniční spolupráce se zaměřením na ochranu obyvatelstva a krizové řízení. Mezinárodní spolupráce je řešena v pohraničních oblastech Jihočeského kraje a to zejména na příkladech mezinárodní spolupráce. Na přeshraniční spolupráci je nahlíženo jako na podpůrný a doplňkový nástroj národního systému ochrany obyvatelstva.

Klíčové slová: *Hasičský záchranný sbor Jihočeského kraje, ochrana obyvatelstva, přeshraniční spolupráce*



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1. Introduction

Cross-border cooperation with a focus on protecting the population and crisis management is one of the possibilities to support and complement the national security system. The contribution on cross-border cooperation in the subject area aims to characterize the basic activities implemented in the individual border regions of the South Bohemian region and in particular to show an example of the joint exercises of the Czech Republic, Austria and Germany in 2017. The partial aim is to elaborate examples of regional cross-border cooperation in the spheres of state administration, self-government and non-governmental non-profit organizations.

In order to achieve the stated goals, an analysis of available information was used, especially from the working documentation of the Fire and Rescue Service of the South Bohemian Region, the South Bohemian Region and the Red Cross Water Rescue Service. Due to the very limited documentary processing of the sub-documents, interviews were subsequently carried out. In addition, a comparison of the individual information was made and a final synthesis summary was prepared.

2. Exercise "Austrian Bavarian Czech Forest Fire Drill 2017"

The three-person area, the common Austrian-German-Czech border, is a very densely wooded area, which is intensively used for tourism. There is a great movement of tourists and mountain bikers. Due to the high levels of inanimate wood, especially on the Czech side due to the bark beetle attack by the Kyrill bark, large hollows have formed in the enclosed forest, which makes the woodlands increasingly dry and, especially in the summer months, leads to a significantly increased risk of forest fires.

The significance of the international exercise in the area of the common border is evidenced by the recent fire of the Dreisselberg garage in March 2016. The garage is located in the German territory at the border and is not accessible from the Czech Republic. Fire water is not available within a few kilometers. The only luck was that the fire broke out in the winter. In addition, many challenging and long-lasting forest fires have occurred, such as in Jochberg (2017), Garmisch Partenkirchen in Kramerspitze (2015) and Fahrenberg in Finsterau (2013).

These risks are very dangerous for humans, animals and the environment. Without special help and cooperation, firefighters are often helpless. The idea of cross-border forest exercise in this area has been created due to the often inaccessible terrain, poor access to water for extinguishing, language barriers and incompatible means of communication.

The practice of "Austrian Bavarian Czech Forest Fire Drill 2017" was organized by three countries - Czech Republic, Austria, Germany. For the Czech Republic, he was a partner in planning and carrying out the Fire Extinguishing Corps of the South Bohemian Region, who also cooperated with the Czech Police, the South Bohemian Regional Authority, the Šumava National Park and the affected municipalities (the founders of the fire protection units especially in the districts of Český Krumlov and Prachatice). On the Austrian and German side, both firemen and police, army, health

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service - the Red Cross, mountain service, cynologists, civil protection, municipal and higher self-government took part.

The territory of Šumava selected for the realization of the exercise is situated on the common border of the Czech Republic with Germany and Austria. This increases the possibility of joint fulfillment of the tasks connected with the fire in large forest units and with regard to the terrain intensity (Haidmüle, Nová Údolí, Trojmezí, Plechý, Smrčina). The area of exercise is shown in Figure 1.



Fig. 1, The cross-border area of Czech Republic, Germany and Austria, own processing

The exercise took place on 30 June - 2 July 2017. Characteristics of activities and cooperation for fire protection units from the territory of the South Bohemian region were very different in individual days. The aim of the exercise was to investigate the ability of fire protection units and other involved forces to fire the forest in an inaccessible forest field near the common border of the Czech Republic, Austria and Germany in the protected nature of the forest massifs. Other goals defined were:

- Examine the capability of cross-border co-operation of fire-fighting units to deal with a major fire including the ability to solve the language barrier of interference units.
- Examine the cooperation of the Operations Centers of the participating States.
- Examine the possibility of using different water sources.
- Investigate traffic organization in poorly accessible terrain.
- Investigate the possibility of air strikes by helicopters or aircraft and their fulfillment.

