

Emergency management and terrorism preparedness

Denmark has a well-functioning day-to-day emergency management system which is also geared to handle major incidents – including acts of terror

Emergency management level and sector responsibility

The Danish Security and Intelligence Service performs regular assessments of the current terror threat against Denmark. This assessment forms the basis for the Danish authorities' emergency management level.

The fundamental principle of emergency management is sector responsibility. This means that the authority or organisation with the day-to-day responsibility for a certain area also has the responsibility for that area in case of a terrorist act.

Emergency management in connection with major incidents

The task and structure of the fire and rescue services are the same irrespective of whether an accident has been caused by terrorism or by some other event.

Multi-level emergency management means that the municipal fire and rescue services handle the initial deployment in the case of a terrorist attack.

If the municipalities need assistance in the form of special-purpose equipment or additional personnel, the five regional fire and rescue centres of the Danish Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) and DEMA's volunteer centre in Hedehusene can offer reinforcement and assistance.

In the case of major incidents, DEMA can rapidly reinforce with up to 1,150 conscripts, non-commissioned officers and volunteers.

Within 48 hours, DEMA can increase its manpower by a further 500 discharged conscripts and non-commissioned officers of the reserve.

In extraordinary situations, the police and the fire and rescue services may call for assistance from the armed forces and the home guard.

Local co-ordination

In case of major incidents, including counter-terrorist responses, the collective response of the fire and rescue services, the police and the armed forces will be coordinated by local emergency management staffs.

These include personnel from the police, DEMA, the armed forces and other relevant authorities. The local staffs carry out their work in the police districts involved.

National co-ordination

Centrally, a national operational staff may be established, normally based with the Danish National Police. The national, operational staff strengthens co-ordination between the Danish National Police, Defence Command Denmark, DEMA and other civilian authorities.

In addition, the national operational staff contributes in providing the government with comprehensive knowledge of a given incident.

CBRN terrorism

In the case of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) terrorism, special precautions are needed.

In all incidents involving chemical substances, DEMA's chemical laboratory – the National Response Laboratory – can assist the on-site response commander and perform substance analyses.

The Danish Centre for Biosecurity and Biopreparedness assists in the case of terrorist attacks involving biological agents.

The National Institute of Radiation Protection assists in the case of incidents involving radiological agents.

In the event of a nuclear incident, DEMA's nuclear emergency management system will be activated. DEMA monitors and analyses measurements from observing stations in Denmark and abroad on a daily basis.



DEMA's CBRN vehicles may be deployed in the case of terrorist acts which might involve chemical or biological agents