



COST Action TU0604 *Integrated Fire Engineering and Response*  
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# Fire brigade tasks, reports and investigations in the Polish realities

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## Outline

- A bit of history
- System changes
- Main tasks and responsibilities of the State Fire Service of Poland,
- Reports
- Investigations
- Other tasks





## A bit of history

- The Group of Organization of the State Fire Service was brought into existence by the Minister of Interior in April 1991. Their task was to prepare a new concept of the rescue system and develop new law acts, updated to new realities after political & economical changes in Poland. On 25 Feb 1992 the Chairman of the Group – gen. Feliks Dela was appointed to a position of the Chief Commandant of the State Fire Service,
- The **State Fire Service** as the institution was formally organized on 1 July 1992 and the new law acts (**on Fire Protection** and **on State Fire Service**) started to be implemented simultaneously,
- The next very important step was to create the **National Firefighting and Rescue System (NFRS)** which came into effect on 1 Jan 1995. Since then the system has been developing and extending. **The State Fire Service serves as the main coordinator of the NFRS system.**
- The basic assumption in the construction of NFRS was to create a unified and coherent system, which brings together various interrelated rescue entities, to take any successful rescue action.
- It's primary purpose is to protect life, health, property or the environment through: the fight against fires and other natural disasters, technical rescue, chemical, and since 1997 also through environmental and medical rescue.



## System changes

- The public administration reform that started in Poland on 1 Jan 1999 had also automatically influenced the system changes in the State Fire Service,
- In years 2000-2005 the Chief Commandant of the State Fire Service acted also as the Head of the Civil Protection (Chief of the National Civil Defence) of Poland. It was a good period of time for the NFRS - very helpful in introducing, developing, integrating and coordinating the National Firefighting and Rescue System,
- In November 2005 the tasks of the Chief Commandant of the State Fire Service and those ones of the Chief of the National Defence were separated,





## Main tasks and responsibilities of the State Fire Service of Poland

The tasks and duties of the State Fire Service are determined by several law acts (with the leading position of two of them: **on Fire Protection** and **on State Fire Service**). The main ones resulting from the law are listed below:

- identifying fire hazards and other local hazards;
- organizing and conducting rescue operations during fires, natural disasters or elimination of local threats;
- providing specialist support rescue operations during natural disasters or elimination of the local threats by other emergency services;
- training of staff for the State Fire Service and other units of fire protection and the National Civil Defence;
- supervising the compliance with fire regulations;
- conducting research on fire safety and civil protection;
- collaboration with the Head of the National Criminal Information Centre in the range necessary to carry out its statutory duties;
- interaction with fire brigades and rescue services of other countries and their international organizations on the basis of binding international bilateral agreements;
- implementation of other tasks arising from international agreements on the rules and within the range specified therein.

## Collecting and processing of information

In Poland some detailed information on fire and other events, given in the form of paper reports are compiled, collected and processed at four levels of command by the agencies comprising the State Fire Service:

- Fire Station,
- County (or City) Control Room,
- Regional Rescue Coordination Centre, and
- the National Rescue Coordination and Civil Protection Centre.



This structure forms the skeleton, which globally creates the **National Firefighting and Rescue System (NFRS)** to which belong most of the entities performing tasks in a very widely understood “a rescue area”.





## Reports



The information collected are related to ongoing activities or emergency firefighting, and except data which would allow to classify fire, concerns (in the majority) only the tactical aspects that make them not very useful or completely useless for scientific purposes.

Data is entered into the nationwide computer system for collecting and processing data in the form of incident reports, prepared by the person heading the rescue operations.

The cause of fire given in the report is only supposed, based solely on the observation of the event and is not confirmed by any thorough analysis of facts or evidence. In most cases the real reason is not obvious and its indication requires careful analysis.



## Investigations

The State Fire Service, as an institution does not conduct investigations themselves. In the Polish system, all the required investigations are led by the authorities responsible for public safety as police, prosecutors and courts. Public security authorities have to exclude the criminal activity - both intentional and unintentional. If there is a need to assess the cause of a fire or structural building disaster, all these bodies shall appoint experts (individual expert or team of experts), whose task is to give an appropriate feedback.

Professional firefighters of State Fire Service, having an adequate stock of knowledge and experience, are very often appointed as such experts.

The rules for appointing experts and issuing opinions are governed by the Code of Criminal Procedure (KPK). These rules are particularly respected when as the result of incident any fatalities occur or when anyone is suspected of committing a crime.

Quite another case (when the opinion of experts is necessary) is a suspicion of insurance fraud. In such situations, the opinion can also be ordered by insurance companies.





## Other tasks

One of the tasks worth mentioning carried out by the State Fire Service is awarding licenses of **fire protection experts**, who lead a key role in construction investment processes.

In some cases, wider described in the Polish construction law, a construction project, requires some prior arrangements to confirm that it contains technical solutions consistent with the requirements of fire protection. This concerns first of all objects that are classified as *risky to humans, manufacturing-warehouse, closed garages or car parks, tunnels, etc.*

After completion, such an object usually requires the administrative decision authorizing its use. The construction law requires the investor should notify the local State Fire Service unit about the completion of construction process and his/her intention to use the building. The State Fire Service controls the building and verifies its compliance with the construction project.



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# THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND ATTENTION

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