

Operational resources

The operational car-pool of the C-EEVBS consists of a Mercedes Sprinter equipped with the module No. 3 (protective equipment) and module No. 4 (operational equipment for chemical incidents), a vehicle for carrying personnel and further federal service vehicles if required.

For incident response the following are used: Permeable and impermeable protection suits, protection masks and filters of the Swiss Armed Forces, additional chemical and particulate filters, decontamination means and antidotes for those affected and the C-EEVBS itself.

For measurements the C-EEVBS uses: Ion mobility, flame ionisation und infrared spectrometers, test tubes for chemical warfare agents, sensors and chips for measuring various dangerous industrial chemicals, chemical detection paper, plus a radioactivity detection device and a dosimeter.

For on-site sampling the following equipment is used: Material and containers for handling gaseous (adsorption tubes, gas bags), liquid (syringes, pipettes etc.) and solid samples (tools, especially coated plastic bags). All the samples are checked for contamination and packed three-fold so that they can be transported without danger.

The operations centre at SPIEZ LABORATORY has an advisory hotline for the intervention teams, an EDP station and an operations room.



C-EEVBS

The chemistry specialists of the
EEVBS Emergency Response Team



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Since the beginning of 2010, the E-EEVBS is ready for operations. It was developed out of the EEVBS Emergency Response Team that has been in service for 10 years. The C-EEVBS consists of about 20 volunteers who are specialists from SPIEZ LABORATORY (a branch of the Federal Office for Civil Protection FOCP) and the NBC EOD Centre of Competence of the Armed Forces. The operational strategy of the C-EEVBS is focused on as rapid and efficient support of the units operating on-site. This includes chemical emergency units, police, medical and fire services.

Performance

If a release of chemical warfare agents or highly toxic chemicals is suspected, the C-EEVBS supports the operations of cantonal units upon request. It offers expert consultation (immediately after the alarm) by telephone and is able to deploy an expert team to the location. This team is specialised in detecting chemical warfare agents and is equipped to take samples from the contaminated area, which are then analysed in an accredited laboratory at SPIEZ LABORATORY. In addition, the team gives technical support to the other units operating on-site.

In case of an emergency, the C-EEVBS can provide antidotes for at least 500 patients of nerve agents, but has no medical staff of its own. During operations the Swiss Toxological Information Centre in Zurich (tox centre) can provide specialist medical advice.

The EEVBS depends heavily on the expertise, that its members have acquired in their professional and part-time duties. Continuous progress of expertise is ensured through regular trainings in Switzerland and abroad.

Alert procedure

The C-EEVBS is called up by the National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC) of the FOCP and is available round the clock. An expert adviser is able to advise the operations manager on site by telephone within a short time. The intervention team of the C-EEVBS is able to leave the NBC Centre in Spiez within no later than an hour after the alarm and drive to the location of the incident with prioritised vehicles. On location the team leader is able to support operations management as necessary. The measuring and sampling team consists of three specialists and is capable of beginning its job in the contaminated area within a few minutes after arrival.



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