

## Emergency Planning for Records and Archives Service

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### Emergency Planning for Records and Archives Service

#### *ABSTRACT*

Every day we are witnessing the destruction of archival documents in all the terrestrial globe as a result of disasters such as earthquakes, floods, fires, war etc. These adversities have raised awareness of archivists to do anything to protect archival documents, because these disaster at any moment can slam their institution. In order to protect themselves and their assets, including records and archives, many organizations develop "emergency plans". An emergency plan seeks to protect people and property and ensure that, in the event of an emergency, action is taken immediately to reduce the damage incurred and institute recovery procedures right away. A risk assessment and impact analysis is usually carried out in four stages: identifying records and assets, determining threats, assessing their impact and recommending action.

**Key words:** emergency plan, disasters archive records

### Pianificare l'emergenza per i documenti ed i servizi archivistici

#### *SINTESI*

Ogni giorno stiamo assistendo alla distruzione di documenti d'archivio in tutto il globo terrestre a seguito di catastrofi come terremoti, inondazioni, incendi, guerra ecc. Queste avversità hanno accresciuto la consapevolezza degli archivisti di dover fare qualcosa per proteggere i documenti d'archivio, perché queste calamità in qualsiasi momento possono abbattere le loro istituzioni. Al fine di proteggere se stessi ed i loro beni, inclusi i documenti e gli archivi, molte organizzazioni sviluppano „piani di emergenza“. Un piano di emergenza cerca di proteggere le persone e le proprietà e di garantire che, in caso di emergenza, si intervenga immediatamente per ridurre i danni sostenuti ed istituire procedure di recupero immediato. Un'analisi della valutazione dell'impatto del rischio avviene solitamente in quattro fasi: individuazione dei documenti e dei beni, determinazione delle minacce, valutazione dell'impatto ed azione raccomandate.

**Parole chiave:** piano per l'emergenza, documenti d'archivio nelle calamità

### Krizno načrtovanje za gradivo in arhivsko službo

#### *IZVLEČEK*

Vsak dan smo povsod po svetu priča uničenju arhivskega gradiva kot posledica naravnih in drugih nesreč, kot so potresi, poplave, požari, vojna itd. Te nevarnosti so okrepile zavedanje arhivistov glede ukrepanja za zaščito arhivskega gradiva, kajti vse te nevarnosti lahko vsak trenutek prizadenejo tudi njihov arhiv. Da bi se zaščitili, vključno z arhivskim gradivom, številne organizacije oblikujejo krizne načrte. Krizni načrt vsebuje smernice za zaščito ljudi in premoženja v primeru kriznega dogodka ter katere ukrepe je potrebno takoj izvesti za zmanjšanje in tudi odpravo škode. Ocena nevarnosti in analiza vpliva se po navadi izvede v štirih stopnjah: pregled gradiva in opreme, ugotovitev nevarnosti, ocena vpliva in priporočljivi ukrepi.

**Ključne besede:** krizni načrt, nesreče, arhivsko gradivo

## Plani Emergjent për dokumentet dhe shërbimet arkivore

*ABSTRAKT*

Çdo ditë jemi dëshmitarë të shkatërrimit të dokumenteve arkivore në të gjithë globin tokësor si rezultat i fatkeqësive të tilla si tërmete, përmbajtje, zjarre, lufta etj. Këto fatkeqësi kanë ngritur vetëdijen e arkivistëve të që të bëjnë diçka për të mbrojtur dokumentet arkivore, sepse këto fatkeqësi në çdo moment mund të sulmojnë institucionin tyre. Në mënyrë që të mbrojnë veten dhe pasuritë e tyre, duke përfshirë të dhënat dhe arkivat, shumë organizata zhvillojnë „plane emergjente”. Një plan emergjent kërkon për të mbrojtur njerëzit dhe pronat dhe për të siguruar që, në rast të një emergjence, veprimi duhet ndërmarrë menjëherë për të zvogëluar dëmin e shkaktuar dhe procedurat e rimëkëmbjes së institucionit menjëherë. Një vlerësim i rrezikut dhe analiza impakti i zakonshëm kryhet në katër faza: identifikuese të dhënat dhe pasuritë, duke përcaktuar kërcënimet, vlerësimin e ndikimit të tyre dhe duke rekomandua rmasa.

