ProtectUK

The National Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear Centre (NCBRNC) Testing and Exercising

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The National Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear Centre (NCBRNC) shares an insight into two European commissioned testing and exercising projects.

CBRN exercises in Europe

The National CBRN Centre, as part of UK Counter Terrorism Policing, are consortium partners in two European commissioned projects - These are known as eNotice and ProActive. The projects seek to host joint activities to test the capability and capacity of joint military and civil responders to a CBRN event, whilst also introducing new concepts of working to continually develop guidance and doctrine around operational response.

Germany

The first exercise was in Dortmund, Germany by the *Fire Department of Dortmund* (FDDO). This was based around a derailed freight train containing chemicals, resulting in the contamination of 50 people. The objectives of the exercise were to assess how well the emergency services identified vulnerabilities amongst members of the public that were contaminated and how they worked together across partner agencies to reduce the threat to life or threat of significant harm.

Italy

The second exercise was held in Rieti, Italy at the Defence CBRN school *(Scuola Interforze Per La Difesa Nbc* (SCNBC)). The exercise aim was to test the operational response of blue light partners and military colleagues to save life and reduce harm to members of the public in a contaminated area

following a CBRN event, be it accidental or malicious.

It involved 80 volunteers from the local town to actively play as members of the public during the event. Blue light and military partners worked together to identify and effectively deal with vulnerable members of the public and to provide effective medical triage. *Save the children* Italy were involved in the exercise, with the view to understanding how the partner agencies would deal with multi-generational families.

Belgium

A third exercise took place in Belgium in May 2023. This time two different European projects worked collaboratively to achieve some shared objectives under the umbrella of one single exercise.

This exercise tested the effectiveness of a mobile phone app that PROACTIVE have created. This app is designed to notify members of the public of a live incident and to keep people away from the scene. It also provides timely updates for those involved in the incident. This was the final exercise before the eNOTICE project finished. As a consortium member of both the eNOTICE and PROACTIVE, the National CBRN Centre played an integral part in the design and management of each scenario.

The threat to the UK of a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear attack or plot by a terrorist group or individual lone actor is unlikely; however, the emergency services and military partners are fully required to not only develop a capability to deal with such an incident, but to ensure it is tested and exercised regularly in order to ensure an effective and joined up response should it ever be called upon.

If you are interested in understanding what a CBRN exercise looks like then please use the links below and watch some of the work that has been coordinated under the projects.

- Dortmund
- Rieti

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