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Emergency-Management System (EMS) of GREECE

GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR CIVIL PROTECTION

Emergency Planning Response Directorate

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- Legal Framework
- Greece emergency management system
- Case study –Earthquake in Thessaly Region
- Case study –Floods in Thessaly Region
- New challenges



Basics of the civil protection system

Legal framework

Law 2344/1995 Greek Parliament establishes the **General Secretariat for Civil Protection** under the Ministry of Interior

Law 3013/2002, Basic Law for Civil Protection - The role of Civil Protection and GSCP is upgraded, (assigning also roles to regional and local authorities).

Law 3013/2002 - Article 1 "Civil Protection protects citizens life, health and property from natural, technological or other kind of disasters (including chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents) during peace time"

Basics of the civil protection system

Legal framework

- **National General Civil Protection Plan "XENOKRATIS"**
Ministerial Decision 1299/2003
- Defines categories of disasters
- Defines roles and responsibilities in central level
- Gives planning guidelines & directions to Ministries, Regions and Municipalities
- In accordance to the General Civil Protection Plan, special plans for every potential disaster (earthquakes, wild fires, floods etc.) have been prepared and approved by GSCP.

Basics of the civil protection system

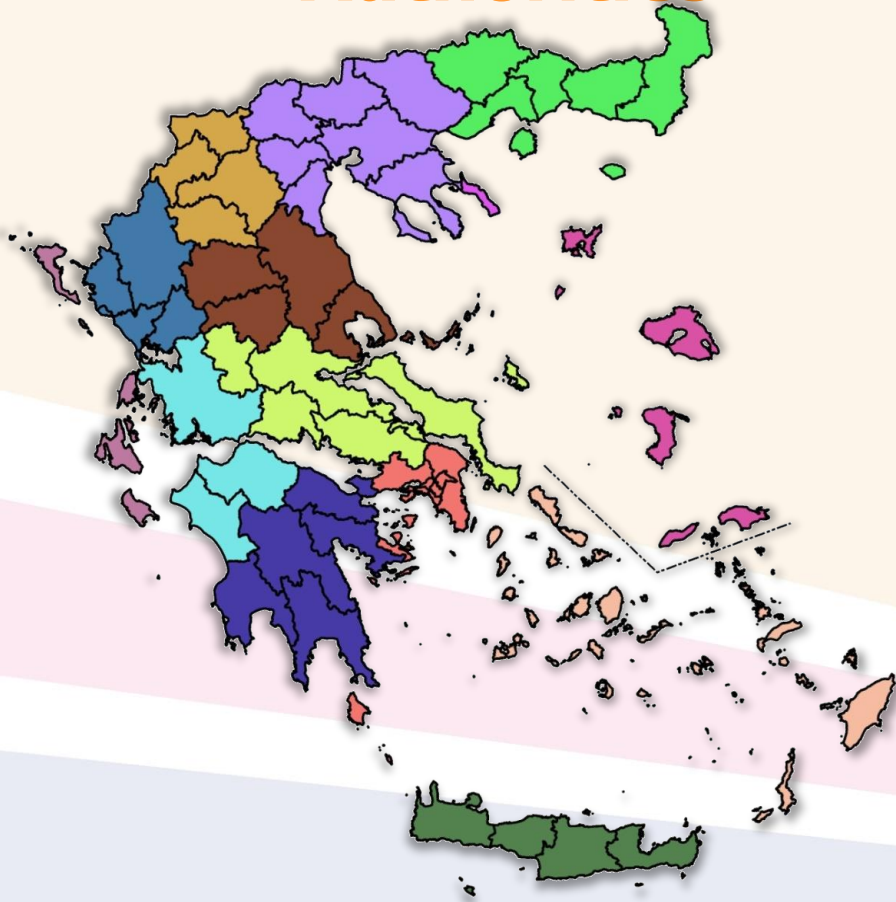
Legal framework

Law 3852/2010 - Kallikratis Program- New Architecture of Government and Decentralized Administration, which reformed the administrative division of Greece in 2011 and redefined the boundaries of the self-governing units

- ✓ The country has been divided into Regions which constitute the decentralized administrative units of the State.
- ✓ Presently, there are thirteen regions throughout the country and 54 regional units.
- ✓ Also there are 332 Municipalities