**Fjalë kyçe:** Plani i Emergjent, fatkeqësitë, Arkivi, Të dhënat

## 1 Introduction

Constantly we lose a large amount of written treasury as a result of natural factors (e.g. light, heat, humidity, dust), but also the disasters that have struck archives (fires, floods, earthquakes etc.). The memory of natural disasters (flood, fire), technological and industrial disasters, human disasters and the wars as well as all incidents within institutions, that lead to the loss of heritage, are enough to remind us the importance of preparation to protect against these factors. Documents and training on these issues should not be missing. Archives should work under the guidance to develop guidelines which describes the various steps to be taken to develop a backup plan for preservation of records in an emergency. Lot of documents were also destroyed during the wars (intentionally or accidentally). We have witnessed that in the last war in Kosovo in 1998/1999, in which case many archival documents were destroyed, such as those in institutions and organizations, as well as those in private ownership. In this war the Municipal Archive of Deçan was burned in its entirety. These are things that push us to think to a rescue plan for loss of heritage.

In order to protect themselves and their assets, including records and archives, many organizations develop “emergency plans”, which are also called “disaster plans”. Such plans are based on the concept that an organization should identify its assets - including its people, its equipment and supplies, and its critical information sources - and then establish procedures to protect those assets. An emergency plan seeks to protect people and property and ensure that, in the event of an emergency, action is taken immediately to reduce the damage incurred and institute recovery procedures right away.

## 2 Stages for protection from disasters

In case of disasters be they natural or induced by man, the archives should take safety precautions provided with legal provisions. Archives must have internal guidelines for the rescue of the case from the aforementioned risks. Kosovo Archive has only one fire protection regulation on record approved by the Kosovo Archives Directorate in 2004. So, should become aware of all workers, good planning and constant updating of protection measures. The question that should be asked in this case is what are the stages that must be included in the action plan in case of disaster? In case of disaster planning involves five phases:

1. Prediction of risk (risk prediction for building and documents);
2. Preventive protective measures (use of measures which will filter out or reduce any risk);
3. Preparedness measures (preparation of written plan for preparedness measures, rescue and elimination of consequences);
4. Salvation (during and after the disaster);
5. Avoiding the consequences (disaster recovery country and restoration of the damaged object).

To foresee the danger, it must first consider the position of the building, the fire risk from floods, risk of technical equipment and conducting works, the problem of vandalism, protection in case of armed conflict etc. Durability of building material must be defined and used, to provide space for the protection of vital material in the place where it is.

Depots archive should be separated from other premises and separated by walls and fire protective doors. Be away from sewage installations, water, electricity etc. provided under the previous provisions. With a main breaker to enable immediate termination of power. Warehouse to be protected from lightning, humidity, heat, ultraviolet rays and other harmful effects and to have appropriate statics. Shelves should be strong, durable and fireproof.

As seen, the building is the first line of protection of archive material and is crucial for the success of the defence program. Its characteristics, location and construction must be certified, while weaknesses are removed or reduced.

The action plan is a written document which sets out urgent measures to be taken if it comes to disasters. The question is how to make security and protection of archive material in these cases? First, made a plan, which includes a description of the urgent measures and recommendations, as well as to update the register of people about if disaster strikes archives. Also, the plan should include measures which funds and collections have a priority to the rescue, and the use of appropriate protective device.

All are encouraged to perform these preparations, because no one knows if one day there will be a victim of a disaster. Effectiveness is multiplied when teams are prepared, trained by regular exercise. And stress is reduced and damages are smaller.

Preserving heritage is an integral part of the emergency response plan. Emergency backup plan and an archive based on the vocabulary used and the list of actions to be taken.

### 3 Actions before disaster

As the guided project: structure and action plan.

Disaster protection plan is teamwork, transversal, building a network that requires different skills. Its success relies on the motivation of management. The emergency plan can be shared if other archival services, or other services as it heritage of libraries, museums ... The advantage is multifold: greater motivation, division of labour, economy of means (different records and materials will be separated, each service must maintain a minimum necessary, the teams will be able to intervene in all countries).

