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The *Saeima*<sup>1</sup> has adopted  
and the President has proclaimed the following Law:

## Civil Protection Law

### Section 1. Terms Used in this Law

The following terms are used in this Law:

1) **civil protection** – the set of organisational, engineering, economic, financial, social, educational and scientific measures, which is implemented to ensure response in cases of disasters or when there are threats of disaster, as well as to support the needs of the State defence system, if a military invasion has occurred or war has begun;

2) **disaster** – an accident which endangers human life and health, causes human casualties, inflicts material losses or environmental damage and exceeds the capacity of the people affected to avert the consequences with the resources of the operational services involved in response available in the relevant territory;

3) **disaster management** – the performance of preventive, readiness, response and emergency measures for the elimination of the consequences in cases of disasters and when there are threats of disaster. Disaster management shall be implemented by the State institutions, local governments, merchants and inhabitants;

4) **preventive measures** – the measures, which are performed in order to prevent the possibility of disaster;

5) **readiness measures** – the measures that are performed in order to prepare for action in possible cases of disasters;

6) **response measures** – the measures which are performed in order to restrict or eliminate devastating conditions and the consequences caused by them, to prevent or reduce possible damage to persons, property and the environment; and

7) **emergency measures for the elimination of consequences** – the measures, which are performed in order to retain or restore at the minimum level the basic functions for the maintenance of public life, which are connected with the survival of inhabitants.

### Section 2. Purpose of this Law

The purpose of this Law is to create a system of civil protection for disaster management, ensuring the legal and organisational grounds for the protection of persons, property and the environment in cases of disasters and when there are threats of disaster.

### Section 3. Disasters

(1) In accordance with the disaster type the following disasters are distinguished:

1) natural disasters (for example, storms, whirlwinds, earthquakes, heavy rainfalls, flood, hail, intense cold, snowstorms, icing, snow-drifts and ice jams, heat waves, drought, fires in forests and peat bogs);

<sup>1</sup> The Parliament of the Republic of Latvia

2) disasters caused by persons:

a) technogenic disasters (for example, industrial accidents with a discharge of chemical, radioactive and biologically active substances, fires in buildings and national economy objects, explosions, vehicle accidents, ruptures in the dams, ruptures in the utility and energy networks, collapse of buildings and structures);

b) public disorders, terrorist attacks and armed conflicts;

3) epidemics, epizootics and epiphytoses.

(2) Disasters shall be divided in accordance with the character of the disaster, the amount of damage caused thereby and the possibilities of resources to be involved in response:

1) local disasters – the amount of damage caused by a disaster does not extend past the borders of the administrative territory of one local government and the resources present in the administrative territory of the local government concerned are sufficient for disaster management;

2) regional disasters – the amount of damage caused by a disaster extends past the borders of the administrative territory of one local government and the resources present in the administrative territory of the local governments concerned and in the State are sufficient for disaster management; and

3) State disasters – the amount of damage caused by a disaster spans all the territory of the State or a significant part thereof and the resources present in the State are not sufficient for disaster management.

(3) If due to the scale of the disaster the restriction of rights and liberty of legal persons and natural persons is required, an emergency situation may be proclaimed. A mobilisation may be proclaimed in an emergency situation for ensuring of rescue operations and the provision of medical assistance to the inhabitants, as well as for the implementation of emergency measures for the elimination of the consequences of the disaster.

#### **Section 4. Structure and Organisation of the System of Civil Protection**

(1) The system of civil protection (hereinafter – the system) shall be formed by the State institutions, local governments, merchants, as well as all able-bodied citizens and non-citizens of Latvia. Unions of persons and other residents may enter the system voluntarily.

(2) The basis for the system organisation shall be an administratively territorial principle. The territorial basic units of the structure thereof shall be the districts and republic cities.

#### **Section 5. Main Tasks of the System**

The main tasks of the system shall be as follows:

1) to carry out disaster management;

2) to provide aid to victims of disasters;

3) to reduce the possible damage to property and the environment caused by disasters;

and

4) if a military invasion or war has begun – to support the National Armed Forces with resources.

#### **Section 6. System Management**

(1) The Prime Minister shall be responsible for the operation of the system and the implementation of the tasks thereof.