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- Investigate the rescue of persons by air rescue workers (participating forces in Austria and Germany).

The whole exercise was organized as tactical with the elements of the screening exercise in relation to the tactical level of coordination at the site of the intervention by the commander of the intervention and the commanders and leaders of the other involved parties. The exercises took place in three basic stages - each day.

On 30 June 2017, the Operations and Information Center of the HHS of the South Bohemian Region was asked by the Operations Center in Pasov to help with the forest fire in the Trojmezna area, Haidmülle - Nové Údolí, which spreads from Germany to the Czech Republic. The troops were deployed at the third level of the fire alarm within the South Bohemian region. The main activities of the Czech units were fire fighting in the difficult area of the Šumava National Park and the carrying out of high-capacity long-distance water transport by hoses, up to several kilometers. 10 units of fire protection, 20 pieces of equipment and 68 professional and volunteer firemen were deployed from the Czech side.

On 1 July 2017, the Operational and Information Center of the HHS of the South Bohemian Region was asked by the Operations Center in Linz to help with the destruction of forest fires in the territory of Austria in the area of Trojmezna, Hochficht, Schwarzenberg. South Bohemian firefighters set up a detachment of fire protection units from the territory of the South Bohemian Region, which traveled from the Czech Republic to Schwarzenberg am Böhmerwald in Austria. From there, the necessary forces and resources were transmitted according to the commander's request. At the same time, due to the magnitude of the incident, he set up an international crew of the commander of the intervention where the intervening components of all countries were represented.

A substantial part of the Saturday rosters was the use of forest specialties and large-volume tanks that provided a water shuttle. The firefighters examined various types of tank filling, such as tanks and hydrants used on the local ski slopes in winter for snow. The exercise scenario supposed a constant fire spread, so it was necessary to ask for support by air strikes. Air support, helicopters and airplanes, was routed to search for people, transport the necessary assets to fire protection units, transport firefighters and, in particular, to fire fighting. The Squadron was commissioned by the Austrian Armed Forces - the Bundesheer. Airplanes and helicopters of the German Armed Forces - the Bundeswehr, the Austrian Armed Forces - Bundesheer and the Air Force Service of the Czech Republic. Firefighting helicopters were harvested in the Lipno Dam in the Czech Republic between Nová Pec and Horní Planá.

On July 2, 2017, the Schwarzenberg and Böhmerwald Austrian Fire Station carried out a joint training session and a brief assessment of the exercises was carried out by each of the leading parties involved. 1011 firemen from three countries, 400 army members with 2 aircraft and 9 helicopters, 60 police officers, 120 medical personnel, rescuers and nurses, 50 members of mountain services with 3 doctors, 10 handlers and other crisis management - civil protection, state administration. A summary of the participating units of the Fire Brigade of the South Bohemian Region and of the volunteer municipal fire brigade units is given in Table 1.

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Tab. 1: List of fire protection units and techniques, own processing

