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Emergencies and the use of unorganized volunteers

Experiences from Tromsø

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Summary

If disaster strikes, people who are nearby will very often contribute in the emergency response. Emergency responders will have to interact with unorganized volunteers. However, research on unorganized volunteers in emergencies has paid little attention on how to best utilize the average citizen. To contribute to better understanding of the interaction between actors present in emergencies we need to understand the relation between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers at the scene. This thesis seeks to add to this knowledge, by providing insight into the interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers.

The thesis has applied qualitative method. Interviews and additional textual analysis has proved fruitful when studying the interaction between emergency response agencies and unorganized volunteers. The study is limited to the community of Tromsø.

The interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers on the scene are not random. In order to analyze the interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers the study has applied institutional logics as an analytical approach. Institutional logics emphasize the powerful and adaptive role of norms, values and beliefs in the process of organizational development. While interacting with their environment (i.e. professional emergency responders and unorganized volunteers) organizational actors rely on both formal and informal frameworks. Organizations provide formal rules of action and informal practices to the actors within an organization. These aspects may facilitate or constraint action, and determine where the attention of organizational actors is directed.

The main finding in this study is that emergency response agencies lack formal practices on how to best utilize unorganized volunteers. Nevertheless, the average citizens are participating in emergency response “every day”, due to informal practices held by emergency responders. Such informal practices refer to the emergency responders’ assumptions, values and beliefs.

Personal motivation

The main reason for choosing this topic was personal interest. I became interested after I participated as a marker in a large scale exercise in Tromsø. All emergency rescue teams were present, including the police, the fire brigade and the paramedics. There were also organized voluntary groups, like The Norwegian civil defense (sivilforsvaret) and Norwegian people aid (Norsk folkehjelp). All markers were supposed to have minor injuries, and act as we would have done if this was a real situation. We quickly started to take care of people that were severely injured. In other words we were acting as unorganized volunteers. The scene was very realistic, with smoke, paramedics running in and out of the building, sirens, and even a helicopter landing outside. The paramedics with lifesaving tasks were, not surprisingly, stressed and overloaded. I observed that the rescuers never asked us to help them with practical issues. There were a lot of tasks that could easily have been delegated to the markers (unorganized volunteers) like carrying stretchers, getting blankets for patients or clear the evacuation route for obstacles, so that the evacuation would go smoother. The question that suggested itself was *why* emergency respondent didn't utilize us [markers/unorganized volunteers] to a larger extent.

“*Citizen response is what saves the day when disaster strike.*”

(Helseloot and Ruitenber, 2004:110)

1 Introduction

1.1 Background and problem

In emergency situations people who are nearby often contribute as unorganized volunteers (Helseloot and Ruitenber 2004:98; Auf der Heide 2004:350-354; Tierney 2003:36). Citizens’ being first on a scene start lifesaving activities, help victims evacuate, give emotional support and offer other practical help (Helseloot and Ruitenber 2004:98; Auf der Heide 2004:350-354, Dynes 1990, Tierney 2003:36, NOU 2012:14). This is part of a phenomenon referred to as convergence¹ (Barsky et al. 2007:495). Emergencies may be manmade (such as terrorism), caused by technical failure, or natural disasters (Rosenthal et.al 2001:10). Nevertheless, people offer equipment and give support in different ways (Auf der Heide 2004:350-354; NOU 2012:14). People *want* to help. Such altruism goes beyond gender, age and culture². There are countless examples worldwide on such volunteering activity (Auf der Heide 2004: 350-354, Tierney 2003:36, Ursano et al. 1994:255), and there is no reason to believe citizens will stop offering help in catastrophes in the future. Yet, literature provides little advice on how professional responders can benefit from unorganized volunteerism.

Helseloot and Ruitenber (2004:109) claim that governments should step in to improve citizens’ response by preparing to facilitate it in times of disaster. Norwegian crisis management is based on different principles (The contingency plan for the police, part 1). These principles are the principle of subsidiarity (nærhetsprinsippet), the principle of responsibility (ansvarsprinsippet), the principle of similarity (likhetsprinsippet) and the principle of cooperation (samvirkeprinsippet). The latter principle implies extensive

¹ Convergence is a broad phenomenon referring to the occurrence of people, probably in large scale, that most likely will show up hours before organized volunteering groups in emergency situations (Barsky et.al 2007:495).