The main stages of the project:

- Starting work initiated by services;
- The definition of objectives, distribution of stock between actors;
- Raising awareness of the service and partners;
- The implementation of the action plan;
- Knowledge of the different phases.

Scheme emergency plan organization comprises the Directorate of services, the steering committee, project manager, project manager and external working groups.

**Steering Committee** - is responsible for carrying out and monitoring the project. Decision-making body, it validates all stages of the process, informs and mobilizes actors internal and external. It consists of the service department, the chief of the project, the project manager, the manager of the building and air treatment, the head of the project, etc.

**Project Manager** - ensures the implementation of the project in close connection with the steering committee. He organizes, manages, access, coordination of actions and actors, and the synthesis of management jobs. Preventive conservation responsibilities may be appointed one whose best fit the job. Project management can be entrusted to a specialized service bidder for written heritage protection in the event of disasters, restorer, and expert in prevention (preventive conservation specialist).

**External Project Manager** - is responsible for the fire service and rescue department. Registration for this service if necessary in concrete cooperation needs, reanimate training and exercises, tools and necessary actions to save people and heritage in close cooperation with the directorate of archives.

**Working groups** - the number of their members depends on the size of the service.

#### 4 Determination of risks

The purpose of this plan is to help cope with various situations that may face outside as well as inside the building. In the case of a major disaster, priority was given to saving human lives, salvation heritage will remain in second place. It is imperative that the service be organized itself to cope with disasters. In case of danger to the structure of the building, but firefighters have access, they will try to salvage priority collections and funds, and then they will take care of service personnel. Everyone will carry identification bands so as not to enter other people (press, pests).

To determine which archival material has a priority for rescue, State Archive in each country must deal with the government and with fond-maker, to define what is a vital subject which usually cannot be more than 4% of the overall case. Subject defined as vital to be classified according to priorities and importance.

**External pests** - very suspicious phenomena are predictable and should be studied in various documents. They enable prediction of flooded areas and areas at risk (earthquake, tsunami, collapse, lightning conductor close control facility).

**Internal pests**, these are the most common risks, but of a smaller scale fires often excluding (electrical hazards, work in hot areas, neglect, vandalism etc.). The fact, that the bulk of archival services available to them the detectors, alarms and division that can limit the spread of fire. But, destruction, maintenance defects and human error cause a permanent risk. Therefore, it is important to regularly inspect to ensure buildings and a list indicating the date, responsibility for the inspection, recommendation, and finished works.

List of key internal risks that have to do to the environment funds:

- • poorly maintained buildings, monitoring of all openings, roofs, gutters, rainwater collection and waste, watchers of the building, the presence of leaves of various plants (insect hazards, humidity, fire, water blocking) , keep track of all the points of water infiltration (a secret leak and small can be disastrous);
- • Air treatment system is poorly maintained or poorly designed, the risk of condensation, injury;
- • The care of manual light sources;
- • Fire detectors and flood, fire extinguishers inappropriate or insufficient or not their existence;
- • Hazardous electrical systems and disregard of advice to them (should be switched off whenever you get out of the warehouse, do not use double sockets);
- • Inadequate storage of material that burns easily (solvents, cleaning products);

Works to spread uncontrolled heat (it is mandatory to ensure the permit in these cases).

To assist in the analysis of internal risks for the preservation of the written heritage, should “rating methodology in preventive conservation practices” that are graphically recorded significant helpers and ensure proper monitoring. Shares for preventive conservation and backup plan often regroup.

Risks associated with the funds:

- Documents located in space where there is moisture;
- Inadequate shelves, that cannot resist fire, water means made of wood;
- Documents located very close to the floor, past the shelf height should be calculated based on the risk of flooding;
- Documents placed on the sewage or other openings;

- Documents placed in contact with the external walls;
- Ascertain the balance: cannot predict disaster damage.

## 5 Warning and informing staff

Among the priority actions in the context of preservation is warning and informing staff, researchers, visitors, school groups. Indeed, in the case of threat or occurrence of a phenomenon, as soon as the action, the smaller will be the consequences:

- Must be informed and be vigilant so that all can adapt their behaviour and ensure proper implementing safety guidelines;
- Be informed about the evolution of the situation that everyone knows what is happening and keep possible new directions;
- To inform the completion of trouble, when all risks are removed and all measures taken (organization providing assistance to and protection of heritage ...).