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Structure of the civil protection system National, Regional and Local C.P. Authorities



NATIONAL LEVEL

- General Secretariat for Civil Protection

REGIONAL LEVEL

- 7 CP Directorates in Decentralized Administrations
- 13 CP Directorates in Regions
- 54 CP Departments in Regional units

LOCAL LEVEL

- 332 CP Offices in Municipalities



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❑ **Central Agencies with the responsibility to prepare for and respond to any kind of disaster like:**

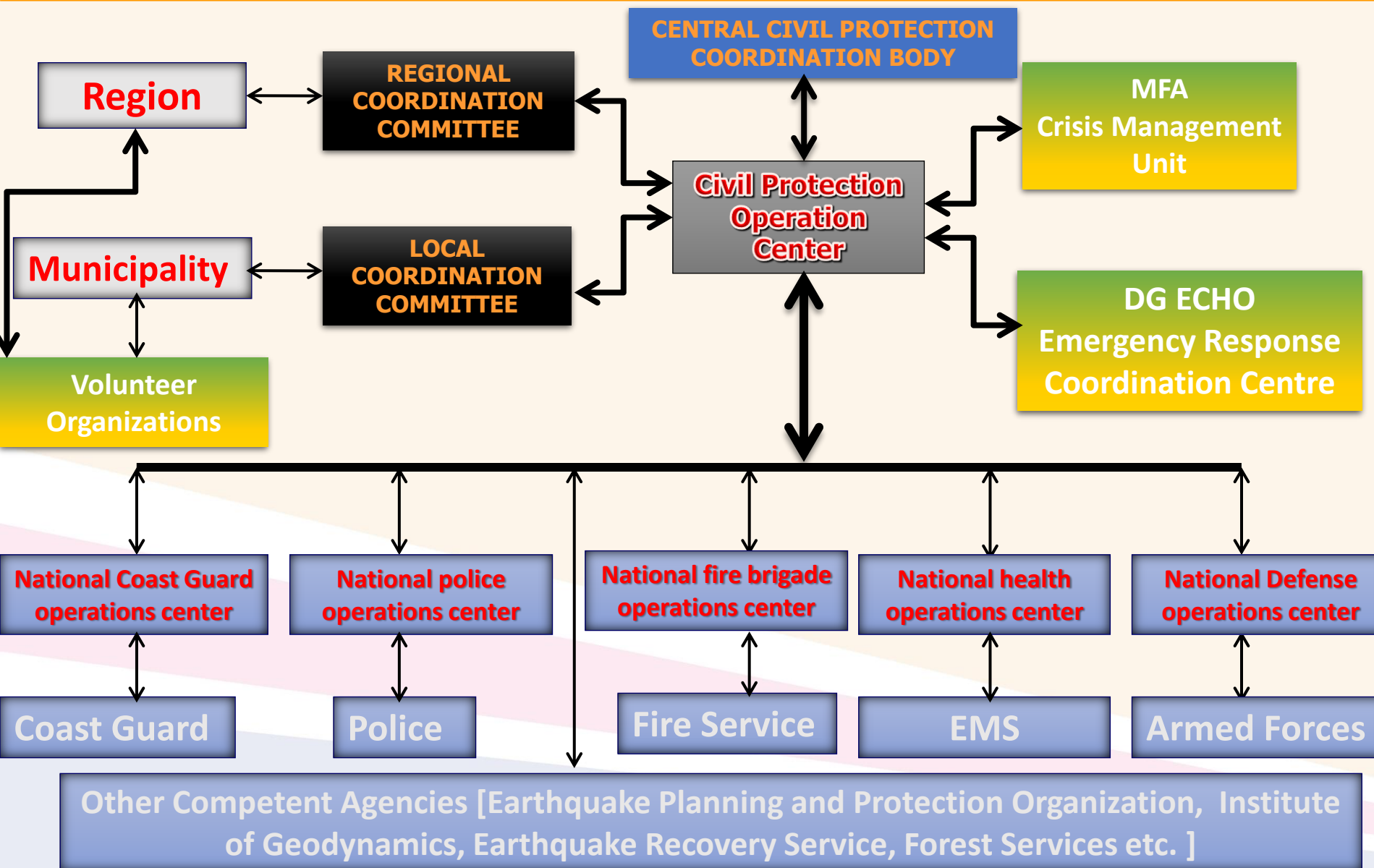
- **General Secretariat for Civil Protection personnel**
- **Hellenic Fire Corps**
- **Hellenic Police**
- **Hellenic Coast Guard**
- **Hellenic Military Forces**
- **National Center of Emergency Care (Emergency Medical Service-Paramedics)**
- **Earthquake Planning and Protection Organization**
- **National Meteorological Service**
- **Other competent agencies at the Central, Regional and Local level**