(2) The Prime Minister shall within the framework of the system manage measures at the State or regional level for the prevention and overcoming of a situation dangerous to the State.

- (3) The State Fire-fighting and Rescue Service shall manage, co-ordinate and control the operation of the system.
- (4) Depending on the type of disaster the emergency measures for the response and elimination of the consequences at the scene shall be managed by the official of the State Fire-fighting and Rescue Service or – in accordance with its competence – the official of the State institution indicated in the State civil protection plan or the local government civil protection plans (hereinafter – the manager of rescue operations).

## **Section 7. Tasks and Rights of the State Fire-fighting and Rescue Service**

(1) The tasks of the State Fire-Fighting and Rescue Service in civil protection shall be the following:

- 1) organise the maintenance of the civil alarm and notification system (except for local object systems);
- 2) organise the development of the regulatory enactments necessary for the system operation;
- 3) in co-operation with local governments develop local government civil protection plans;
- 4) carry out the operational management of natural and technogenic disasters;
- 5) manage the response and emergency measures for elimination of the consequences in accordance with its competence at the scene depending on the type of disaster;
- 6) develop recommendations for the action of inhabitants in case of a possible disaster;
- 7) establish and maintain a database for the existing disaster management resources (including collective means of protection), as well as regarding the objects of increased danger;
- 8) maintain the Operational Control Centre of Civil Protection at permanent readiness for disaster management;
- 9) organise civil protection instruction at the State and regional level, participate in civil protection instruction at the international and local level;
- 10) co-ordinate the development of educational programmes in civil protection matters;
- 11) co-ordinate the formation and utilisation of the State material reserves for disaster management in accordance with its competence;
- 12) using the mass media and electronic public mass media, provide information regarding a disaster to the inhabitants of the territories affected or endangered by the disaster, the threats thereof and the measures for prevention or decrease of the danger;
- 13) organise the training of those merchants and employees of institutions, which are intended to be involved in the performance of rescue operations;
- 14) organise and carry out the training of the local government civil protection commissions.

(2) The rights of the State Fire-Fighting and Rescue Service in civil protection shall be the following:

- 1) to request and receive free of charge the information from the State institutions, local governments and private persons which is necessary for the performance of civil protection tasks;
- 2) to control compliance with the civil protection requirements specified in regulatory enactments regulating civil protection matters, prepare prescriptions regarding the drawbacks determined in the field of civil protection, as well as provide consultations to the State institutions, local governments and merchants regarding the elimination of drawbacks and improvement of the civil protection measures;

3) impose administrative fines regarding such violation of the civil protection requirements, which are specified in the regulatory enactments regulating civil protection matters;

4) in case of disaster – give instructions to the authorities involved in the response, as well as to natural persons regarding action at the scene; and

5) involve the resources of the material reserves in the disaster management upon the written permission of the Minister for Interior or the authorised official thereof.

## **Section 8. Tasks of State Institutions**

(1) The tasks of the ministries in civil protection are the following:

1) to explore the possible threats in the sector and submit proposals to the Ministry of Interior up to 20 January each year regarding the clarification of the State civil protection plan, as well as a notification regarding the measures and operations carried out in civil protection during the previous year;

2) to plan action for the provision of the operation of the sector in cases of disaster;

3) to co-ordinate the operation of the subordinated authorities in cases of disasters;

4) to co-ordinate and control the formation of the State material reserves in the sector;

5) to ensure the fulfilment of the measures specified in the State civil protection plan, including in accordance with the proposals of the Ministry of Defence – a support to the State defence system, if a military invasion has occurred, war has begun or threats of war or invasion have arisen; and

6) to ensure the training of employees of the institution in civil protection matters.

(2) The tasks of the other State institutions in civil protection shall be the following:

1) upon request of the State Fire-fighting and Rescue Service provide information regarding the resources at the disposal of the institution for the management of disasters;

2) to ensure the fulfilment of the measures specified in the State civil protection plan; and

3) to ensure the training of employees of the institution in civil protection matters.

(3) The State institution shall plan the action for the provision of the operation thereof in case of disaster. If the State institution complies with the conditions of Section 13 of this Law, it shall develop the civil protection plan.

