

THE TASKS OF CRISIS HEADQUARTERS AT LOCAL LEVEL IN THE TIME OF EVACUATION¹

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Abstract

Crisis management at local level is an important element of crisis situations solving. Its task is to provide management in crisis situations outside the time of war and state of war. It creates conditions for effective precautions to protect life, health and property, analyses possible risk of creation of crisis situation and proposes measures to solve it. At local level, which in the Slovak Republic is represented mainly by cities and municipalities, the crisis management is performed by the crisis headquarters, an executive body of crisis management. These are the situations, during which the safety of the state, the city, citizens and their property is immediately threatened. To solve crisis situation an extraordinary situation, state of emergency or state of calamity can be declared. Crisis management outside the time of war is a sum of work of crisis management bodies, that are concentrating on analysing and evaluation of safety risks and menaces, planning and executing measures during crisis situation solving. The basic document of crisis headquarters is the Statute of crisis headquarters. It has a character of internal document and is usually developed on city or municipality level. The development is usually delegated on the responsible department or an expert employee. Its text is binding and in case of crisis management, all involved parties must be guided by it.

Keywords: crisis management, evacuation, evacuation committee

1 Introduction

One of the most important roles during the solving of crisis situations outside the time of war and state of war belongs to the crisis management.² Crisis situation is the time period, during which the safety of the state, the city, citizens and their property, is immediately threatened.³ Crisis management fulfills an especially significant role at local level, where the first contact with the crisis situation takes place. At local level it undertakes the necessary steps to protect lives, health and property of citizens.⁴ On municipal or city level the crisis management is performed by the crisis headquarters.⁵ The crisis headquarters of the city has jurisdiction over the entire city area, city districts and forests owned by the city. It is an analytical, planning, coordinating and controlling body of the mayor. The chairman of crisis headquarters is the mayor of the city.⁶ The mayor is designating members of the crisis headquarters according to his own considering and according to the needs of the crisis headquarters. Vice-chairmen of the crisis headquarters of the city are usually the deputy mayor and the head of municipal office. Members of crisis headquarters are the chief of municipal police, heads of the specialized units, an employee of section of civil protection, connections, telephonists and other persons. The head of municipal office is also the speaker of the crisis headquarters.⁷ Based on the decision of chairman, other persons from public administration, self-government, businessmen or specialists can be summoned to join the proceedings. These additional persons are summoned according to need and only on request of the crisis

1 This article is a revised version of a text presented at an international conference in Skopje, Macedonia on September 25, 2013.

2 The study is developed on model case of the City of Považská Bystrica.

3 *Štatút krízového štábu Mesta Považská Bystrica*. Považská Bystrica : Mestský úrad, 2011.

4 For more detailed reading on crisis management see: KÚTIK, J.: *Organizácia a krízový manažment verejnej správy*. - 1.vyd. - Trenčín : Trenčianska univerzita Alexandra Dubčeka v Trenčíne, Fakulta sociálno-ekonomických vzťahov, 2006. ISBN 80-8075-142-0; KÚTIK, J. - HRTÁNEK, L.: *Úvod a teória krízového manažmentu a jeho právny vývoj*. - 1.vyd. - Trenčín : Trenčianska univerzita Alexandra Dubčeka v Trenčíne - Fakulta sociálno-ekonomických vzťahov, 2006. - ISBN 80-8075-166-8.; JANAS, K. - BUŠŠA, M.: *Crisis Management at Regional Level in the Slovak Republic*. In: *Global Security and Challenge of the 21st Century*. Skopje : MIT University, 2012. ISBN 978-608-4589-12-9.

5 Zákon NR SR č. 387/ 2002 Z. z. o riadení štátu v krízových situáciách mimo času vojny a vojnového stavu a Zákon č. 42/1994 Z. z. o civilnej ochrane obyvateľstva v znení neskorších predpisov.

6 *Štatút krízového štábu Mesta Považská Bystrica*. Považská Bystrica : Mestský úrad, 2011.