UNIT	EQUIPMENT
HZS JčK ÚO Český Krumlov (HZS Plzeňského kraje)	Pumping container HYDROSUB
	Fire hose container HZS Plzeň
	CAS 30 S3VH T815-7
	CAS 20 M3LP Camiva
	VEA L2R Ford Ranger
HZS JčK České Budějovice	CAS 30 S3VH T815-7
HZS JčK ÚO Prachatice	CAS 30 S3VH T815-7
	CAS 20 M3LP Camiva
	DA L1Z Fiat Ducato
	DA 8 A31 + hose trailer
HZS JčK Vimperk	SxS Artic Cat
JSDHP NP (Stožec, Modrava)	CAS 30 S3VH T815-7
	CAS 30 S3VH T815-7
JSDHO Horní Planá	CAS 32 T815
	DA L1Z MB + pump
JSDHO Volary	CAS 20/4000/300 S2R MAN
JSDHO Nová Pec	CAS 32/6000/600 S3R T148
JSDHO Lenora	CAS 25/3500/200 S2R Š 706 RTHP
JSDHO Svatá Máří	DA 8 L1Z Iveco Daily + pump
JSDHO Vlachovo Březí	DA 8 L1Z Ford Tranzit + pump

The exercise examined the synergy of the three security and rescue forces of three countries in response to an emergency in the difficult to reach terrain of the Šumava - Böhmerwald - Bayerischer Wald National Parks. It has been demonstrated that both sides of the border have similar technical means and joint intervention is possible. There is, however, a clear language barrier and a very complicated connection in a given location. It has also been tested for a different supply of water for extinguishing, which is deficient in a given location. The transport of water by large-volume tanks, large-volume pumping with transport hoses and, last but not least, by air.

3. Other cross-border cooperation activities

3.1. Exercise Taranis 2013 - engagement of Fire Brigade JČK in the exercise of the CO Mechanism in the EU

In 2011, the Austrian Red Cross, the regional organization of Salzburg, together with national and international partners, designed a project to organize exercises within the EU. This idea was confirmed by the signing of the grant agreement between the Austrian Red Cross, the regional organization Salzburg and the European Commission in December 2011. The exercise was actively involved in the preparatory and implementation phase of the Fire Brigade of the South Bohemian Region.

The European Union has introduced the so-called Civil Protection Community Mechanism, which uses common forces and means of protecting the population of EU Member States (Dušek, 2011), to manage the consequences of major emergencies, including terrorist attacks. Emergency preparations include joint exercises of the Member States as one form of preparing a systematic approach and supporting assistance. One of the exercises carried out under this system was the EU Taranis 2013 exercise. Its aim was to improve cooperation between EU member states to support and streamline coordination in the event of major crisis situations. The EU Taranis 2013 exercise took place in two main parts - at the national level of Austria and at the international level of the European Union [2].

The EU Taranis 2013 exercise was based on historical experience of supra-regional crisis situations. To improve the effectiveness of disaster response, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism seeks to strengthen co-operation in the field of civil protection - co-operation in rescue work. The EU Taranis 2013 exercise was also aimed at examining the planning and implementation of international exercises and the coordination of intervening teams. The specific objectives of the exercise were:

- Verify the international assistance provided under the EU Civil Protection Mechanism in Austria,
- improve the level of cooperation, coordination and interoperability among participants in the exercise,
- develop opportunities for cooperation between international organizations (the EU and the International Federation of the Red Cross) in a crisis situation,
- to test the operability and basic procedures of the participating teams and their management,
- Provide opportunities for training for these teams,
- To prepare the documentation and the presentation of the identified facts that emerged from the planning process of the exercise and its practical part.

The Fire Rescue Service of the South Bohemian Region sent a detachment for the high capacity water pumping and emergency accommodation at the EU Taranis 2013 exercise. The high-capacity water pumping unit operated with the SIGMA 400 mobile pumping station, which is mainly used for pumping large flooded areas. The second part of the department provided the emergency survival container. The SSF of the South Bohemian Region has also actively participated in the preparation and planning process of the exercise. For this activity, a pair of members of the FRS of the South

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Bohemian Region from the IZS and Services Department and from the Department of Population Protection and Crisis Management prepared the necessary materials and documents for the Czech side (Kavan, 2013).

