

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

COM (89) 25 final

Brussels, 20 April 1989

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL

Community cooperation on protection and assistance in the case of a nuclear accident or radiological emergency

SUMMARY OF THE COMMUNICATION OF THE COMMISSION

A Community initiative in the field of nuclear protection and assistance has to take into account both the networks of bilateral cooperation agreements between States and the international Convention. With regard to these factors, a Community initiative has to avoid any duplication of effort and bring added value, which takes full advantage of the bonds of solidarity existing between the Member States and the very advanced state of development of the nuclear field in the Community.

In the light of the consultations it has held, the Commission wishes to promote Community cooperation on matters of prevention and nuclear assistance in respect of certain particular aspects, so as to fill out and add to the arrangements already made in other areas.

In actual fact, the approach taken and the areas of cooperation that have been identified with the help of experts from the Member States bear some resemblance to those adopted in respect of conventional civil protection which led to the Council Resolution of June 1987. This will enable the Commission to systematize the cooperation mechanisms and to harmonize the Community arrangements for cooperation in the areas of civil protection and assistance in the case of a nuclear accident.

In particular, it would like to :

- hold periodical meetings on protection and assistance, between the members of a network of correspondents in the Member States;
- work towards better utilization of the structures and resources available in the event of a nuclear accident or a radiological emergency;
- set up an inventory of resources available for use in countermeasures against nuclear accidents.

The Commission requests the Council to lend its support to the proposed action.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION
TO THE COUNCIL

Community cooperation on protection and assistance in the case of a nuclear accident or radiological emergency

I. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT OF THE PROPOSAL

1. In its framework communication of 13 June 1986 (1) on the consequences of the Chernobyl nuclear accident, the Commission declared its intention to lay a proposal before the Council on the implementation of a Community system for mutual assistance in emergencies.

Since this was a complex field in which the national responsibility certainly outweighs that of the Community, the Commission intended to conduct a number of consultations beforehand.

2. The Chernobyl accident also showed that it would be useful to set up a system of mutual assistance on the broadest international basis and, at the special session of the General Conference of the IAEA held in Vienna from 24 to 26 September 1986, an international Convention on assistance in the case of a nuclear accident or radiological emergency was adopted. It has so far been signed by 74 States, including eleven Member States.

(1) COM(86) 327-final, 13.6.1986

3. The Commission has recommended that the Community accede to this international Convention. The formal proposal was laid before the Council in January 1987 (2).

The arguments developed in favour of accession are connected with the existence of the Joint Research Center (JRC) and are based, in brief, on :

- the advantage that the JRC might benefit if need be from the assistance provided for under the Convention;
- the possibility that the JRC could contribute, by using its own resources, to an international assistance action set on foot pursuant to the Convention.

This proposal similarly expresses the opinion that the broadest international cooperation is necessary on mutual nuclear assistance and also demonstrates the Commission's willingness to cooperate in the closest possible way with the IAEA.

The Council has discussed the proposal but has not yet made a decision on it.

4. The consultations with the experts from the Member States that were announced by the Commission took place on 10/11 December 1986 and 23 February 1987. The setting up of the international Convention on assistance was one of the basic factors to be taken into account.

These consultations made it possible to single out a number of themes which would lend themselves to worthwhile Community cooperation and it was on the basis of these results that the Commission prepared this communication.

5. Incidentally, it should be recalled that Community cooperation on conventional civil protection was set on foot following the resolution of the Council and the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting in the Council, of 25 June 1987. The developments of this cooperation were emphasized in the resolution of the Council and the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting in the Council, of 13 February 1989.

This cooperation covers very different fields but excludes a number of risks, one of which is the nuclear one. This line taken in this dossier and the areas of cooperation adopted may, however, indicate some useful lessons which could be drawn for protection and assistance in case of a nuclear accident.

