

# Minimum Standards and Non-Binding Guidelines for First Responders Regarding Planning, Training, Procedure and Equipment for Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Incidents

## MODALITIES FOR THE ADVISORY SUPPORT TEAM





## Introduction

The consequences of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) emergencies may stretch national capabilities to their maximum extent. As responsibility for first response remains with individual nations, it is essential that nations build on their resources to respond and mitigate the consequences of an emergency situation to lives, property and the environment. Due to the nature of CBRN incidents, particularly their trans-national effects, co-operation between Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) nations is necessary. The development and adoption of Non-Binding Guidelines and Minimum Standards facilitates and improves national responses and mutual assistance.

The initiative to develop Non-Binding Guidelines and Minimum Standards (NBG/MS) for First Responders regarding planning, training, procedures and equipment for CBRN incidents, stems from the EAPC Seminar on responses to terrorism which was held in Warsaw in February 2002. Subsequently, the project was included in the 2002 update of the CEP Action Plan.

The purpose of the initiative is to provide

general guidelines that EAPC nations may draw upon on a voluntary basis in order to enhance their preparedness to protect civilian populations against CBRN risks. Such guidelines seek to improve understanding and interoperability between nations, thereby contributing to greater efficiency in the use and delivery of national and international assistance, ultimately enhancing interoperability. This document describes the modalities for an Advisory Support Team. Separate documents in the same series address Response Guidelines establishing procedural guidance and advice for planners on procedures, capabilities and equipment required for an effective emergency response. The CBRN International Training Curriculum helps first responders acquire a level of proficiency that enables them to provide an effective response to a CBRN incident.

## Purpose and key functions of the Advisory Support Team (AST)

It is a national responsibility to ensure adequate preparations, at local and national level, in order to be able to respond to an emergency. Against this background, the AST is designed to assist national authorities or international organisations in preparing for a response to natural and technological disasters. It can offer the necessary expertise to nations, at their request, in helping to improve their preparedness plans and systems.

The main purpose of an AST is to provide expert advice to assist the requesting nation in assessing and further developing its national level of emergency preparedness, response and recovery capabilities at the strategic and operational level. The AST is not to be deployed to provide consequence management in the aftermath of an event.

NATO Civil Emergency Planning (CEP) has developed a wide range of tools that nations can use to improve their emergency preparedness, such as the “Risk and Vulnerability Analysis” document, training and exercises programmes, as well as the exchange of best practices and lessons learned. The AST complements these tools and can be

constituted to provide advice on issues related to one or more CBRN agents.

### A nation can request AST assistance for several reasons, including, but not limited to:

- assessing overall national preparedness and response plans and systems, mainly related to CBRN risks and, where appropriate, indicate possible improvements;
- advising on national training plans for responders to CBRN incidents, as part of the emergency preparedness plans; this may also include adaptation and review of national training curricula for responders to CBRN incidents, using the CBRN Training Curriculum as a basis;
- supporting the planning and conduct of exercises – e.g. participation as directing staff; advice in planning; observation and evaluation of exercise planning and conduct;
- supporting national preparations for a specific high-visibility event;
- advising on medium- and long-term response and recovery from a CBRN incident or from a major natural disaster.

## Eligibility and pre-requisites for AST assistance

To deploy an Advisory Support Team, the interested nation or international organisation should direct its request to the Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee at NATO. For Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) countries requests, SCEPC is also the approval body. For Mediterranean Dialogue and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative nations, Contact Countries and host nations where NATO is engaged in military operations, decisions for AST assistance are provided on a case-by-case basis, subject to a NAC decision. Nations are encouraged to keep in mind the AST concept when developing their Individual Partnership Programmes / Individual Cooperation Programmes.

Prior to requesting assistance, the interested nation is encouraged to conduct a self-assessment of its national preparedness.

Based on the results of the self-assessment, the AST together with the national authorities would conduct a survey of the requesting nation's current capabilities, drawing on the Non Binding Guidelines/Minimum Standards. This will constitute a basis for the advisory process.





### **Constitution and deployment of the team**

As an AST requires a broad knowledge base and expertise, the team will be tailored to the needs as set out in the request and will consist of CEP Civil Experts. If needed, experts/planners who are not CEP Civil Experts or officers serving in CEP or the Euro Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) could also take part as appropriate.

### **Implementation of the recommendations made by the AST**

It is up to the requesting nation to determine to what extent it will use the recommendations of the AST. The nation may request that the AST return at a later stage to monitor, review and assess the efforts to implement the initial recommendations.







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