



Swedish Civil
Contingencies
Agency

Research for a safer society

Summary of the MSB Research Programme 2011–2013

The MSB and research

The MSB (Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency) works for a safer and more secure society. The development of knowledge plays an important role in this work. Therefore the MSB funds research.

The MSB's orientation and funding of research has as its starting point society's need for knowledge. Research must be relevant for the fields of public safety, civil protection and emergency preparedness and should be of a good scientific quality.

Research supported by the MSB is first and foremost of an applied nature. This means that it results in new insight, new methods or new products that lead to enhanced public safety.

The research covers many scientific disciplines. To be able to better analyse and understand societal phenomena and apply research results the MSB encourages cross- and multi-disciplinary projects. The MSB collaborates with a number of authorities, the private sector and with organisations at home and abroad.

Through its active work with research communication the MSB works to ensure that its research benefits society. Seminars and popular science summaries are two important dissemination channels.



Research for civil protection and emergency preparedness

The MSB's research programme, "Research for a Safer Society" functions as guidance and a source of inspiration for research ideas. It also provides an introduction to the MSB's work on the orienting and financing of research. Here is an opportunity to read a summary of the programme.

The research programme is primarily aimed at researchers but is also of interest for authorities, research funders, and other entities in the MSB's and related areas of competence. It is divided into three programme areas, which are described below.

A safer society

Work on public safety can be likened to an extensive net including various entities, dependencies, strengths and vulnerabilities. And as society develops the net grows and becomes all the more complex.

The work for a safer and more secure society requires research on general aspects of safety work, such as societal processes and institutions.

More knowledge is also needed about societal vulnerabilities and the factors that contribute to creating a society that can withstand pressures and strains and recover after a crisis. Knowledge is also needed about how changes in society affect safety and security.

While working for a safer society consideration must be given to the needs of the individual. More knowledge is needed therefore on the role of the individual in societal safety work – both as an entity and as a victim. How people comprehend and evaluate risk and how they behave in crisis situations are areas of vital knowledge.

Risks, threats and vulnerabilities

Crucial for the MSB's work is knowledge about risks, threats and vulnerabilities in society, what consequences they entail and how they can be prevented and managed. This means everything from everyday incidents – which due to their large number lead to many personal injuries – to more serious yet less common incidents, such as major industrial emergencies and terrorist attacks.

There are some areas in which the MSB sees a particular need for research on risks, threats and vulnerabilities. Accidents involving falls and residential fires are examples of **everyday incidents** that occur relatively often. Society contains a large amount of **hazardous substances** that can cause great damage and injury if they are spread unintentionally or handled incorrectly. The forecast for natural disasters is that they will continue to increase in number and become more serious in a changed climate and risk injury and damage to people, property, the environment, and critical infrastructure.

Disruptions to vital societal services and critical infrastructure can entail consequences for all of society, especially as such services are often complex and dependent on each other. With information becoming all the more important in society it is crucial to protect **information security**.



Prevent, prepare, manage and learn

In the fields of public safety, civil protection and emergency preparedness there are a number of entities with varying roles. Studying these, their responsibilities and operations provides the prerequisites for the effective prevention and handling of emergencies and crises.

In emergency and crisis situations, **command** and **decision-making** are crucial issues. It is also important to study how various entities **collaborate** or how they ought to collaborate. There is a need for more research on how to, in a good way, generate, analyse and share **information**. Just as there is a need to study how **communication** regarding risks, threats and emergency situations functions – both between societal entities and to and from the public.

Tools, methods and equipment for the prevention and handling of emergencies and crises need to constantly be improved through new technologies and improved methodologies. Issues in this field that touch on **training, exercises and learning** also require further study.

At the **international operations** that Sweden works on specific circumstances often prevail. More knowledge on international conditions could improve the operations.



Apply for funds from the MSB

The MSB has an annual research budget of approximately SEK 120 million. The MSB announces when it is possible to apply for research funds within a specific field. Research funds are allocated among the applicants that are received within the application period and which meet the criteria specified in the announcement.

Calls for proposals can either be open or themed. Open calls for proposals are based on the general orientation of the MSB research programme of the day. Themed calls for proposals are within clearly defined areas described in the research programme.

Calls for proposals can apply to several forms of funding among them research projects, framework programmes for research, post-doctoral support and planning support.

The MSB's research funds can be applied for by researchers and research groups at colleges, universities and research institutes. The MSB welcomes applications from the private sector and other interested parties but the guiding principle is that the main applicant must be based at a university, college or research institute.

You can read more information about the MSB and the MSB's orientation and funding of research at:

www.msb.se

From there you can download your own complete version of the research programme: *Research for a Safer Society. MSB research programme 2011–2013*, and read more about current research projects.

Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB)

SE-651 81 Karlstad Tel +46 (0)771-240 240 www.msb.se

Order number MSB226 - December 2010