



Swedish Civil
Contingencies
Agency

SUMMARY

A first step towards a national risk assessment

– National Risk Identification



This pamphlet is a summary of the report "A first step towards a national risk assessment – national risk identification", published by the MSB, MSB 336-2011 - November 2011.

The report presents a range of risks that could have major consequences for Sweden if they occurred, and it provides a starting point for further work to develop a national risk assessment.

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Risks from a holistic perspective

The risks we face in society must be considered in a holistic manner. Risks range from everyday events to major events that can lead to great harm in our society. The consequences can affect people, societal functionality and ultimately our ability to maintain our basic values.

In Sweden so far, we have worked with risk and vulnerability assessments from a local and a regional authority perspective as well as the scope of a selection of governmental agencies. We have a tradition of building our preparedness from below, on the activities of operators based on their responsibilities. A national risk assessment becomes an important aspect for linking up the prevention, preparation, handling and follow-up elements and to combine the bottom-up approach with a perspective "from above" – the national perspective. With an integrated national and cross-sector risk assessment, we can better understand what gaps exist and how we can make priorities.

National Risk Assessment

The MSB (Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency) has been commissioned by the government to develop a national risk assessment on the basis of Council conclusions on risk assessment in the European Union (8068/11). The report produced in November 2011, is a presentation of the work and the first step in the process of developing a national risk assessment in Sweden.

The risks presented in this report are those that mainly are of low probability and which could have major consequences from a national perspective and thus may be considered of value to the EU's overall situation awareness. Risk identification is based on a range of risks that the national authorities and county administrative boards (regional authority) have identified in their risk and vulnerability assessments in 2010 and these cover a broad spectrum of events.



The report provides a starting point for further work to develop a national risk assessment. This provides opportunities to compare risks from a national perspective, which in turn creates better conditions for resource priorities.

Selection of risks

The selection of risks in the risk identification was based on the risk and vulnerability assessments for 2010 carried out by the 46 governmental agencies, including regional authorities. To get an overall picture of the risks that may have an impact on a national level, the MSB has made a selection of those risks that according to their assessments are stated to entail "very serious" or "disastrous" consequences. The selection of risk events was later modified somewhat by two workshops, one conducted internally at the MSB and one in conjunction with other authorities. This work resulted in the final selection of the 24 risks.

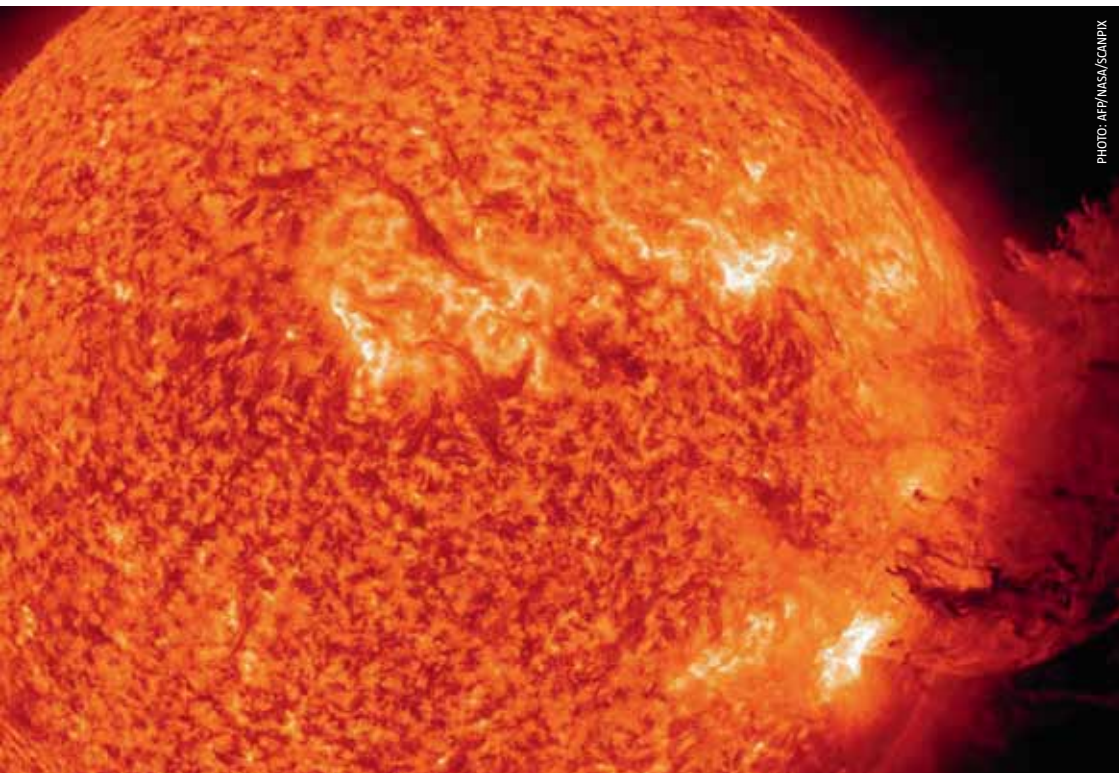




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Identified risks

The 24 risks presented in the report provide an overview of selected risks that may affect our country. Certain risks have a broad scope as regards possible causes and effects. Others are more specific in nature. Many risks also share common components. A storm is in itself a risk, but it may also give rise to other risks, such as disruptions in electronic communications.

It is not possible to analyze risks in Sweden from a strictly national geographic perspective. Risks are influenced most often by, and provide spillover effects, in a major context. There are many events that can occur in other countries – such as cyber-attacks, volcanic eruptions and pandemics that could affect Sweden. This was especially evident during the tsunami disaster in 2004 in Southeast Asia when 543 Swedes died. Similarly, events at local or regional level, for example, disruptions to electricity supplies, can quickly lead to effects that must be dealt with at a national level.

The 24 risks

The 24 risks presented in the report are as follows:

- floods
- landslides
- storms
- earthquakes and volcanic eruptions
- solar storms
- heat waves
- forest fires
- vermin infestation (pests)
- infectious diseases (outbreaks, pandemics, zoonoses and epizooties)
- resistant bacteria and resistance to antivirals
- disruptions in the supply of medicines
- the risks associated with nuclear and radiological materials
- risks associated with chemicals
- dam failures
- disruption of food and drinking water supply
- extensive fires in buildings and tunnels
- disruptions in electronic communications
- disruptions in energy supplies
- disruptions in payment systems
- oil spills
- disruption of transport and major transport emergencies
- terrorism
- cyber-attacks
- risk of societal instability and civil unrest

Continued work with a national risk assessment

The work presented in this report represents a first step towards a national risk assessment. Developing processes and methods for assessing risk from a holistic national perspective is an important component of the work on strengthening civil protection and emergency preparedness.

The Swedish emergency management system is based on all societal levels being involved. The MSB will in collaboration with the relevant authorities continue the work already undertaken to develop a process for a national risk assessment.

Reconciling the bottom-up approach with the "from above" – the national perspective – has not been done before in this area. Thanks to existing work on risk and vulnerability at different levels in the Swedish emergency management system, a developed concept for capability assessment, and otherwise well-established networks for coordination and collaboration with national authorities, there are a variety of tools that can be used in future development work.

In conclusion, this work will be collated in a national risk assessment, which will be submitted to the government in spring 2013.



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