(4) The relevant minister shall be responsible for civil protection in the sector. The head of the institution shall be responsible for civil protection in the State institution.

## **Section 9. Tasks and Rights of Local Governments**

(1) The Chairperson of the local government city or county council (parish council) shall be responsible for the fulfilment of the tasks of civil protection indicated in Paragraph two of this Section in the relevant administrative territory.

(2) The tasks of the local governments in civil protection shall be the following:

1) to establish and manage the republic city, district civil protection commission (a deputy head of the commission is the head of the relevant division of the State Fire-Fighting and Rescue Service). The civil protection commission of the local government shall operate pursuant to the regulations developed in accordance with the model regulations approved by the Cabinet;

2) to participate in preventive measures in the relevant administrative territory and to provide support to the operation and emergency services taking into account the possible threat in performance of response and emergency measures for the elimination of the consequences;

3) if necessary, to evacuate the inhabitants from the territories endangered or affected by a disaster, to ensure a record of the inhabitants, temporary accommodation, feeding, social care and provision of medical assistance;

4) to ensure work and living conditions for the personnel of other administrative territories, State and other States rescue services invited for the prevention of the disaster and elimination of the consequences thereof;

5) to provide proposals regarding formation, maintenance and storage of the State material reserves in accordance with the provisions specified in the regulatory enactments regarding the State material reserves;

6) upon request of the State Fire-fighting and Rescue Service provide information regarding the resources at the disposal of the local government for the management of disasters;

7) to organise instruction for the members of the civil protection commission of the republic city, district;

8) to participate in civil protection instruction.

(3) The rights of the local governments in civil protection shall be the following:

1) to receive information from the institutions and merchants located in the relevant administrative territory for the performance of civil protection tasks; and

2) taking into account the plans of territorial development and threats they are aware of, to develop additional tasks of civil protection (including regarding the civil protection protection structures) for the merchants present in the relevant administrative territory.

## **Section 10. Tasks and Rights of Merchants**

(1) The tasks of the merchants in civil protection shall be the following:

1) to inform the fire safety, fire-fighting and rescue services and local governments regarding the disaster that occurred in the territory of the merchant's object and notify the employees of the merchant's object and the directly endangered inhabitants of the surrounding territory;

2) to develop the civil protection plan, if the merchant's object complies with the conditions of Section 13 of this Law;

3) to ensure the training of employees in civil protection matters; and

4) to organise the fulfilment of civil protection measures at the merchant's object (including the protection of employees in case of disaster).

(2) Merchants the objects of which are considered as objects of increased danger in accordance with Section 17 of this Law shall have the following tasks in addition to the ones specified in Paragraph one of this Section:

1) to organise and carry out preventive, response measures and measures for the elimination of the consequences in the territory of the merchant's object, as well as to maintain resources ready for use (including protection structures for civil protection and personal means of protection) which depending on the type of threat may be used for disaster management; and

2) to establish an alarm and notification system of the object in the objects of industrial accident risk and in other explosive, fire hazard and especially important objects.

(3) The head of a commercial company shall be responsible for the fulfilment of the civil protection tasks of the commercial company, but an individual merchant – for the fulfilment of the civil protection tasks of the individual merchant.

(4) Merchants have the right to establish units of civil protection for response in case of disaster and for the performance of emergency measures for the elimination of the consequences.

## **Section 11. Rights and Duties of Inhabitants**

- (1) The rights of the inhabitants in civil protection shall be the following:
- 1) to receive information and warning regarding disasters in the State and in the relevant administrative territory and recommendations regarding action in case of disasters;
  - 2) to receive all possible assistance in the case of a disaster.
- (2) The duties of the inhabitants in civil protection shall be the following:
- 1) to notify immediately the relevant State institutions and local governments regarding the disaster or threats thereof;
  - 2) in case of disaster to act in accordance with the information provided by the mass media and electronic public mass media, as well as the instructions of the officials of the operational and emergency services at the scene; and
  - 3) to perform as far as possible operations in order to decrease the consequences of the disaster up to the moment of arrival of the operational and emergency services.