² Even though, Helseloot and Ruitenber claim that further research on cultural differences in emergency response is needed (2004:110).

coordination and cooperation between public services, local administrations and voluntary organizations. The principle must be implemented in the plans, routines and procedures for all organizations that participate according to this principle (The contingency plan of the police, part 1). The importance of training and exercises involving all parties is emphasized (ibid).

The principle of subsidiarity in crisis management implies a decentralized form of organization where decisions and actions for handling of the crisis or disaster are taken at the lowest organizational level practical. This means that a crisis within a municipality or county will be handled by units within the local administration. In this respect it is important to take the emergency response by unorganized volunteers into consideration (Kruke 2012:10). In “the golden hour” of crisis, unorganized volunteers will be an important resource (Kruke 2012:10).

Table 1. Actors in emergencies and their functions (Kruke 2012:11):

Actors	Phase	Responsibility
The affected/injured	“The Golden Hour”	Save themselves and others
Unorganized volunteers	“The Golden Hour” (+)	Lifesaving activities
Professional emergency responders	Acute phase (30 min+)	Take command and crisis management
Organized volunteers	Acute phase (1h+)	Procedures and planned tasks

Every actor in an emergency has its function (see table 1). Adequate aid in the first hour of an emergency may be the difference between life and death for severely injured people (Helseloot and Ruitenber, 2004:106; Procedural handbook for the ambulance service). Citizens will have to rely on themselves and/or be dependent on aid from unorganized volunteers (Helseloot and Ruitenber 2004:106, Kruke 2012:11).

The Norwegian Directorate for Civil protection claims all resources must be mapped prior to an undesirable event (www.dsb.no), yet few professional emergency responders include unorganized volunteers as a resource in their contingency plans (Procedural handbook for the ambulance service, Contingency plans for search and rescue for the Red Cross). Besides, there is little research conceptualizing how to utilize this massive crowd, willing to help.

Citizens are a resource in many ways; they are a source of information about local area and the event sequence, and starts lifesaving activities (Kruke 2012). A brilliant example of the

valuable aid provided by unorganized volunteers is the emergency response during the terrorist attack 22th of July, 2011, in Oslo (NOU 2012:14). The professional emergency agencies received invaluable assistance from both organized and unorganized volunteers (ibid). In addition to the above mentioned principles, there is an assumption that no sector in Norwegian society may handle a huge crisis alone, making Norwegian crisis management dependent on volunteering aid from citizens (Kruke 2012:10)³. People are a resource in crisis. “Contingency plans, preparedness, training and exercises, therefore, should reflect on the capacity of people”. (Kruke 2012:16).

In order to manage crisis there is a lot of planning and preparedness (Perry and Lindell 2003). Contingency plans are written and exercises are conducted in accordance to the written plan (ibid). Different scenarios are discussed in tabletop exercises, and large scale exercises involving all emergency response organizations are being held (Perry 2004). Evaluation is done, and hopefully lessons are learned from both training and exercises (Kruke 2012). However, volunteers willing to contribute labor in the emergency response are often overlooked in planning (Dynes 1990). The emergency response should emphasize on effectively utilizing and mobilizing volunteers (ibid). So far, however, little attention has been paid to explore how unorganized volunteers can be included in contingency plans in order to utilize them to the best of their ability (Dynes 1990). More information about the interaction between unorganized volunteers and emergency responders on the site would help us to establish more knowledge on this matter. There is limited knowledge in disaster and emergency response literature on how to utilize unorganized volunteers. My thesis intends to contribute with knowledge in this field.

1.2 Research on unorganized volunteerism in emergencies

Different terms are used in literature to discuss unorganized volunteers. Unorganized volunteers are referred to as helpers (Fritz and Mathewson 1957; from Barsky et. al 2007:496), unaffiliated responders (Barsky et.al. 2007:495), volunteers (Drabek, 2010:135) and unofficial volunteers (Barsky et al. 2007:496).