II. NATURE OF COMMUNITY COOPERATION

6. A Community initiative in the field of nuclear protection and assistance has to take into account both the networks of bilateral cooperation agreements between States and the international Convention. With regard to these factors, a Community initiative has to avoid any duplication of effort and bring added value, which takes full advantage of the bonds of solidarity existing between the Member States and the very advanced state of development of the nuclear field in the Community.
7. In comparison with the national and bilateral level, a Community cooperation should seek to take advantage of the economies of scale by putting existing structures and resources to the best possible use and to promote the dissemination throughout the Member States of knowledge and practices which will help in protecting the public.
8. The international Convention on assistance itself provides that the States may conclude bilateral or multilateral arrangements in order to make it easier to achieve its objectives. It thus makes it possible for international action to be supplemented by the actions taken at a regional level.
9. The Commission's contribution must not, therefore, be in lieu of the existing networks, agreements and Convention but must be concentrated on certain aspects where it will bring added value.
10. A Community initiative may also offer a benefit to the individual European citizen by demonstrating the pooling of resources intended for protecting the public.

III. ELEMENTS OF COOPERATION

11. The Chernobyl accident clearly showed that a nuclear accident can have consequences reaching far beyond national boundaries and might call on the resources of several Member States acting in concert.

It should therefore be made easier to provide rapid assistance in the case of a nuclear accident or radiological emergency so as to minimize its effects as far as possible and to protect life, property and the environment from the effects of radioactivity releases.

Assistance may be in the form of providing experts, equipment and materials. It may cover medical treatment or the temporary evacuation of persons affected by the accident to the territory of another Member State.

Assistance is facilitated by the prior collection and exchange of information and data relevant to protection against nuclear accidents. In addition to the experts, equipment and materials, this will cover the methods, techniques and available research results relating to action taken in the event of nuclear accidents.

12. The contacts with the experts from the Member States have singled out three areas where cooperation is possible:

- (a) setting up a network of correspondents with the task of exchanging information on preventive and crisis measures;
- (b) drawing up an inventory of equipment and specialized services;
- (c) defining several research themes connected with protection and assistance in the case of a nuclear accident.

The experts have also stressed the importance of effective dissemination of information in disaster management.

III.1. Setting up a network of correspondents

13. The likely function of a network of correspondents would be to ensure good cooperation between the Member States' authorities responsible for protection against nuclear accidents with a view to promoting effective assistance in the case of a nuclear accident. The contacts and periodic meetings between correspondents would encourage them to keep each other informed and would provide the basis for an exchange of views between specialists on the activities of each Member State. They would make possible discussion and dissemination of the innovations and progress made by the Member States in finding the ways and means for taking action.

14. More specifically, the members of the network of correspondents could carry out the following tasks:

- communicating adequate information for completing the list of different agreements regulating cooperation between Member States in the event of a nuclear accident; an initial list was drawn up by a group of experts as part of a study on transfrontier planning of emergency assistance published by the Commission in 1986 (3);
- identifying the human and material resources that can be made available for rendering assistance;

(3) Objectives and methods of transfrontier planning of emergency assistance in the countries of the European Community in the event of an accident in a nuclear installation.

- looking into the possibilities for:
 - . economies of scale, particularly by using standard equipment wherever necessary if the financial size or technical importance of the investment justifies it;
 - . incorporating a list of these resources in a database;
 - coordinating Community action with that of the IAEA;
 - encouraging informal meetings between experts on specific points;
 - promoting simulation exercises and encouraging observers from the different Member States to take part;
 - conducting joint discussions and examining questions such as:
 - . standardization of emergency equipment;
 - . harmonization of technical language.
 - profiting from the lessons that are likely to be drawn in order to give more effective assistance.
15. The members of the network of correspondents could meet once a year at the Commission's request.
16. In the event of a nuclear accident in the Community or an accident in a non-member State which has repercussions in the Community, the role of the network of correspondents would be as follows:
- setting up, after the accident, a rapid exchange of information on the scale of requirements and the corresponding assistance that each country can usefully provide; to do this, the correspondents would use the network of contact points set up within the framework of the Community system for information exchange in the case of an accident and within that of the international Conventions;
 - in the light of this information it would be able to:
 - (a) set in motion the action required while avoiding duplication of effort;
 - (b) initiate additional action where this would be useful, if necessary joint action between several Member States or between Member States and the Community;

- it would monitor the assistance being given throughout the different phases of the accident.