❑ **Civil Protection Volunteer Organizations with civil protection expertise**

❑ **Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs)**



Coordination of Civil Protection Authorities and Forces During the Response Phase of an Emergency



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Volunteer Organizations are registered either on Regions or on Municipalities data bases and can be activated only by them.

After their activation they operate under the command of the Central Agency which is responsible for dealing with the consequences of the disaster



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EARTHQUAKE in THESSALY

- On March 3, 2021, an earthquake of magnitude 6.3 on Richter scale hit the Tyrnavos area in Thessaly Region
- The depth of the epicenter was 8,5 km
- It resulted in the death of one person, three injuries and serious damage to an old school, two churches and several residences in Ellassona, Mesochori, Damasi, Amouri, Domeniko, Zarko, and Larissa.



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Thessaly's Region Civil Protection Directorate and the Municipalities of the Region have plans for the emergency Response and necessary actions to deal with the consequences of the earthquake.

The plans among other things, describes with details the role of each department in the response and restoration phase.

Those plans also includes lists with certified and registered Volunteers groups with contact numbers and their capabilities .



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EODYA -Volunteer Group for Rescue & Health Missions-VTRHM

- Is a trained and certified volunteer group for rescue and health missions
- It is also Registered in Voluntary Organizations list of the General Secretariat of Civil Protection
- The operational area of the team is the Region of Thessaly
- Their headquarters located at the Municipality of Killeler
- In addition, the Municipality of Killeler included EODYA in the operational plan of Civil Protection,

EODYA operations

- **Tyrnavos 2021 earthquake**
- **Train crash 2023**
- **Storm DANIEL 2023**



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After the earthquake, the head of Thessaly's Civil Protection Directorate activated the volunteer groups of the region