3.2. Cooperation between firefighters in Český Krumlov and Freistadt

The cooperation of professional firefighters from Český Krumlov in the south of Bohemia with the border region of the Austrian region, especially the district of Freistadt, has developed spontaneously and gradually developed. Following the political and social changes that took place in the Czech Republic after the so-called Velvet Revolution on November 17, 1989, new links with border partners began to be created. The first impetus for mutual cooperation was the handover of the Bethlehem light on December 23, 1989 to the customs office in Dolní Dvořiště. (The idea of spreading the pre-Christmas room and peace was created in 1986 in Austria). This event has become a traditional, extensive social advent event that firefighters Freidstadt and Český Krumlov firefighters keep up to date. The handover of the Bethlehem light alternates so that for one year this handover is organized in the district of Freistadt and subsequently in the district of Český Krumlov. At the anniversaries of this event, Bethlehem light is handed over to firemen directly on the state border.

Mutual activities include competitions in fire fighting and wreckage of injured people from crashed vehicles, border visits and excursions to fire stations. Representatives of the Fire Brigade of the Territorial Department of Český Krumlov had the opportunity to visit and inspect the Landes-Feuerweherschule and the Landeswarnzentrale in Linz. They also regularly take part in annual ceremonial festive gatherings of volunteer firefighters in Freistadt (district firefighting day). The representatives of the Český Krumlov firefighters repeatedly participated in a meeting of historical firefighting vehicles in Freistadt. On the contrary, representatives from the Austrian side visited the Fire Rescue Service JčK (in Budějovice, Č. Krumlov, Frymburk and Kaplice) and the Operational and Information Center of the Fire Rescue Service JčK in České Budějovice. [3]

The cross-border cooperation of volunteer firefighters from Freistadt and members of the OU Český Krumlov has already its tradition and its firm place. Similar cooperation between units of the Volunteer Fire Brigade of Municipalities takes place, for example, at fire units from Svatý Jan and Nove Hradky, where mutual visits and practical training take place with PO units in Austria (Weitra). Mutual interaction is due to geographic proximity and the same activity. The exchange of information and experience enriches both sides and leads to an important intersection of interest, such as the implementation of rescue work for the benefit of the affected population. Although the conditions and the system of rescue services are different, the mutual link is the same goal as protection and rescue of the population.

3.3. Exercise "Traffic accident of the České Velenice bus"

As part of the preparation for emergency response, a tactical training was conducted on 24 November 2010 with a focus on the intervention of the components of the integrated rescue system in the case of a traffic accident of a means of mass

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transportation of people in the border region of the South Bohemian Region. This was an exercise focused on cross-border co-operation in resolving an extraordinary event with more people.

The objectives of the exercises were formulated as follows:

- Verify co-operation between operational centers of the IRS components when requesting international assistance.
- Training of the co-operation of the IRS components in joint intervention with the rescue forces of Lower Austria.
- Improving the capabilities and capabilities of the IRS commanders and leaders in joint management, co-ordination of forces and resources.
- Training of Fire Brigade Operations and IZS Components in joint intervention in a traffic accident with a greater number of injured persons.

The exercise took place on the Czech side of the park, which is situated on the outskirts of the town of České Velenice. The park is located in the area of České Velenice - Gmünd. It consists of the Czech and Austrian industrial zones along both sides of the state border. On an area of about 50 hectares (of which 25 ha on the Czech and 25 ha on the Austrian side). The subject of the exercise was the situation when a crash of a passenger car with a bus occurred at approximately 15 pm at the intersection of local roads in the area of the České Velenice Park near the Czech-Austrian border.

3.4. Water Rescue Service of ČČK - cooperation with the Austrian Association

The Water Rescue Service (WRS ČČK) was established in 1968. In the past years, the importance of the Czech Railways Police Station has been gradually strengthened both in the region and internationally, especially in Austria. The WRS of ČČK contributes to the provision of the necessary professional assistance in terms of safety and prevention at its places of competence. Thanks to its activities, professionalism and reliability, the WRS ČČK is one of the other components of the integrated system, where it performs tasks in the field of prevention, rescue and first aid. It is important to work on the common services of the CzK ČKK on the Lipno water reservoir in Dolní Vltavice and also in the Austrian town of Feldkirchen, where it has been successfully operating for the saving of human lives for several years.