## **Section 12. Co-operation with the National Armed Forces**

- (1) The National Armed Forces shall participate in the performance of preventive and response measures, performance of emergency measures for the elimination of consequences, as well as provide support in search and rescue work.
- (2) The State institutions, local governments and merchants shall co-operate with the National Armed Forces in the management of disasters in accordance with the civil protection plans and agreements.

## **Section 13. Planning of Civil protection**

- (1) Civil protection measures, being aware of the possible threats, shall be provided in:
- 1) the State civil protection plan;
  - 2) the local government defence plan;
  - 3) the civil protection plan of the merchant's object, if the merchant's object is an object of increased danger or there may be more than fifty people located in it. If there are several merchants in one building, the civil protection plan shall be developed by each merchant which complies with the referred to conditions;
  - 4) the civil protection plan of an institution, if the institution is an object of increased danger or there may be more than fifty people located in it. If there are several institutions in one building, the civil protection plan shall be developed by each institution which complies with the referred to conditions.
- (2) The structure of the civil protection plan of local governments, merchants and institutions, the procedures for the development and approval thereof shall be determined by the Cabinet.
- (3) Legal and natural persons shall provide free of charge information in the field of civil protection, in order to ensure the planning of civil protection in cases of disaster (sources of risk at the object, external threats, the amount of dangerous substances at the object, characteristics of the dangerous substances, amounts of leakage of dangerous substances in case of accident, the parameters for the spread of harmful effects, the alarm and notification system of the object, civil protection protection structures, resources at the disposal of the object, which depending on the type of threat may be used for disaster management, preventive and readiness measures planned and performed, planned response and emergency measures for the elimination of the consequences, training of employees in civil protection

matters, instruction carried out, civil protection units, data regarding the accidents that have occurred at the object).

#### **Section 14. Civil protection Protection Structures**

(1) For the protection of inhabitants from the destructive factors of a disaster, as well as in those cases, when a military invasion has occurred or war has begun, the civil protection protection structures or other structures adapted for the relevant type of disaster shall be used.

(2) The procedures for the establishment, use, maintenance, financing, record-keeping and classification of civil protection protection structures shall be determined by the Cabinet.

#### **Section 15. Civil Alarm and Notification System**

(1) The civil alarm and notification system shall ensure the warning and informing of inhabitants regarding disasters or threats thereof, as well as the announcement of an emergency situation, the state of emergency or mobilisation.

(2) The procedures for the establishment, use and financing of the civil alarm and notification system shall be determined by the Cabinet.

(3) The mass media and electronic mass media shall provide free of charge the information of the State Fire-fighting and Rescue Service regarding the threat and recommendations for action of inhabitants, taking into account the service conditions regarding the urgency of the provision of information.

#### **Section 16. Involvement of Resources in Disaster Management**

The following shall be involved in the disaster management depending on the type of the threat:

1) the operational and emergency services, mobilizable civil protection formations – the Operational Control Centre of the State Fire-fighting and Rescue Service in accordance with the State civil protection plan or local government civil protection plans;

2) the State material reserve resources – in accordance with the regulatory enactments regarding the State material reserves;

3) local government resources - the chairperson of a local government city or county council (parish council);

4) resources at the disposal of a commercial company – the head of the commercial company or his or her authorised person, but resources at the disposal of an individual merchant – the individual merchant or his or her authorised person.

#### **Section 17. Objects of Increased Danger**

(1) Objects of increased danger shall be the following:

1) objects, the economic or another type of operation of which is connected with the generation and accumulation of energy, electromagnetic radiation, processing, treatment, production, use, storage and transportation of flammable, explosive, dangerous chemical substances and products, hazardous waste, plant quarantine organisms, biological active and radioactive substances, nuclear materials and waste thereof in such amounts that due to the impact of a disaster or other factors damage may be caused to persons, property and the environment outside the territory of the object;

2) hydrotechnic structures.

- (2) According to the scale of possible damage, objects of increased danger shall be divided into three danger groups:
- 1) objects of national significance;
  - 2) objects of regional significance; and
  - 3) objects of local significance.
- (3) The criteria for the specification of objects of increased danger and the duties of the owners (possessors, managers) of these objects for ensuring measures for reduction of risk shall be determined by the Cabinet.

