Knowledge from lessons learned

The objective of the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) is to strengthen society’s ability to prevent and deal with emergencies, from small traffic accidents up to serious emergency incidents. Society can learn from past experience by evaluation and follow-up in a continuous process where experience is used to organise and develop tasks for entities within civil emergency planning. Evaluation and lessons learned from emergencies and disasters, supervision and monitoring, the need for new research and support for civil emergency planning are important tasks for the strengthening of societal safety and security and to support prevention, preparedness, response and recovery throughout the disaster management cycle.

Funding research which reduce risks and strengthens emergency preparedness

One of the MSB’s tasks is to fund research. The goal of the MSB as a research funder is to contribute to the build-up of knowledge among those parts of society that work with the prevention and management of emergencies and disasters.

The MSB coordinates, directs, commissions, quality-assures and conveys research that aims to strengthen Sweden’s emergency preparedness and reduce societal risks and vulnerabilities.

Research in the field of civil protection and emergency preparedness embraces many scientific disciplines, i.e. societal, technical, natural and behavioural. Multi-disciplinary and cross-sector research efforts are encouraged. Most of the funding is announced openly during the year.

To further strengthen the build-up of societal knowledge we actively work with other stakeholders both nationally and internationally. We aim to develop our external cooperation, for example, through networks with other authorities, the private sector, organisations and the education sector. Internationally we identify suitable cooperation partners and strive towards attaining improved cooperation within our area of research.

Lessons learned from past events

The MSB stimulates cross-sector learning from past events and provides access to facts, statistics and expertise within the area of learning from emergencies and disasters in order to improve safety work at various levels.

One of our primary tasks is to provide a collective overview and assessment of incident and accident trends and safety work in society, thus giving decision-makers and the public a broad and unbiased overview of the present situation and trends of emergencies in different sectors. To achieve this task, the MSB develops and maintains a number of reporting systems, databases and web applications, e.g. for the response of local fire brigades, as well as for chemical emergencies, major incidents, natural disasters and fatal fires. The work also includes an estimation of the economic burden of injuries as well as of investments in safety. The effectiveness of different safety measures is evaluated by means of cost-benefit analyses.

The MSB works with the entire emergency cycle, in other words, before, during and after the occurrence of emergencies, crises and disasters, which provides good opportunities to adopt a holistic perspective and to gain experience from incidents. Regardless of whether it is one person that is affected, for example, in an accident in the home, or if it is a serious emergency that could have consequences for the entire country or even other countries as well.

The objective of the Swedish Civil Contingency Agency (MSB) is to strengthen society’s ability to prevent and handle accidents and severe peacetime emergencies. Society can learn from past experience by evaluation and follow-up in a continuous process where experience is being used to organise and develop tasks for the actors in the civil emergency planning system. Evaluation and learning from accidents and disasters, supervision and monitoring, need for new research and support for civil emergency planning activities are important tasks in order to strengthen societal safety and to support prevention, preparedness, response and recovery throughout the disaster management cycle.
In order to improve the learning processes development projects and training are carried out within relevant areas such as incident reporting, accident investigation, statistical analysis and observer missions.

**Supported supervision**

The MSB also perform supervision and provides guidance on supervision for other inspectorates, in order to follow-up, examine and evaluate activities within its area of responsibility. These responsibilities include civil protection, emergency response, control of dangerous substances, transport of dangerous substances, handling of flammables and explosives etc. Experience and results from our work are used to decide on further inspections and are provided to other departments within the MSB that are responsible for development regulations, policies and training. Cooperation and communication with other authorities is an essential part of our work.