Numerous studies have described unorganized volunteerism (Dynes 2002; Wachtendorf & Kendra 2004, Auf der Heide 2004, Tierny 2003). Citizens bring themselves to safety, and save fellow citizens, in disaster (Helseloot and Ruitenberg 2004:110). Unorganized volunteers can be used as a source of information and as helpers for practical assistance (Johansson

³ Referred to as *Dugnadsprinsippet*

2013:3). However, studies show that volunteering contribution in emergencies is not exclusively positive (Barsky et al. 2007:495). Barsky et al. discuss the paradox that volunteers on the scene pose the risk of being both a potential help, but also a hindrance (Barsky et al.2007:495) Through in-depth interviews with members of the Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) the study map different ways of interacting with, and utilizing volunteers. Volunteers are being assessed in terms of their presumed legitimacy, utility and potential liability or danger posed during the disaster response (ibid). The arrival of people showing up on the scene is ranging from professionals to untrained, well-meaning individuals. Emergency managers are enforced to deal with these responders. Concluding remarks from the authors suggest that there is no correct answer on how to best make use of volunteers in disaster response.

Dynes (1990) discusses the problematic assumptions rooted in conventional emergency planning. He stresses a distrust of independent action by volunteers, not anticipated in the pre-emergency planning (Dynes 1990:11). The effective use of volunteers depends on considerations being built into contingency planning for their utilization (Dynes 1990:21-22). Volunteers are a supplemental emergency response resource, and may perform a number of tasks, like search and rescue (Dynes 1990). In sum, he suggests a problem solving model for emergency response, rather than traditional command- and control model, based on a top down approach to crisis management. The problem solving model assumes that the citizens are relevant and capable in emergencies. Thus the primary focus in emergency planning should focus on the development of mechanisms and techniques of coordination which will allow an effective response on the part of the organizational resources in the community, emphasizing effective utilization of unorganized volunteers (Dynes 1990:23-27).

Drabek (2010) claim volunteers must be integrated into the overall disaster response. If this is not done efficiently, they may become a source of problem rather than a resource (ibid). Authorities have neglected the possibilities and advantages of citizens` response (Helseloot and Ruitenberg 2004:110). It is necessary to take into account the possibilities of citizen response, as disaster plans generally approach a citizen as a helpless victim, who can only be helped by the appropriate services (ibid). Current contingency plans tend to perceive citizens as a problem rather than a resource (Dynes 1990:5). Instead of contingency plans based on the traditionally three C's (Chaos, Command and Control), Helseloot and Ruitenberg (2004) agree with Dynes (1990). Dynes suggests to replace the traditional C's with Continuity, Co-ordination and Co-operation (Helseloot and Ruitenberg 2004). The latter model, termed the

problem-solving or human resources model is based on the idea that successful crisis management is flexible, adaptive and decentralized.

Whether to use a “command and control” approach to crisis management, or the bottom-up approach based on coordination and cooperation (Helseloot and Ruitenberg 2004:104), is a topic of discussion (Tierny 2003:39). Research suggests that emergency plans should be based on principles, rather than specific details. In this way, contingency plans encourage both communities and rescue teams to improvisation (Perry and Lindell 2003:342-343). There are several examples on successful improvisation (Weick 1993, Auf der Heide 2004; Tierny 2003). Nevertheless, crisis management often relies on the traditional “command and control” principles because planners believe people will react to crisis in an unsocial way and need to be controlled (Tierny 2003:19).

Auf der Heide emphasizes that contingency plans must conform to the actual behavior of people on a disaster site (Auf der Heide 2004:364). He argues that communities are resilient and do not suffer social breakdown in disasters. He argues against common misconceptions about disaster behavior, such as “the panic misconception”, the hesitancy to evacuate, the “disaster syndrome” and the “looting misconception”. These “myths” of social behavior are often held by planners (Auf der Heide 2004:342- 362). Unfortunately, these misconceptions can lead to dysfunctional planning. *“Disaster planning is only as good as the assumptions upon which it is based”* (Ibid, p.364).