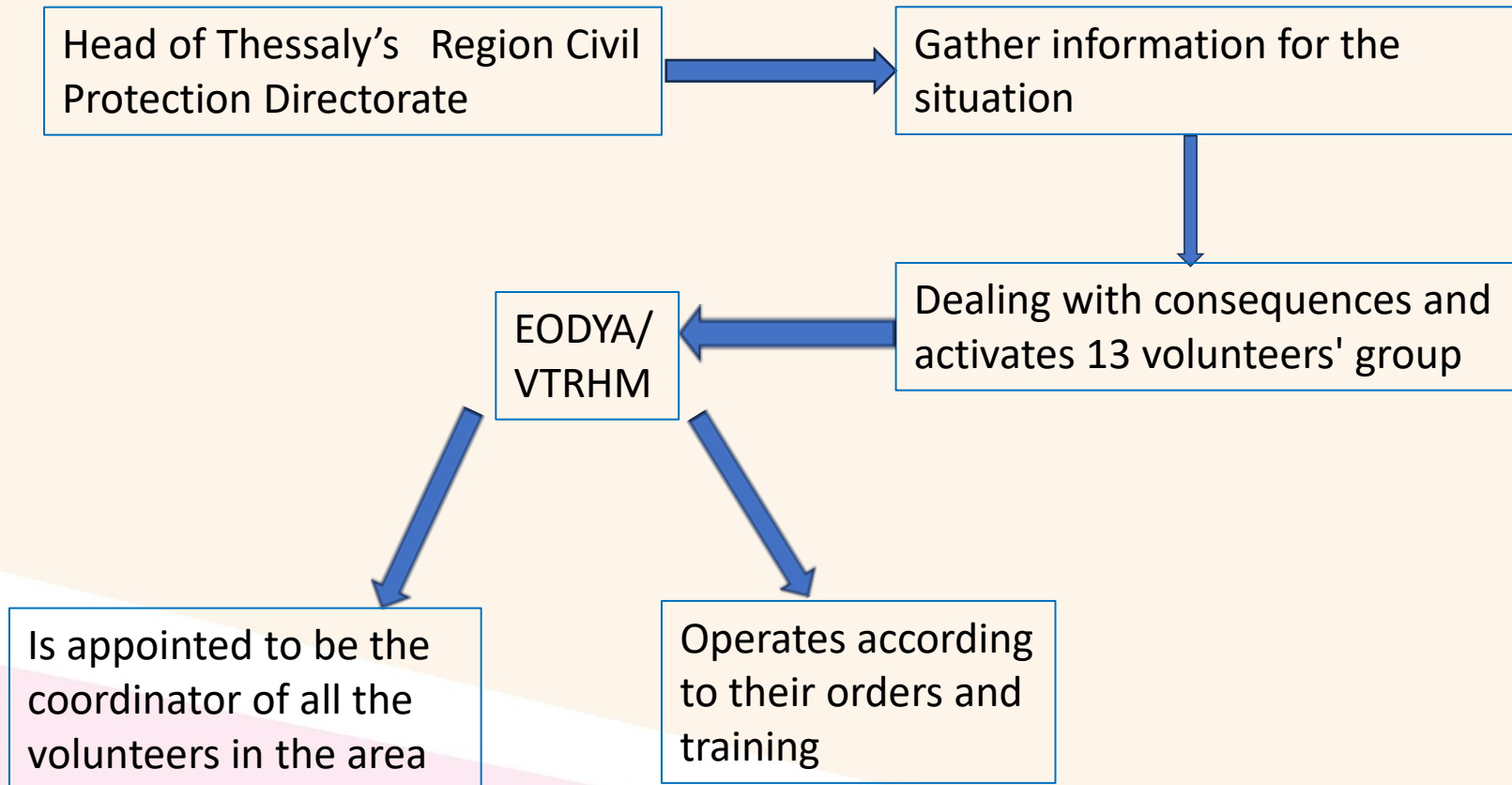
On Wednesday 03 of March EODYA Volunteers were put on high alert through a special communication channel they have.

EODYA participated from the first moment in the devastating earthquake of Wednesday, March 3, 2021, which affected the wider area of Thessaly and in particular the Provinces of Tyrnavos, Elassona and Farkadona, mobilizing a large force of trained Volunteers and special equipment to the points of the incident.

In total, they operated in the affected areas for 37 days in tents.



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COORDINATION-OPERATION

Every two hours they informed the head of civil protection about the operations and the needs

After the order of Mr. Karalis, they took over the coordination and distribution of the in-kind assistance

EODYA took over the coordination of 170 Volunteers from 13 Volunteer groups by order of the Civil Protection.

They collaborated with the Holy Diocese of Ellassona and His Eminence Mr. Charitona



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Special reference for the contribution of Holy Diocese of Ellassona and His Eminence Mr. Charitona

EODYA set up a tent in the camp of Damasius for the Religious needs of the Believers and his Eminence Mr Xharitonas was present all the time supporting the affected population



Also, with His Eminence's intervention, accommodation was found outside the camp for people who needed it.

Finally, his contribution to finding resources (fuel, etc.) quickly and away from time-consuming procedures that are followed by the State was also important



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RESPONSE of VTRHM

Immediately after their activation, all The available Volunteers began to arrive at the Base of EODYA in Nikaia near the city of Larisa, where an update was made on the current situation, and they took the necessary individual and group Rescue - Health equipment & materials.

At the same time, the rest of the Volunteers were notified to be ready to reinforce if necessary.

The head of Thessaly's Region Civil Protection Directorate, Mr. Vasilios Karalis, responsible for dealing with the consequences of the earthquake, informed the EODYA to go to the villages of Mandra and Koutsochero in Larissa as well as to Pineiada of Trikala.