The international cooperation with the Austrian Water Rescue Service at all levels (youth co-operation, joint courses and trainings, etc.) is constantly developing. The further development of cross-border activities is aimed at establishing cooperation with the German Water Rescue Service (Deutsche Lebens-Rettungs-Gesellschaft eV, DLRG).

Within the framework of the project "Common activities of the WRS ČČK and Upper Austria" joint services were carried out with the Rescue Service from Upper Austria at the Lipno dam, organization of joint international exercises and seminars (rescue training course, frozen water rescue training, wildwater rescuer course) , international youth competition, international water competitions (international water marathon, international racing sport competitions) and the construction of the "Czech-Austrian Training Center and the Water Rescue Service Base" in Dolní Vltavice [4].

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3.5. *South Bohemian Region and cooperation with the Vysočina Region, the South Moravian Region and Lower Austria*

The South Bohemian Region under the "Cooperation Agreement between the South Moravian Region, the Vysočina Region, the South Bohemian Region and Lower Austria" is involved, among others, in the part aimed at mitigating the impact of extraordinary events on the population. The activities under the agreement are referred to as "Disaster protection" and are mainly aimed at continuing the good cooperation of experts in the event of floods or other disasters. Other activities covered by the agreement place emphasis on strengthening cooperation in the areas [3]:

- exchange of information on the preparation and management of specific disaster models (model situations),
- analysis of possible disaster models in border regions, strengths and means to address,
- education primarily in the thematic areas of crisis management and population protection,
- disaster risk analysis in the border zone or disaster with a potential for mutual assistance in the partner area,
- exchange of information and expertise in the field of disaster protection,
- exchanges of information on technical systems on alert, control, information, forecasting, development, disaster response,
- exchange of experience on cooperation and the role of voluntary organizations in disaster protection,
- cooperation and mutual participation in the exercises of the components of the integrated rescue system organized by the partners,
- training activities through co-operation or participation in joint exercises to protect against disasters or during mutual observation during exercise,
- Geographic information systems such as crisis management support,
- the use of information systems in the preparation and management of disasters - supporting the decision-making process.

Conclusion

The concept of population protection and crisis management is addressed in a multi-sectoral breadth and complexity. To ensure the safety of the population, its life, health, property and the environment, the crisis management authorities must use the available resources and resources. The system's preparedness to face current and foreseeable security threats and the associated emergencies and crisis situations can not be accomplished solely by deploying the forces and means of state security forces. There is a need to look for new ways, tools and procedures, namely to effectively involve all those who are able to help [1]. One of the possible ways of resolving new resolutions efficiently and improving the coordination of deployment of forces and resources in emergency situations and crisis situations is undoubtedly cross-border cooperation.

Ensuring coverage of the area (ie the distribution of forces and resources within a given territory) by individual rescue units is weaker in the border areas compared to the internal parts of the republic. Short distances, quick landing times, open borders

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are clear factors that clearly encourage the use of cross-border cooperation in rescue work, such as fire fighting, wounded relief in traffic accidents, large numbers of injured persons, etc. On the other hand, it is necessary to perceive a not quite common system of calling for cross-border units, a language barrier and a different system of rescue organizations and communication

Cross-border co-operation is often retired due to much larger projects within the European Union and its Civil Protection Mechanism. The cooperation of border regions is not always sufficiently promoted, although it is very important for the development of these areas. In addition to professional cooperation, personal contacts and many friendships also develop. Although the rescue systems are not totally identical, the case reports show that co-operation both in the preventive preparatory phase and in joint interventions is possible. Mutual rescuers combine their goal of protecting and saving human life and health. An important aspect is so-called "local safety", local security, where local resources are used to address emergencies.

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