Another issue that has been addressed recently is patterns of interaction between professional emergency responders and unorganized volunteers on the incident site (Johansson 2013). He found that all of the studied emergency responders (the police, fire- and rescue services and the paramedics) regarded the unaffiliated helpers as a resource in two respects: to be used for practical assistance, and as a source of information. The study examines how unorganized volunteers are being utilized on the site an emergency: ambulance personnel used unaffiliated helpers for non-treatment tasks, like carrying stretchers, holding hands- and talking to injured people. The police demanded assistance from unaffiliated helpers, regarding information and the fire and rescue needed unorganized volunteers for carrying stuff and other practical issues.

Unorganized volunteers were recognized for selfless and outstanding aid in rescuing victims in the emergency response during the terrorist attack in Oslo, 2011 (NOU 2012:14 p. 202-203). Unorganized volunteers gave first aid, offered warm clothing, blankets and showers; they evacuated youth, warned emergency agencies and provided care in different ways. The

commission emphasis what “an enormous resource the average citizen is in disaster” (NOU2012:14). Nevertheless, the report gives no recommendations for further focus on how to utilize unorganized volunteers in emergency.

If disaster strikes, people who are nearby will most likely contribute in the emergency response. Professional emergency responders and organized volunteers will have to interact and cooperate with unorganized volunteers. The intention of this study is to shed light on what allocate the attention of emergency responders in emergencies, and what rules do they conceive as appropriate to the situation they are facing regarding unorganized volunteers. It may be interesting to explore if the potential for utilizing unorganized volunteers are greater.

1.3 Research purpose

There is limited knowledge in disaster and emergency response literature on how to interact with and utilize unorganized volunteers. My thesis intends to contribute with knowledge in this field. In order to address the topic, two research questions were formulated:

- 1. How do emergency response organizations interact with unorganized volunteers through formal and informal means?*
- 2. What factors facilitate and constraint interaction between professional emergency responders and unorganized volunteers?*

Empirically, this study will contribute with knowledge on the interaction between emergency response organizations and unorganized volunteers in Tromsø. The data focuses on the emergency response organizations. The interaction on site is highlighted through the lenses of the emergency response organizations, not unorganized volunteers. As such, the study has an organizational point of view.

In terms of theory, the study will test the applicability of analytical approaches studying the institutional logics to the analysis of the interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

This thesis has been divided into six chapters. The study begins with an introduction, containing background and problem, a brief overview of research conceptualizing unorganized volunteers and research purpose. I will then explore the organizational point of departure and the analytical approach applied in the thesis, institutional logics. Part three will

present and explain choice of methods, and what I have done to ensure validity and reliability. The fourth section will present the findings of the study, followed by a discussion of the empirical data in light of the theoretical framework. Finally, I will conclude and answer the issue of the thesis and give recommendations for further research.

2 Theoretical framework

This chapter will provide an overview of the theoretical point of departure in the study. First, a brief overview of organizations and their environments is presented. Second, the concept of boundary spanning personnel is described. Third, a description of the notion of institutional logics is given. Institutional logics approach is a systematic way to theorize the guidance of institutions on individual and organizational behaviour (Thornton and Ocasio 2008). The theory will provide a framework to analyse the empiric in the discussion section. Finally, the analytical implication for the thesis is presented.

2.1 *Organizations and their environments*

Organizational environment is understood as “*an entity that lies outside the boundary of the organization, providing the organization with raw materials (inputs), and absorbing its products and services (outputs)*” (Hatch 2006:63). Organizations are shaped by and adapt to their environments (Fincham and Rhodes 2005:478). Transaction across the organizational boundary takes place constantly (ibid). Organization is a product of environmental influence- it is “*both embedded in and an active part of, its environment*” (Hatch 2006:75) Therefore, it may be difficult to define the exact boundary between the organization and the surrounding environment (Fincham and Rhodes 2005, Hatch 2006).