7 *Štatút krízového štábu Mesta Považská Bystrica*. Považská Bystrica : Mestský úrad, 2011.

headquarters.⁸ Additional persons are obligated to attend the proceedings and submit required documents, propose specialized solutions of Crisis Situation and meet the demands and decisions of crisis headquarters to solve the crisis situation.⁹ Failure to meet the responsibilities is fined according to the law.¹⁰ A distinctive position belongs to the crisis headquarters secretariat of the city. It consists most usually of the secretariat of mayor. In case of need, it can be broadened by other city hall employees, according to proposal and by decision of the crisis headquarters chairman. Secretariat technically facilitates the workplace of the crisis headquarters. According to need, it creates an expedition group equipped with a vehicle and specialized tools to gather more information. It prepares proposals to solve the crisis situation for the mayor. It puts out studies and reports to superior and subordinate bodies, according to established information system. It creates overviews of crisis situation consequences elimination, deployment of forces and resources, requests and granting of help. It processes and files records from crisis headquarters proceedings.¹¹ The city crisis headquarters creates several working committees. These committees act simultaneously with the crisis headquarters according to specific solution of the crisis situation in accordance with their statute and executive plans. The crisis headquarters has following committees:

- a) city flood committee,
- b) city anti-contagion committee,
- c) city evacuation committee,
- d) committee for allocation economy,
- e) shelter committee.¹²

2 Role of the Evacuation Committee

A specialized position within crisis headquarters belongs to the evacuation committee. Evacuation committee is one of the most important auxiliary, advisory and coordinating bodies of the mayor and the crisis headquarters of the city in respect to crisis management. Its creation was based on the Ministry of Interior decree¹³, which is also regulating it.¹⁴ It has several main tasks, determined by its status. One of the top responsibilities is to establish contact with evacuation bodies of the circuit. Evacuation committee is closely cooperating with them and answers to their requests and proposals. It organizes common action with all evacuation bodies in the circuit.¹⁵ Evacuation committee has a duty to inform circuit evacuation committee about the course of the evacuation process. It is presenting it with proposals over matters that are out of jurisdiction of the city committee itself and executes the decisions and orders of the crisis headquarters. It submits daily reports about the state and course of evacuation to the evacuation committee of the circuit.¹⁶ It issues an alert for agencies, forces, means and cooperative bodies of the city, that are in control of evacuation.¹⁷ It decides what forces and capacities are necessary for the evacuation in the city. It takes other measures as they result form the range and character of evacuation and from the measures taken by crisis headquarters of the circuit.¹⁸

In order to fulfill the tasks, that are based on law acts and the statute, the committee needs to have an evacuation plans and time schedule prepared. The evacuation of inhabitants is a serious decision, which takes place in case of danger and under the exceptional circumstances. Evacuation can only take place after previous declaration of the exceptional circumstances. There has to be decided the length of the time, for which living in the area is going to be restricted. This decision is usually made only after the evacuation has started. Depending on the seriousness of the exceptional circumstances, the compulsory time restraint on the endangered area is:

- a) short term with the return within 72 hours,

8 Zákon NR SR č. 387/2002 Z. z. o riadení štátu v krízových situáciách mimo času vojny.

9 Zákon NR SR č. 42/1994 Z. z. o civilnej ochrane obyvateľstva v znení neskorších predpisov, § 15, § 16, § 19, § 20, § 21, § 22, § 23, § 25.

10 Zákon NR SR č. 387/2002 Z. z. o riadení štátu v krízových situáciách mimo času vojny a vojnového stavu a Zákon NR SR č. 42/1994 Z. z. o civilnej ochrane obyvateľstva v znení neskorších predpisov.

11 Zákon NR SR č. 42/1994 Z. z. o civilnej ochrane obyvateľstva v znení neskorších predpisov

12 *Štatút krízového štábu Mesta Považská Bystrica*. Považská Bystrica : Mestský úrad, 2011.

13 Vyhláška Ministerstva vnútra č. 75/1995 Z.z., § 7, ods. 1.

14 Vyhláška Ministerstva vnútra č. 75/1995 Z.z., § 7, ods. 4, 5 a 6.

15 *Štatút evakuačnej komisie Mesta Považská Bystrica*. Považská Bystrica . Mestský úrad, 2012. The evacuation committee cooperates with the evacuation committees of the municipalities designated to receive evacuated personnel and helps to fulfill tasks in the places of accommodation.

