

Template for Observer Reports of Crises

Using a common template for those carrying out observer studies is a way of structuring the experiences obtained from observer duties. This facilitates the comparison of reports both within one's own field of activity as well as between different fields. It also simplifies the execution of joint observer studies and joint observer reports.

The structure used here has its basis in the Utstein method of studying disasters within the area of disaster medicine "[Health Disaster Management: Guidelines for Evaluation and Research in the Utstein Style](#)", which is the result of extensive development carried out in recent years at WADEM (World Association for Disaster and Emergency Medicine). Processing and modification of this work has been done within the framework of the Swedish Emergency Management Agency's network of observers.

The observer report is in principle a product of "lessons identified". "Lessons learned" is the resulting process carried out by each involved body to gain from lessons identified, leading to a number of measures that will improve preparedness in a future event.

All the headings below should be included, but in some cases it may be relevant to only state that a heading is superfluous if it was either not possible or not warranted to study the subject. Under each heading it is often motivated to have a number of sub-headings, which may vary according to the area studied. Under the headings Damage and Disturbances, for example, one or more of the sub-headings Health, Environment, Property and Politics may be appropriate.

As far as possible, comments and reflections should be written after each chapter (section) where experience gained and its relevance for Swedish conditions, among other things, is presented. These comments will later constitute the mainstay of the text presented under Experience. Comments or experiences here can be presented in a fact box to make them clear and easy to find.

Title

The type of event, place/region/country and the year should always be clearly stated in headings. A sub-heading is appropriate with the term "observational study" (if this is not already included in the heading) so that the report(s) are easy to find using computer searches.

Preface

The preface should be structured in accordance with the policy of each authority. The preface may completely replace or supplement the Introduction.

Observers and Authors

The presentation should be structured in accordance with the policy of each authority.

Summary and Experiences

The scope of the summary will vary depending on the event reported. If the summary only is to be translated into English it may be motivated to make it reasonably detailed.

Under Experiences it is always important to relate the relevance of experiences to Swedish conditions and whether any "local" experiences can be generalised.

As a rule, this chapter is translated into English. However, there may be exceptions if, for example, it is judged that the report is only of interest to Swedish readers. It may be relevant

to only publish the English translation on the website. The heading and authors etc. should then be in this place.

Introduction/Material and Methods

This heading may be omitted if the relevant information is in the Preface.

The reasons for the study, its area of focus and delimitation, should be included here, along with a description of the commission and the method (s) used. Reflections concerning the observer commission carried out (method etc.) may be included in this section if justified.

Hazard (Threats and Vulnerability)

Why and how the event arose should be described here, as well as why and how it led to the actual consequences. What was the threat (hazard) and what were the organisational/social/political/financial/technical circumstances (vulnerability) that put people and organisations at risk and what made the accident/disaster happen? Each authority should select here what they feel is relevant to study as well as what the observer studies found were relevant vulnerability factors.

Background

This chapter should describe relevant background information, which may vary considerably depending on the incident/part of incident studied.

The chapter should have at least the following section: Pre-event status and Preparedness.

Pre-event Status

The situation prior to the event should be described here.

Preparedness

The preparedness available to handle the event in question should be described here, including legal prerequisites, organisations etc. Where appropriate, any structures (or corresponding) resulting from lessons learned from previous events should be described.

Any organisational charts should preferably be presented as an appendix.

Event

The sequence(s) of events should be described here. The structure of this chapter depends on the nature of the event. The description should be of an overall type. Detailed time sequences etc. should be presented as appendices. The location of the event (including GPS coordinates if possible) is given here.

Damage

A description of what/who/which was damaged should be presented here, but the effects are described in the chapter Disturbances.

Disturbances

The consequences of damage to people and the environment are described here.

Examples

Damage (person)

Bone fracture

Disturbances

impaired mobility

Damage (environment)

Ruptured water pipe

Collapsed bridge

Collapsed building

Flooding of farming fields

Disturbances

impaired water supply

transportation impossible

loss of shelter, house

impaired production and

Responses

Measures related to damage as well as disturbances should be described here. Where appropriate, these are described separately.

Detailed time sequences etc. are described in appendices.

Recovery and Development

The description of whether and how the society/organisation etc. has been restored to the pre-event status and recovered should be presented here. Repairs should be related to damage, and recovery should be related to disturbances. Any developments that have taken place are also described here, and what experiences have already become "lessons learned".

Discussion

Analysis of findings and what lessons identified have been observed should be described here and, where appropriate, how these can be converted to "lessons learned".

References

The structure of this section follows the policy of each authority.

Appendices

Detailed time sequences etc. and illustrations of organisations should be presented as appendices.

Key words

Relevant key words should be included here.

Index

Words and expressions that are important to be found easily in the text are indexed here.

Abbreviations

List of abbreviations used in the report.