Vigilance should be more efficient, reliable and known to all. In the case of natural or technological disasters, cities should have warning systems. To verify if the safety instructions are well displayed and well monitored.

## 6 Human resources

Archival service in case of any emergency or disaster should first calls to help its staff, while in case of disasters with greater proportions call to volunteers by specialized associations for heritage conservation.

List to quickly identify and contact the person identified in the intervention plan should be updated regularly. It should be clearly organized starting from managers and their deputies (necessary in case of absence) including external services such as firefighters who have to be on the list. It must contain the official phone numbers and personal, home address, or whatever will verify whether access roads or streets auxiliary are accessible to people of the dangers that often occur at night and on days of rest and holidays.

The list will contain the necessary professionals to manage a disaster over time.

## 7 Convention for protection in cases of conflict

As a defence base in war conditions is Hague Convention of 1954 and microfilming insurer as the important preventive measure. Convention for the protection of cultural goods in cases of armed conflict (Hague Convention and its Protocols, applies UNESCO.

On the basis of The Hague Convention 1996 is formed ICBS - The International Committee of the Blue Shield. His job is to coordinate preparations for the confrontation in situations of crisis and to act appropriately in case of armed conflict or natural disasters, and those under the Hague Convention of 1954.

This comprised four non-governmental organizations:

- ICA - The International Council on Archives;
- ICOM - The International Council of Museums;
- ICOMOS - The International Council of Monuments and Sites;
- IFLA - The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions.

XXXVI International Conference of the Round Table on Archives, held in Washington, in 1995, reviewed the serious risks which appeared to archive material from the wars and other conflicts, the consequences of which pose a threat to human rights and civil.

In 1998 it published the UNESCO program entitled “Emergency Programme for Safeguarding

of vital records in the event of Armed Conflict”. Program of urgent measures for the protection of vital material in the event of armed conflict has developed the International Council of Archives, which has entrusted UNESCO in 1997. ICA consistently recommends that should increase the awareness of managers and all employees of archives because small or large disasters at any time can hit the archives and destroy their cultural heritage. Awareness should be used as the driving mass in those countries where there is such a plan is necessary to develop. Plans should be updated regularly and be tested, while staff team should to have mandatory trainings.

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## SUMMARY

Every year we are witness of the loss of large amounts of documents as a result of “natural” causes (e.g. light, heat, humidity, dust), but also the disasters that have struck archives (fires, floods, earthquakes etc.). Many documents were also destroyed during the wars (intentionally or accidentally), where are witnesses in the last war in Kosovo in 1998/99, in which case are largely destroyed archival documents such as those in institutions and organizations, as well as those in private ownership. In this war the municipal Archive of Decan was burnt in entirety. These are things that push us to think towards a plan of protection for the loss of heritage. In case of disasters, whether natural or induced by man, the archives should take safety precautions provided with legal provisions including sensitization of workers, good planning and constant updating of protection measures. In case of disaster the planning includes five phases:

1. Prediction of risk (risk prediction for building and documents);
2. Preventive protective measures (use of measures which will filter out or reduce any risk);
3. Preparedness measures (preparation of written plan for preparedness measures, rescue and elimination of consequences);
4. Rescue (during and after the disaster);
5. Avoiding the consequences (The recovery of disaster place and restoration of the damaged material).

Scheme organization of emergency plan comprises the directorate of services, the steering committee, project manager, external project manager and working groups. Defense fundamental action is warning and informing staff, researchers, visitors, school groups, etc. Archival service duty in case of any unexpected event or disaster is that there should first appeal to help its staff, while in case of disasters with greater proportions to call volunteers from associations for heritage preservation. From all this we can conclude that much cheaper would cost sources of risk prevention or reduction of the size of their consequences than later remediation of damage. The existence of coherent archival systems and taking measures for the protection of archives, or of archival material in the event of armed conflict or other disasters are the foundation of any rule of law. Of course they should be an integral part of measures aimed at establishing the rule of law.

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