III.2. Inventory of equipment and specialized services

17. The consultations with the experts also showed the advantages of setting up a joint inventory of resources which the Member States can make available in response to nuclear accidents. This information list could be in the form of a register or a computer database.
18. The Commission's departments have carried out a preliminary study of ways of classifying the equipment and the means of rendering assistance after a nuclear accident. This work could make it possible to propose a common format for an inventory and to make the national inventories easier for all to understand.

The catalogue could include:

- the equipment;
- the materials which could be used after a nuclear accident;
- the specialized services: fire-fighting, hospital, evacuation and rehousing services;
- technical advisers;
- specialized firms or organizations.

Resources could be classified in accordance with the phase of the accident, the place and the purpose of the action taken.

19. The inventory could be prepared by the Commission with the help of the members of the network of correspondents referred to in section III.1. above.

III.3. Research themes

20. Several research themes identified as being linked with nuclear protection and assistance have been put forward and discussed from the technical angle with the experts from the Member States consulted by the Commission.

Many of them have now been adopted in the revised version of the radiation protection research programme and in the JRC's programme for 1988-91. These programmes pursue the twin aim of improving the standard of preparation and preventive measures against nuclear accidents and of being better able to evaluate their radiological consequences, while taking into consideration the situation that prevailed after the Chernobyl accident.

The following are the research projects:

- evaluation of the reliability and validity of models for the atmospheric transport of radioactive materials over long distances;
- databank of environmental radioactivity levels;
- evaluation of data for the transport of radionuclides into the food chain;
- feasibility of epidemiological studies on the health of the population;
- radiological aspects of the scenarios following a nuclear accident;
- data for establishing derived reference levels in the case of an emergency;
- improvement of practical countermeasures in respect of the rural and aquatic environment;
- improvement of practical countermeasures in respect of the urban environment;
- improvement of practical countermeasures in respect of preventive medicine;
- measurement and surveillance in an accident situation;
- methodologies for treating exposed persons.

21. Without taking over the role of the bodies responsible for research, this discussion has been fruitful and in future it would be desirable for the various research programmes that are linked with nuclear protection and assistance activities to be put forward and discussed with the members of the network of correspondents referred to in section III.1. above.

III.4. Information exchange

17. The consultations conducted by the Commission have made clear how important it is to have good information disseminated widely at two levels:

first, among those responsible for accident prevention in each Member State;

second, among the populations concerned.

23. Certain measures have already been taken or proposed with a view to ensuring that the information supplied after a nuclear accident is consistent and unambiguous and properly distributed.

(a) on the international level, the Convention on early notification of a nuclear accident provides for mutual supply of information between the States likely to be affected.

(b) on the Community level, Council Decision 87/600/Euratom of 14 December 1987 lays down the arrangements for the early exchange of information between the Member States; as regards the information to be supplied, this Decision follows the international Convention and supplements it on certain points; in particular, it provides for mutual information on "the measures taken, or planned, to inform the public" (Article 3(h)).

(c) in addition to these measures the Commission has drafted a proposal for a Directive on informing the public; this has to be undertaken by the national authorities in the following two contexts:

- throughout the period of validity of the regulations permitting the initiation and organization of emergency measures, the population concerned must be given, in an appropriate manner, general information on radioactivity and the nature of the radiological emergencies considered possible and more detailed information on emergency health protection measures and evacuation plans;

- in addition, in an actual radiological emergency the population affected must as soon as possible and repeatedly thereafter be supplied with information which, depending on the prevailing situation, covers radioactivity, the nature of the radiological emergency and its development, the emergency measures taken with regard to the public and the conduct to be adopted.