The topic of organisational environment has been addressed extensively in organizational theory (Fincham and Rhodes 2005, Thompson 1967, Hatch 2006, Duncan 1972), and in particular potential threats (Fincham and Rhodes, 2005; Duncan, 1972). More than forty years ago, Thompson (1967) proposed that organizations seek to manage their dependence on the environment. Organisations must adapt to the environment to survive and perform their functions (Duncan 1972). One of the main problems for organizations is coping with externally created uncertainty (Thompson 1967). Environmental uncertainty is defined by the *amount of complexity and the rate of change in the organization’s environment* (Hatch 2006:78). Uncertainty can be created in a number of ways: environmental complexity (simple-complex) environmental stability (stable-dynamic) and environmental richness (rich-poor) (Duncan 1972). Disasters create uncertain environments for organizations. Environment changes constantly (Hatch 2006) making emergencies difficult to predict (Perry 2004, Perry and Lindell 2003). Crisis management is thus about decision making under high degree of uncertainty (Aven 2010). Improvisation in crisis is essential as there is usually more than one way to solve a problem (Dynes 1990). Improvisation is a way to improve organizational

resilience in crisis management (Weick 1993:637), and need to be performed by actors at the site of emergencies (Dynes 1990, Kruke 2012).

2.2 *Boundary spanning*

The environment poses challenges to organizations in many different ways (Hatch 2006). But interaction between organization and environment is essential for organizations to survive. Therefore boundary spanning is crucial to organizations. Boundary spanning is a complex phenomenon (Beechler et al. 2004). Boundary spanners operate at the skin of the organization and hence their functions are to interpret environmental conditions and relay that information to organization decision makers (Leifer and Huber 1976). They are the people who establish and maintain the linkage between the organization and the environment (Beechler et al. 2004:122).

The professional emergency responders are the boundary spanners of emergency response organizations (Johansson 2013). Coping with uncertainty is one of the central problems for organizations (ibid, Leifer and Huber 1976). Working in unpredictable and dynamic environment, professional emergency responders are forced to deal with uncertain conditions and changeable tasks (Johansson 2013). The degree of uncertainty may vary, depending on the nature of the task, and the environment of the organization (ibid). To understand the interaction between professional emergency responders and unorganized volunteers, it is crucial to study the nature of their relations. As all external contacts are not equally important for organizations, Johansson (2013) suggest a distinction between boundary spanners' external relations, where some are of primary task- related importance and others of secondary- related importance⁴. Professional emergency responders meet two kinds of unorganized people at the site of emergency: the victims of the incident, and the unorganized volunteers (ibid). To some emergency responders, the interaction with unorganized volunteers is of primary task-related, to others secondary task-related.

Organizations function as a result of a number of different circumstances (Johansson 2013) and in interaction with environmental conditions (Hatch 2006:37). Example of environmental conditions may be the nature of the tasks, characters of collective identity, skills and training and demands from the environment (Johansson 2013). In this respect, organizations function

⁴ Primary task-related importance refers to interaction between boundary spanners and organizationally unaffiliated individuals where encounters with clients are necessary, such as salespersons and hairdressers. Other social relations are less crucial, meaning they are of secondary task-related importance (Johansson 2013).

according to different institutional logics (Thornton and Ocasio 2008; Friedland and Alford 1991).

2.3 *Institutional logics*

Do you know what is wrong with social theory?” Roger Friedland⁵ asked a friend when he saw his newborn twins in the arms of his wife. “There’s no love in it- anyplace”. (Friedland; cited by Lounsbury and Boxenbaum 2013). Friedlands` struggle to understand this brought him to the work of Max Weber. Weber distinguishes between instrumental and value rationality (ibid). Instrumental values refer to the actors` cognitive action motivated by evaluating its consequences and consideration of the various means to achieve it. They are usually planned and taken after considering costs and consequences (Friedland; cited by Lounsbury, and Boxenbaum 2013). Value rationality action is motivated by valued goal, regardless of other consequences.

Institutional logics is a concept within sociological theory and organizational studies. The concept was first presented by Friedland and Alford in 1991 (Thornton et al. 2012). The perspective was originally a criticism of organization theory for not situating “actors” in a societal context (ibid). Friedland and Alford (1991) argued that society and social relations are not just about the circulation of material structures, but also about culture and symbolic (Thornton et al 2012). Institutional logics are defined by Thornton and Ocasio (2008:101) as: *“the socially constructed, historical patterns of cultural symbols and material practices, including assumptions, values, and beliefs, by which individuals and organizations provide meaning to their daily activities, organize time and space, and reproduce their lives and experiences”*.