16 The news are always submitted before 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. It reports the state at 6 a.m. and 6 p.m..

17 Vyhláška Ministerstva vnútra Slovenskej republiky č. 523/2006 Z. z. o podrobnostiach na zabezpečenie záchranných prác a organizovania jednotiek civilnej ochrany v znení neskorších predpisov.

18 Metodický pokyn Úradu krízového manažmentu Ministerstva vnútra Slovenskej republiky pre krajské úrady a obvodné úrady na zjednotenie postupu koordinácie činnosti obcí pri plnení niektorých úloh na úseku obrany štátu a hospodárskej mobilizácie v období krízovej situácie, č. p.: ZU - 96/ÚO-2006 zo dňa 25. mája 2006.

b) long term with the return after 72 hours.

Evacuation measures on the level of the city consist of two parts - information set and expert staffing of evacuation.¹⁹ The information set must contain information about notifying the evacuation committee and facilities and about reaching preparedness. The mayor is responsible for its development. The second set consists of information concerning ways to declare the evacuation. It is usually done through the local radio.²⁰

3 Evacuation Committee Composition

Evacuation committee is responsible for the preparation and complex provision of the organizational, technical and material evacuation measures. It controls the state and process of expert provision of the evacuation. It directs, manages and controls the evacuation process, declares the special regime of life, supervises over order and safety in evacuated area and in evacuation facilities. The expert staff of the evacuation consists of security, traffic, medical and supply personnel. It is solely up to the evacuation committee to decide what is the course of evacuation going to be. A part of what the expert staff prepares are the time norms for evacuation. The evacuation committee and evacuation facilities are – in case of emergency - starting their work according to these time norms. The evacuation committee has to be prepared within 3 hours, the evacuation center within 4 hours. The departure bus station for the evacuated persons must also start working within 4 hours, while the other departure stations must be functioning within 6 hours. The arrival station for the evacuated persons, regulating post and the accommodation facility must be functioning within 5 hours. The evacuation and transport must start in less than 4 hours since the evacuation was declared. In case of railroad transport, the time limit is 6 hours. Evacuation of inhabitants should be planned to be complete within 72 hours. In case of short term evacuation the time norms are adjusted according to conditions.²¹

The chairman of the evacuation committee is the mayor. He designates the vice chairman and other members by a decree. The membership in the evacuation committee is not transferable and members cannot be substituted without the approval of the chairman.²² The evacuation committee meetings are called to order by the chairman. He also leads the meetings and sets the agenda. The evacuation committee meetings take place either according to the plan of the meetings, or it is called to order by the chairman in necessary cases or in exceptional circumstances.²³ There must be at least one meeting a year. The summary from the meeting is passed in form of a decree. The evacuation committee chairman proposes to the chairman of the circuit evacuation committee solutions to end the evacuation. He is also responsible for the committee, its readiness to direct evacuation works and to cooperate with other committees. The chairman assigns tasks to the individual members, facilities and evacuation bodies in order to ensure evacuation and he oversees their fulfillment. A delegated deputy, which is usually the deputy mayor, proposes organizational measures in respect to committee actions and attends the supervising activities at his section of evacuation measures. His responsibility is agenda-setting and summarizing of the basic organizational documentation. The deputy organizes calling the committee meetings to order and prepares documentation and overviews for the meetings. He also organizes activities in the committee and creates the summary from the meeting. If the chairman is absent, he fully takes over his responsibilities and powers. Members of the committee – through the executive bodies – operatively control activities that lead to safety of the citizens and to creation of conditions for unproblematic reaching of evacuation measures. They process the expert documentation on evacuation measures for their respective specialization. The members of the evacuation committee attend the supervising activities at their section of evacuation measures. They also prepare documentation and propose suggestions to reach individual tasks during evacuation. The committee members are obligated to perpetually increase their expertise by attending seminars and trainings. On their expert field they ensure permanent readiness and monitoring in order to know the actual state. The responsibility for the readiness of their representative in the evacuation committee lies on the director of the respective bodies or organizations.²⁴ The documentation of the evacuation committee of the city consists of:

1. statute of the evacuation committee,

19 *Štatút evakuačnej komisie Mesta Považská Bystrica*. Považská Bystrica . Mestský úrad, 2012.