24. Incidentally, the Commission is well aware of the importance, quality and content of the information and it dedicated the first meeting of the Standing Conference on Health and Safety in the Nuclear Age to this matter. This meeting proved useful in providing an opportunity for an exchange of ideas and experience between various groupings on the question of informing the public and the media on health protection and nuclear safety. The Commission will continue to stimulate reflection at the next meeting of the Conference.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

25. In the light of the consultations it has held, the Commission wishes to promote Community cooperation on matters of prevention and nuclear assistance in respect of certain particular aspects, so as to fill out and add to the arrangements already made in other areas.

In actual fact, the approach taken and the areas of cooperation that have been identified with the help of experts from the Member States bear some resemblance to those adopted in respect of conventional civil protection which led to the Council Resolution of June 1987. This will enable the Commission to systematize the cooperation mechanisms and to harmonize the Community arrangements for cooperation in the areas of civil defence and assistance in the case of a nuclear accident.

26. In particular, it would like to:

- hold periodical meetings on protection and assistance, between the members of a network of correspondents in the Member States;
- work towards better utilization of the structures and resources available in the event of a nuclear accident or a radiological emergency;
- set up an inventory of resources available for use in countermeasures against nuclear accidents.

27. The Commission requests the Council to lend its support to the proposed action.

FICHE D'IMPACT SUR LA COMPETITIVITE ET L'EMPLOI

I. Quelle est la justification principale de la mesure?

Renforcement de la coopération communautaire dans le domaine de la protection et de l'assistance en cas d'accident nucléaire.

II. Caractéristiques des entreprises concernées. En particulier:

(a) Y a-t-il un grand nombre de PME? non

(b) Note-t-on des concentrations dans des régions?

i. éligibles aux aides régionales des Etats membres? oui non

ii. éligibles au FEDER? oui non

III. Quelles sont les obligations imposées directement aux entreprises?

Rien

IV. Quelles sont les obligations susceptibles d'être imposées indirectement aux entreprises via les autorités locales?

Rien

V. Y a-t-il des mesures spéciales pour les PME?

non

oui Lesquelles?:

VI. Quel est l'effet prévisible?

(a) sur la compétitivité des entreprises:

nul

(b) sur l'emploi:

nul

VII. Les partenaires sociaux ont-ils été consultés?

non

oui Quels sont leurs avis:

FICHE FINANCIERE

1. Ligne budgétaire concernée : 664 "Radioprotection"
2. Montant des crédits inscrits sur cette ligne pour l'exercice
1989 : CE 2.000.000 ECU
CP 2.000.000 ECU

3. Montant de la dépense découlant des action objet de la communication :

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| a) au titre de l'année en cours :- | 90.000 ECU |
| b) au titre de l'année 1990 : | 90.000 ECU |
| au titre de l'année 1991 | 90.000 ECU |
| au titre de l'année 1992 | 90.000 ECU |
| au titre de l'année 1993 | 90.000 ECU |

La disponibilité dépendra des crédits inscrits au budget des exercices ultérieurs.

4. Incidence financière de l'action sur les crédits d'intervention :

Les actions objet de la présente communication n'impliquent pas la mise à disposition de moyens financiers ou en personnel supplémentaires. Elles sont financées à 100 % par le budget communautaire.

- 4.1. Il s'agit d'une action à durée de cinq années, renouvelable.

- Les frais sont imputés à la ligne 664 "Radioprotection".

- 4.1.1. Mode calcul

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| - Consultation d'autorités nationales, d'experts scientifiques et d'organisations Internationales (frais de déplacement et de séjour pour les réunions et les missions) | 20.000 ECU |
| - Etudes dans le domaine de l'organisation des moyens de lutte contre les accidents nucléaires | 50.000 ECU |
| - Frais de secrétariat | 20.000 ECU |
| | <u>90.000 ECU</u> |

- 4.1.2. La répartition des dépenses sera identique pour les années suivantes.

5. Implications financières en ce qui concerne les dotations en personnel

- 5.1. Personnel supplémentaire nécessaire :
néant. L'action sera exécutée par le personnel existant.

6. Financement des dépenses d'intervention

- 6.1. financement possible par crédits inscrits au chapitre concerné dans le budget en cours d'exécution.