



PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP GIVES MORE BODY TO INDUSTRIAL INCIDENT CONTROL THE POWER OF MUTUAL AID

CONFERENCE REPORT BY PHILIP STOHR, CONSULTANT KAPPETIJN SAFETY SPECIALISTS

Mutual Aid through public private partnership is a fine option for the industry and the government to run a collective safety organization in an industrial hotspot. That is the core message of the conference on this topic that Kappetijn Safety Specialists organized in Rotterdam on the 29th of June 2017. Representatives of various stakeholders reflected on the subject of Mutual Aid. This conference is a spin-off of the Kappetijn Safety Specialists Research Project on the same subject in collaboration with JOIFF.

Mutual Aid organizations come in all shapes and sizes. Safety specialist Kees Kappetijn, organizer of the meeting, provided an overview. There are some strong arguments for a collective approach in the Netherlands: the government mandates companies of a certain category (often Seveso companies) with an above average risk level to keep up a corporate fire brigade. High demands are set to preparedness, effectiveness and provisions to prevent escalation of incidents. That requires quite some effort from the companies in terms of money, equipment, personnel and specialized education and training. If multiple high-risk companies are close together, then joining forces through Mutual Aid, whether or not in the form of a public private partnership, is a proven solution. The Netherlands already has many different models, but all of them aim for one goal: smartly organizing specialized fire and rescue services for industrial and municipal fires and hazards.

Around sixty representatives of firefighting brigades and the corporate life present at the conference discussed the question of how industry and government can join forces even more effectively. For fire scenarios that occur only rarely, but that do require heavy duty extinguishing equipment and trained specialists.

The importance of good stakeholder management

Jan Waals, director of the Unified Fire Brigade (UFB) in Rotterdam (a high quality large scale Mutual Aid Organization for over twenty years) emphasized the importance of good and

continuous stakeholder management.

“It mostly comes down to decent stakeholder management”, says Waals. The reason for this is that the management agreement is complex and both the companies and the government are keen to have their needs served equally in this joint organization. “Specifically for that, we even named a designated account manager. His most important job is to better the relationships for durable collaboration. Effective cooperation rests on mutual trust, shared responsibilities, joint supervision on the delivered performances, with money and leadership as the binding factors. The government and the companies put a joint 25 million into the management and upkeep of the organization each year, this means there is bound to be a regular discussion about the division of costs. The board spends a significant amount of time sharpening the agreements to make sure ‘everyone stays on board’. In a collaborative construction with 67 connected companies and an involved government, there will always be something that needs to be ‘fixed’, but luckily we always succeed in doing so.”



*Tank Fire Fighting in Europoort, a Public Private Partnership (PPP) in a PPP.
Image above title: Tank fire fighting with Amsterdam Mutual Aid System training*



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Jan Waals does have one concern for the future. He observes that more and more companies choose to cover their normative fire scenarios with stationary extinguishing facilities. This gets them out from under the formal corporate fire service mandate, which means they do not have to contribute to the firefighting collective. If this causes the membership to dwindle and the incomes to plummet, the UFB will have to draft a new vision on safeguarding the quality of the fire care in the area and the contribution model to pay for it.

A stable and safe port, a high value for the Rotterdam Port Authority

The Rotterdam Port Authority was one of the co-initiators in for the establishment of the Unified Fire Brigade in 1998. Alan Dirks, program manager Policy & Development of the Port of Rotterdam, also puts a lot of value on intensive relationship management. In his eyes it is extremely important that all stakeholders try to imagine each other's positions and always remain on speaking terms. A tip for the governmental partners of the governmental fire brigade in Mutual Aid constructions still under development: "Step up to the plate and take the companies with you in the process. Do it with an open mind and leave your uniform at home. This relieves tensions with doubters of the Mutual Aid model and sets the tone for a fruitful collaboration."

A stable and safe area is a high value for the Rotterdam Port Authority "One of our main goals is managing and dealing out land to companies in name of the municipality, so that the port



Director Jan Waals speaking at the "Mutual Aid" conference



Mayor Theo Weterings, member of 3 large PPP-Mutual Aid set-ups



Industrial firefighting equipment in Rotterdam, available for all harbor-partners

can make an economic profit. The Port of Rotterdam is the economic engine of the country, with a yearly contribution of 20 billion to the Gross Domestic Product. An important issue in attracting multinationals to the main port is that they are offered a stable settlement area. Not one large-scale company wants to settle in an area where the safety is sub-par and incidents are not adequately followed up. (...) And to my firm conviction, this model of collective fire care is much cheaper for the member companies than if they were to take individual measures to comply with their corporate fire brigade mandate."