The objective purpose was to check on the spot for Victims and to record the damage to houses, public buildings and infrastructure



OPERATION

The 1st team consisting of 2 vehicles and six (6) Volunteers left immediately for the mentioned villages where they found that there were no serious injuries, but only extensive damage to houses, public buildings, churches and infrastructure (bridges, roads, etc.).

Mr. Vasilios Karalis was immediately informed of these findings.

The 2nd team left at the same time for Damasi Tyrnavou (where the epicenter of the earthquake was), consisting of six (6) Volunteers and equipment, with 4 vehicles. Upon their arrival to the scene, they began to operate under the instructions of the Chief of the Fire Department.

Later, the 2 groups joined and, in consultation with Mr. Vasilios Karalis, the creation of a temporary camp and the setting up of tents at the Damasio stadium began.



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A team of 3 Volunteers with a vehicle moved to the villages of Mesochori, Domeniko, Magoula, Vlahoyanni, Pretori and Amouri to assess the situation and record the immediate needs of the affected.

The following day (Thursday, March 4) they were notified by the head of the Directorate of Civil Protection of the Thessaly Region, Mr. Vasilios Karalis, to return to Damasi to receive equipment and move to the village of Amouri Elassonas, to set up tents for the needs of the affected of the village.

13 volunteers went to the village of Amouri, where they set up tents for the homeless affected residents.



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SECOND CRISE

COVID-19

They set up a tent with appropriate markings for possible covid-19 incidents, in the camp of Damasios Tyrnavos

We also inform you that all EODYA Volunteers implemented the measures of safety, protection and limitation of the spread of covid-19, in accordance with the health protocols. In addition, they were submitted almost daily to a rapid test, by the National Organization for Public Health that was present in the affected areas for this purpose



