Community Civil Protection Mechanism. Recast

2006/0009(CNS) - 26/01/2006 - Document attached to the procedure

COMMISSION'S IMPACT ASSESSMENT
For further information regarding the context of this issue, please refer to the summary of the Commission's proposal for a Council Decision establishing a Community civil protection mechanism (recast) - COM(2006)0029.

1- POLICY OPTIONS AND IMPACTS

The Commission considered three potential policy options.

1.1- Option 1: to reject any legislative initiative: this option would not allow the Community to achieve the policy objectives set by the European Council and the European Parliament

1.2- Option 2: to create a permanent European civil protection force: while drawing on Member States' civil protection teams, the force would be kept on standby at European level to respond rapidly to emergencies. Although this option presents various advantages, in particular relating to speed, effectiveness, visibility and coordination, it is, nevertheless, considered to be unrealistic at this stage of the mechanism's development because of the financial implications and the administrative and management challenges that it entails.

1.3- Option 3: to introduce a limited number of improvements in the Council Decision governing the mechanism: This approach would enable the Community to be more ambitious with regard to civil protection cooperation, while remaining pragmatic and cost-effective.

*CONCLUSION:***Option 3 was the Commission's preferred option.** It allows the Community to continue to build upon Member States' civil protection resources, as the principal means through which EU civil protection assistance is implemented, and to provide additional support to complement the Member States' resources. While avoiding the financial costs associated with option 2, the proposal guarantees an appropriate balance between supporting and complementing actions that will allow the Community, as a whole, to come to the aid of those affected by major emergencies.

IMPACTS

Costs: the main costs from this proposal are as follows:

Transport: the precise transport costs will depend on a number of elements, including the location, size and duration of an emergency. Based on past experience and the financial data presented in the '*Survey of the needs and existing markets in the field*

of air transport for members of Community intervention teams' of October 2004, the average transport costs for emergencies within the EU have been estimated at EUR 0.6 million per emergency. The transport costs associated with major emergencies outside the EU have been estimated at EUR 3 million per emergency.

Equipment: while the precise costs of additional Community support could vary significantly from emergency to emergency, depending on the type of support provided, the average cost has been estimated at approximately EUR 0.56 million per emergency.

Expert missions: the cost of an average expert mission, including logistical support, is estimated at EUR 4,000.

Increased funding levels for the new financial perspectives period, as foreseen in the proposal for a Rapid Response and Preparedness Instrument, should allow the Commission to gradually start implementing the new actions envisaged in the present proposal.

Benefits: The proposal will allow the Commission and the Member States to pursue an integrated approach that will provide the optimal level of support to Member States affected by major disasters. It will enable the Commission to address the main weaknesses of existing work on civil

protection, and ensure that effective assistance is provided immediately to those affected by major disasters. The proposal will allow recent events, new technologies and the lessons learnt from disasters to be taken into account and reflected in the future work of the mechanism. They will contribute to the Commission's overall policy of enhancing the security of EU citizens and showing solidarity with those who are affected by disasters.

Most importantly, the proposal will provide a legal basis for additional Community support complementing the Member States' assistance. The creation of a safety net at Community level – both with respect to transport and other means – provides all Member States with the reassurance of immediate civil protection assistance in times of need. It is a necessary step towards ensuring that the Community is capable of responding effectively to new terrorist and other threats.

2- FOLLOW-UP

The Commission shall evaluate the application of this Decision every third year from the date of its notification and transmit its conclusions to the European Parliament and the Council. The conclusions shall be accompanied, if appropriate, by proposals for amendments to this Decision.