20 *Štatút evakuačnej komisie Mesta Považská Bystrica*. Považská Bystrica . Mestský úrad, 2012. Based on the instruction of the mayor, or the city office employee, or on the new information about the situation, the prepared message in the local radio is changed and after the consent of the mayor the message is aired.

21 *Plán evakuácie Mesta Považská Bystrica*. Materiál č. 8288/2010. Považská Bystrica : mestský úrad, 2010.

22 *Štatút evakuačnej komisie Mesta Považská Bystrica*. Považská Bystrica . Mestský úrad, 2012.

23 *Plán evakuácie Mesta Považská Bystrica*. Materiál č. 8288/2010. Považská Bystrica : mestský úrad, 2010. After calling the evacuation committee meeting to order, the mayor informs the members about what does he know at the time, what has been done and what is the further plan of action. He gives specific instructions to individual members of the committee and assigns responsibility for their fulfillment. He sets the order of tasks and time limits for their fulfillment. He personally manages and oversees the fulfillment of tasks by individual members and the members of the evacuation facilities.

24 *Štatút evakuačnej komisie Mesta Považská Bystrica*. Považská Bystrica . Mestský úrad, 2012.

2. naming decrees,
3. extract form the "Analysis of the Považská Bystrica circuit area",
4. evacuation plan of the city,
5. overviews of the expert views on the evacuation,
6. auxiliary documentation of the evacuation committee,
7. regulation of the Ministry of Interior no. 75/1995 Z.z.,
8. statement documentation – maps, chronicle of activities, forms,
9. the plan of activities and records of the evacuation committee of the city,
10. summaries from the evacuation committee meetings.²⁵

Evacuation committee elaborates an overview of numbers of evacuated persons.²⁶ During the evacuation, the inhabitants of the city are divided into groups:²⁷

- a) children from schools and school establishments,
- b) housewives with children,
- c) disabled citizens in households with others providing care,
- d) children from healthcare and social care establishments,
- e) other ill from healthcare and social care establishments,
- f) employees of the state, public sector, self government, persons and corporations with possible inclusion of their family members,
- g) other inhabitants.²⁸

4 Evacuation

Based on given situation, evacuation committee can favor some groups of inhabitants. The favored groups can most obviously be children from schools and school establishments, ill from healthcare and social care establishments, or disabled citizens in households with others providing care. In such cases their family members, or others providing care to them, can also be favored. Special position within the evacuation belongs to the saving of valuable property. Valuable property of the city is modified through security project of the city office. The security of valuables and money belonging to the evacuated persons is solved individually by the separate owners and within the evacuation luggage weight limit.²⁹ The city police has an important role during the evacuation. After receiving the message, the unit currently in service at the moment confirms the message and the extent of measures that are being taken, from the source. The gathered information is to be written to the *Recorder of news and notices*. The next step is to watch the news programs, while summoning the members of the evacuation committee and evacuation facilities according to prepared plan of connection. City police in cooperation with the Police of the SR ensures order and safety during the evacuation. Their joint task is to secure unproblematic course of the evacuation, avoiding panic and in case of floods they close the area to protect the property of the people. The first to act is the city police, which acts independently until the arrival of the state police. After their arrival, the city police must cooperate with the state police and local forces of the civil protection.³⁰

The evacuation committee decides the means of transportation and directs the transportation of evacuated persons through the city area. The committee also decides about medical assistance during the evacuation process. The medical care is provided by the Emergency medical services, with each covering its part of the evacuation area. Evacuation committee decides about the emergency supplies for the evacuated personnel. The food is usually distributed in school and preschool facilities outside the evacuated area that have kitchens with enough spare capacity. Evacuation committee also prepares a report on its own activities and summarizes the economic costs and loses associated with the evacuation.³¹

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25 *Plán evakuácie Mesta Považská Bystrica*. Materiál č. 8288/2010. Považská Bystrica : mestský úrad, 2010.

26 Vyhláška Ministerstva vnútra SR č.75/1995 Z. z., § 6 ods.2.

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