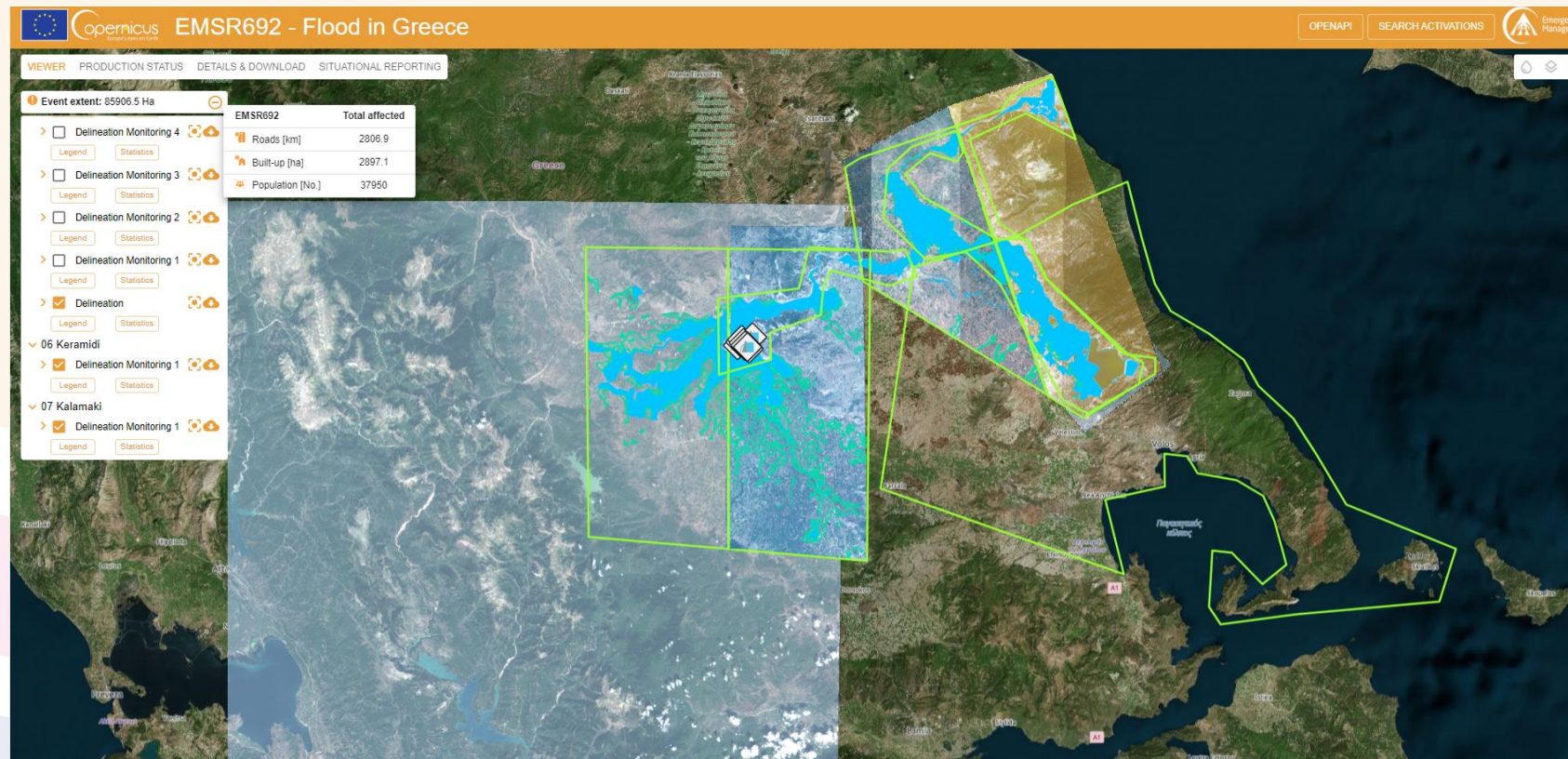
FLOODS in THESSALY REGION

- Storm Daniel was an extreme weather phenomenon with heavy rains and storms that first hit Greece, Bulgaria and Turkey and then moved towards Libya
- Storm Daniel began on September 4, 2023 from the Ionian Sea, centered on the wider area of Thessaly, causing massive destruction
- According to Copernicus EMS – Mapping , in the wider area of THESSALY Region, more than 87,000 hectares were flooded and many of them are still flooded, the majority of which are agricultural areas
- Storm Daniel is responsible for more than 10 casualties
- More than 35.000 people were affected and either they had to be displaced or evacuate
- critical infrastructure were affected (roads, bridges , railway, etc)
- Huge losses of livestock that later proved to be a major problem

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COPERNICUS Emergency Mapping Service



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Post event photos



Impacts and problems encountered

- Search and rescue operations (Fire Brigade, Hellenic Army, Volunteers)
 - Evacuations (Municipalities, Volunteers, Police department)
 - Disruption of distribution of drinkable water and in some cases the water was polluted
 - Health issues (Ministry of Health, Region Units)
 - Interruption of Transportation (Ministry of Infrastructure, Police department)
 - Relocation of people in need (Municipalities, Volunteers)
 - Security issues (Police department)
 - Water pumping from building (Fire Brigade, Volunteers)
-
- LOCAL AND REGIONAL FORCES WERE OVERWHELMED
 - ALMOST THE ENTIRE REGION WAS DECLARED IN STATE OF EMERGENCY
 - MANPOWER AND EQUIPMENT WERE MOVED FROM OTHER REGIONS
 - HUGE OFFER FOR HELP FROM VOLUNTEERS

Prioritization of Needs

- The Regional Coordinator of Central Greece and Thessaly, from Fire Agency, was responsible for the coordination of all forces involved in the search and rescue operations
- Thessaly's Civil Protection Directorate and the head of the Region were responsible for the distribution of all in kind assistance
- Local's Municipalities Offices and Mayors were responsible for the sheltering of all affected people

PREVANTION

The Directorate of Civil Protection of Central Greece has plan for the emergency response and Consequences Management in case of Floods.

Among other things the plan has risk analysis for floods that indicates that some areas of Central Greece are in High Risk. It also has a list of certified volunteer civil protection teams with their contact points and capabilities. One of the certified volunteer team is the Reserved Special Forces Association (RSFA).

The Central Greece's Civil Protection directorate acknowledging the danger of floods, and in this phase among other things, requested on 11/07/2023 the procurement of an inflatable boat for the possible cooperation of the reserved special forces association in rescue operations. something that was done almost immediately.