The use of Mutual Aid in the Transportation sector

Nils Rosmuller, lector Transportation Safety at the Institute for Physical Safety argued that by the use of Mutual Aid in transportation related incidents there is a world to win. "Transport is, as opposed to industrial areas, not bound to one place and thus serious incidents with hazardous substances can happen practically anywhere in the Netherlands. And in my opinion, we need a good national cooperative structure just for that, because there are many authorities involved with transport incidents: the governmental Emergency Services, Rijkswaterstaat (Water and Infrastructure agency), the Inspection for Environment and Transport, ProRail for the railway and very presently also partners from the corporate life. Think of transporters, the industrial environmental clean-up crew, but also the manufacturers. Because who knows more about the transported hazardous substance than the producer? And who knows more about the trucks involved or the railcar than the transporter?"

The Swedish model

Both nationally and internationally, many places are investigating how the government and companies can fulfill specialized large-scale industrial fire care in a more effective way through cooperation. An interesting example of how that can be done was provided by Per Brännström, manager of the Swedish Slackmedelscentralen (SMC).

Brännström explains how it works: "The large industries finance and manage the materials and fund the necessary training and education, while the operational execution is placed with four selected large governmental fire brigades: Malmö, Göteborg, Stockholm and Sundsvall. From these four national anchor points we can be anywhere in Sweden within an hour and a half to four hours with specialized extinguishing equipment." The Swedish SMC-structure has a total of eight supportive modules, two per anchor point region. They each consist of a pump-unit with a capacity of 10.000 liters per minute, two 150mm hoses with a length of 800 meters and an extinguishing monitor with a capacity of 10.000 liters per minute. With two modules, Brännström says it is possible to fully control a storage tank fire effectively. Sweden is a large country with long travel distances, but there is a solution for that. With help of the Swedish Airforce, a module can be transported quickly across long distances via a Hercules transporter plane. Dependent on the availability of airplane and crew, of course. The SMC-system has been deployed successfully with various large-scale tank fires in

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Sweden, and in 2014 components were even used to combat the largest forest fire in Sweden's history.

Involved in Mutual Aid as a policy maker

Theo Weterings, mayor of Haarlemmermeer, and chairman of the Kennemerland Safety Authority, is involved in no less than three large Mutual Aid constructions. The Kennemerland fire brigade provides assistance for Amsterdam-Ymond Mutual Aid (AMAS-AYMA), is connected with the incident management organization of the national Airport Schiphol and participates in a public private partnership for fire services at Tata Steel in Velsen.

"Kennemerland is a part of the Amsterdam metropolitan area, a very dynamic area where government and the corporate world really need each other to warrant the safety and effectively combat complex incidents. Mutual Aid is an agreement between the companies and the government, in which the interests of both parties have to be served. Chances to collaborate have to be utilized. I do not want to be told by lawyers what cannot be done through a public private partnership, I want to be told what can be done. And what can be done can be seen in the three large Mutual Aid constructs in Kennemerland."

Weterings described the agreements between the Safety Authority and Tata Steel that have resulted in an independent performance of the corporate fire brigade up to the level of a

medium fire, and mutual assistance with large-scale incidents. The Tata Steel fire brigade has already assisted with large dune-fires in the region. At Schiphol, the airport fire brigade was exclusively responsible for aircraft firefighting until a few years ago, while the fire care in the terminal and other buildings on the extended terrain were the responsibility of the governmental fire brigade. An illogical situation, as observed by all the parties involved, so a three party discussion between Schiphol, Haarlemmermeer municipality and the Kennemerland Safety Authority gave way to a new, broader set of tasks for the airport fire brigade. Since then, the airport fire brigade carries out the building and other firefighting tasks in name of the municipality and the Safety Authority. And since a few years, this has also included the fire care for AFS and KLM through their industrial fire services mandates. Weterings: "In short, we have quite some experience with Mutual Aid and public private partnership constructions in our region. In varying shapes, because one all-inclusive format for Mutual Aid does not exist. It is good to learn from each other's experiences; my most important conclusion is that mutual trust between partners is the key to success."

The enthusiasm of the audience at this conference shows that Mutual Aid is a hot topic. Kappetijn Safety Specialists plans to organize an international conference in the upcoming year, when possible with JOIFF. As well JOIFF members will be updated when more information is available.



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