#### **Section 18. Financing of the System**

The State institutions shall finance the fulfilment of the civil protection tasks thereof from the State budget resources allocated to them, the local governments – from their own resources, merchants – from their own resources.

#### **Section 19. Involvement of Legal and Natural Persons in Response Measures**

- (1) Legal and natural persons may be involved in response measures, as well as the property thereof may be used in cases of disasters or when there exists a threat of disaster, if human life or health is endangered and the immediate non-involvement of resources may cause unavoidable consequences.
- (2) The head of rescue operations shall involve legal and natural persons in response measures or assume possession of the property of legal persons and natural persons, by entering into an agreement in writing thereof.
- (3) Legal persons and natural persons which are involved in response measures or the property of which is used for response measures, have the right to receive compensation for expenses and loss caused during response measures.
- (4) The procedures by which expenses and loss caused during response measures are to be compensated to legal persons and natural persons and by which the amount of compensation is to be calculated, shall be determined by the Cabinet.

#### **Section 20. Training of Heads of State Institutions, Local Governments, Commercial Companies and Civil protection Specialists**

- (1) The training of the heads of State institutions, local governments, and commercial companies in the civil protection matters shall be organised by the State Fire-fighting and Rescue Service.
- (2) The preparation of civil protection specialists shall be performed by the State accredited institutions of higher education and vocational secondary education institutions.

#### **Section 21. Educating of Students of Educational Institutions, Inhabitants and Employees**

- (1) Educational institutions shall ensure the provision of a mandatory course in civil protection to students, as well as to educatees of general and vocational education institutions. The minimum requirements for the course in civil protection shall be determined by the Cabinet.
- (2) The educating of inhabitants in civil protection matters, by using the mass media and electronic mass media, as well as by distributing informative materials, shall be performed by



the State institutions and local governments, as well as merchants (in respect of inhabitants, which may be affected by accidents in the merchants' objects).

(3) Training of employees in civil protection matters shall be organised by the employer. The minimum requirements for the content of the course in civil protection for employees shall be determined by the Cabinet.

## **Section 22. Ensuring of Scientific Research of the System**

To promote the development of the system, the State institutions, local governments and merchants may implement scientific research work in the field of civil protection.

## **Section 23. System Readiness Control**

(1) The State institutions and local governments shall control the development and clarification of the civil protection plans of institutions subordinated thereto, as well as the fulfilment of the measures provided for in the plans.

(2) The State institutions and local governments shall organise civil protection instruction for ensuring the system readiness control. The types of civil protection instruction and organising procedures shall be determined by the Cabinet.

## **Section 24. Liability Regarding Non-observance of Civil protection Requirements**

Persons who have violated the requirements of the regulatory enactments in the field of civil protection shall be subject to administrative liability.

## **Section 25. Provision of Assistance to States Suffered from Disaster**

(1) If necessary, humanitarian assistance may be provided to the states, which suffered from a disaster, as well as assistance for the performance of emergency response measures and the elimination of consequences.

(2) The State Fire-fighting and Rescue Service and the Centre of Emergency and Disaster Medicine shall establish the quick response unit and medical support unit respectively for the states which suffered from a disaster for provision of assistance in performing of the response and emergency measures for the elimination of the consequences. The Cabinet shall determine the procedures for the establishment, maintenance, training and financing of the referred to units, as well as the procedures by which the involvement in the international assistance provision shall be performed, and the social guarantees for the personnel of the referred to units.

(3) The Cabinet shall determine the procedures for the receipt and provision of humanitarian assistance, as well as take a decision regarding the provision of assistance in the performance of response and emergency measures for the elimination of the consequences.

## **Transitional Provision**

With the coming into force of this Law, the Civil protection Law of 15 December 1992 (*Latvijas Republikas Augstākās Padomes un Valdības Ziņotājs*, No. 1/2, 1993; *Latvijas Republikas Saeimas un Ministru Kabineta Ziņotājs*, No. 5, 1994; No. 8, 1995; No. 5, 1997; No. 13, 1998; No. 2, 22, 2005).

This Law shall come into force on 1 January 2007.

This Law has been adopted by the *Saeima* on 5 October 2006.

President

V. Vīķe-Freiberga

Rīga, 26 October 2006