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PREPAREDNESS

- The National Meteorological Agency on Sunday 03/09/2023 issues an Emergency Weather Warning Forecast, which was then send to all authorities that deals with civil protection.
- The Central Greece's Civil Protection supervisor, Mr Polizos Zois informed the volunteers via e-mail about the emergency weather forecast. He also communicated with the team's captain, Mr. Angelis Ioannis and put the team on high alert .
- Mr Angelis notified the members of the team in order to form a group of volunteers with the needed skills for a possible operation. In no time the team gathered at the associations headquarters to prepare all the necessary equipment such as the inflatable boat, an outboard engine, ropes, canyoning harnesses, neoprene suits, stretchers, first aid kits, digging tools and wireless communications. The equipment was loaded on the vehicle and a final check was made. On 04/09/2023 the captain called Mr Zois to inform him that the team is formed by certified on swift water rescue members and is ready to operate at any place and even during the night.



RESPONCE

After storm “DANIEL”, Central Greece and Thessaly Regions were in need for help

Coordination of the help

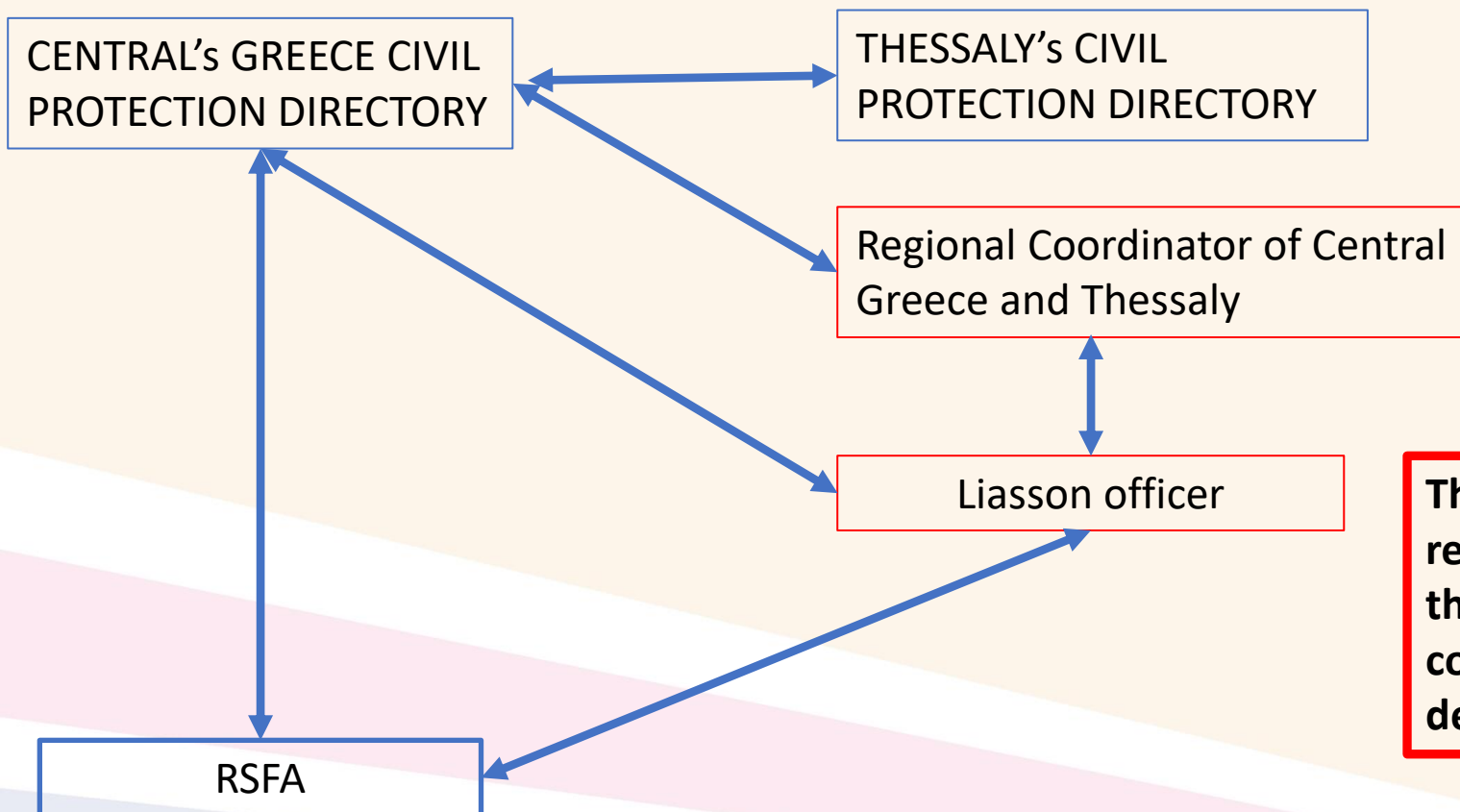
The supervisor of Central’s Greece Civil Protection Directorate contact with his colleague in Thessaly and was informed for the situation and that they will probably need more search and rescue teams

He also contacted the Regional Coordinator of Central Greece and Thessaly, from Fire Agency who was responsible for search and rescue operations both in Central Greece and in Thessaly Regions, offering help.

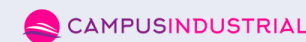
The Regional Coordinator informed Mr. Zoi, that there is a need in S&R operations in Central Greece and he also appointed a Liasson officer to coordinate the incoming help in specific areas on Thessaly Region.

The supervisor of Central’s Greece Civil Protection Directorate activates the Reserved Special Forces Association (RSFA).

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The volunteers are activated by the regional civil protection directorate and then they operate under the commands of a national authority depending on the incident





Reserved Special Forces Association (RSFA)

Founded in 1999 from reserved special forces

Is a certified volunteer group

The Special Rescue Team of Multiple Missions (E.D.O.P.A.) of RSFA consists of trained members. With their training and equipment, they can carry out missions day and night, on any terrain and under any weather condition.

They help the civil protection authorities in S&R missions in mountain terrain and in inland water. They also assist the fire service during summer, and they are supported by the region of Central Greece

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RESPONCE

Operations in the Region of Central Greece

On 06/09/2023 the captain of RSFA received a phone call with the request to begin operations in the district of Domokos in Central Greece Region

A team of five (5) members, fully equipped and by the orders of Mr. Zois arrived at the firefighting station of Domokos. From that point they were coordinated by the Chief of the local Fire Brigade and operated under his command

First, they were order to move towards the village Petrilia. Since the intensity of the phenomenon would put the safety of the team in danger, the chief of the operation ordered the retreat of the volunteers back to the village Thaumakos.

Even though the conditions were getting worse the team managed to help an entrapped woman with her twenty-day newborn baby and take them to a safe relative's house.

After that, the volunteers remained still until Mr Zois ordered them to return at night because of the flooded roads.



Operations in the Region of Thessaly

The next day 7/09/2023 the RSFV, was requested by Mr Zois if the team is capable to operate outside the borders of Central Greece and specific in Karditsa district and then he got them in touch with the Liasson officer

On the 08/09/2023, four (4) volunteers fully equipped for water search and rescue operations and with detailed guidance from Mr. Zois, moved towards the region's firefighting headquarters, there they were instructed to go to Rizovouni village where the appointed liaison officer would give them further instructions.

After their arrival to Rizovouni the liaison officer dictated the area in which they would operate.

The hours that followed RSFV successfully managed to rescue four people. Two of them were children 8 and 12 years old.

The team remained at the village in case there was any other need and kept continuous contact with Mr Zois informing him about the whole process.



Operations in the Region of Thessaly

After a while, the fire department chief thanked the volunteers and announced that the village was completely evacuated

Regroup phase had started and the members were checking their equipment to return in their base. The liaison officer thanked them and after they communicate with Mr. Zois they were ordered to return in Lamia where its their base

The next day, following the same procedure Mr Zois, asked the volunteers if they can operate in another place in Thessaly called Platykabos of Larissa

On 10/09/2023 the volunteers of RSFA, once more they geared up and moved to the designated area, where unfortunately due to rushing waters and even though they trayed many different approaches, they didn't manage to rescue the 6 trapped person which altimetry rescued by air.



NEW CHALLENGES

Due to Climate Change the disasters tends to be more severe

Complexity of missions

Assessment of real needs and acceptance of the proper assistance

Coordination of assistance

Lack of proper equipment and/or training

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THANK YOU