The institutional logic of an organization guides the behavior of its actors; their attention is selective, and only occurrences considered as important within a given domain attract their attention (Thornton and Ocasio 2008). Institutional logics affect the external relations of the boundary spanners i.e. professional emergency responders (Johansson 2013:4). The principles, practices and symbols of an institution offer a cognitive framework to be used by the actors` reasoning, vocabulary used to motivate action, and their sense of self and identity (Thornton et al. 2012). Furthermore, these symbols and practices are available to individuals, groups and organizations to further achieve desirable outcome (Friedland and Alford 1991). Institutional logics are both material and symbolic, providing formal and informal rules of

⁵ Founder of institutional logics

action, interaction and interpretation (Thornton and Ocasio 1999). Formal logics are specific and observable and provide rules and regulations written in plans and laws. Informal logics are more “taken for granted” rules, existing because they are “talked and experienced” into existence (Thornton and Ocasio 2008). Rules, both formal and informal, guide and oblige decision makers in realizing the organization’s tasks and in obtaining social status, credits, punishments, and rewards in the process (Ocasio 1997). Institutional logics shape rational and mindful behaviour (Thornton and Ocasio 2008). However, formal and informal aspects are intertwined (Sydnes 2011, Thornton et al. 2012). Formal procedures mainly connect roles and functions but not individuals (Selznick 1948; cited by Sydnes 2011). Formal organizational structures may fall short in complex situations (Sydnes 2011). As such, informal aspects may serve as a supplemental aspect (ibid).

Institutional logics is a metatheoretical framework for analysing the interrelationship among institutions, individuals and organizations in a social system (Thornton et al. 2012). Friedland and Alford (1991) identify five institutions with distinctive and associated logics: family, religion, state, market, and corporation. In recent years two more have been added: community and profession (Thornton et al 2012). Each of the institutional orders in society has both material and cultural characteristics (Friedland and Alford 1991). Material aspects refer to structures and practises, cultural aspects refer to values and beliefs (Thornton et al. 2012). An institutional logic approach emphasize that institutions develop and change as a result of the interaction between cultural and societal structures (Thornton and Ocasio 2008). If researchers are interested in questions of how individual and organizational actors are influenced by the institutional orders of for example the profession, as in this study, the institutional logics approach is a suitable analytical tool. An institutional order as for example profession, offer unique organizing principles, practises and references to guide the actors` behaviour (Thornton et al. 2012). A key assumption within the institutional logics is that the interests, identities and values of individuals and organizations are embedded within fundamental logics (Thornton and Ocasio 2008). Choices and consequences are a result of the interaction between individual agency and institutional structure (Friedland and Alford 1991). While individual and organizational actors may seek power, status, and economic advantage, the means and ends of their interests and agency are both enabled and constrained by prevailing institutional logics (Giddens 1984).

The logics of institutions affect the allocation of attention, regarding perception, interpretation, evaluation and response to environmental situations (Thornton and Ocasio 2008). There are two interests by which institutions structure attention (Ocasio 1997):

1. By creating a set of values that order the legitimacy, importance, and relevance of issues and solutions
2. By providing decision makers with an understanding of their interests and identities

These mechanisms provide motivation for action for actors within an organization (Thornton and Ocasio 2008). Institutional logics help us understand how individual and organizational behaviour is located in a social context and the social mechanisms that effect that behaviour (ibid).

To sum up, institutional logics offers a cognitive scheme to actors within an organization, providing “rules” concerning behavior and decision making. The choices actors of an organization make, and the interaction between actors, are not free and independent, but influenced by institutional logics which either facilitate or constrain organizational action (Glynn and Raffaelli 2013). There are both formal and informal “rules” to guide the actors’ choice of action. To understand individual action in an organization, therefore, one has to look upon the institutional logic within the organization. Institutional logics affect the external relations of boundary spanners, and their relations and interaction with unorganized volunteers.

2.4 Analytical implication

The analytical implication is that the understanding of the institutional logics will help to identify and explain interaction patterns between professional emergency responders and unorganized volunteers.

The interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers is not random. In this thesis I seek to examine those factors that facilitate and constraint the interaction between the boundary spanning personnel (emergency responders) and unorganized volunteers. Aspects of institutional logics are both formal and informal. And may both facilitate and constraint the interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers.

In order to illustrate the logic of the study I would like to introduce a figure:

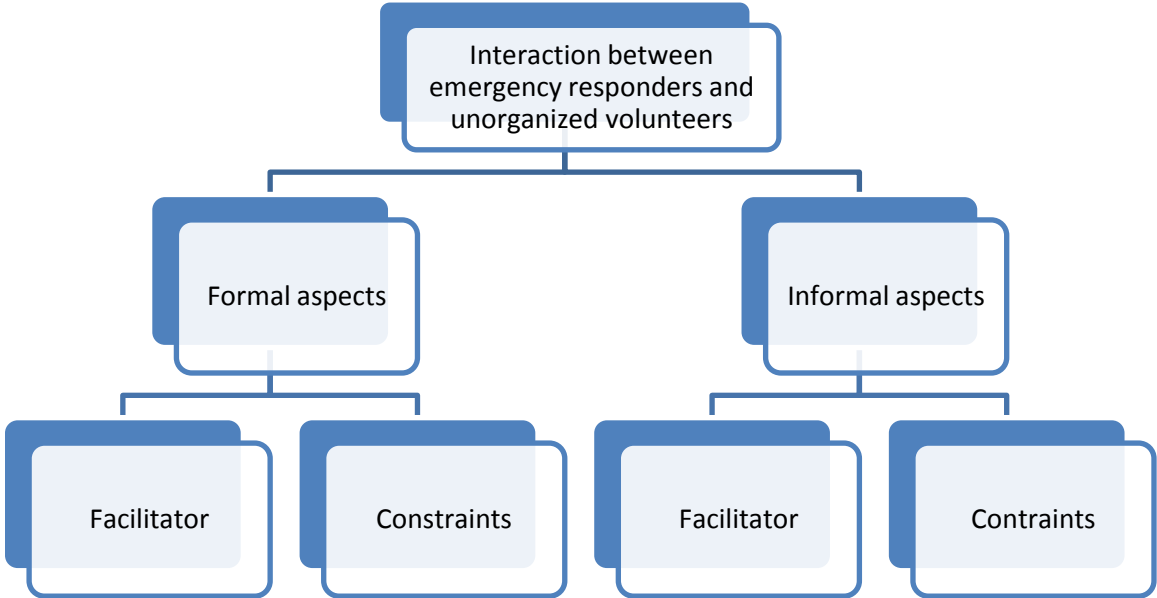


Figure 1. Interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers are based on formal and informal aspects

Figure 1 illustrates “rules of action” that guide emergency responders. The rules are either formal or informal, and may both facilitate or constraint interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers. As such, logics provide a framework for social behaviour and the criteria by which options and possibilities are to be evaluated.

3 Methodology

Research often starts with a sense of wonder, a question (Kleven et. al 2011:12). You may ask yourself: “What is actually going on here? And why?” The research continues with an effort to answer, or at least shed light on this question (Kleven et. al 2011:15). Different research questions lead to the choice of different research strategies. To address the research questions posed in this thesis a qualitative⁶ (Ryen 2010) approach was applied, using semi-structured interviews, both individual- and group interviews, and textual analysis.

According to Richards (2009:7) “... *the techniques of qualitative research (..) are not linear but looping. The researcher learns from the data, returning to revise or revisit steps taken before that understanding developed.*” In other words, when using qualitative methodology, the researcher works continuously on the collected data, interprets and analyses. The researcher must analyze, not just repeat what the participants have said (Ryen 2002).

3.1 Interview

Interviews are the most applied source of data collection within qualitative research (Ryen 2002:10). There are several different types of interviews (Ryen 2002: 15). I have chosen semi-structured interviews for my data collection. Semi-structured interviews are characterized by setting up main questions, issues or topics, without specifying detailed question wording or the order of these (Ryen 2002:99). All interviews were conducted in Tromsø, within a period of three weeks. The informants worked for the police, fire brigade or ambulance service. I also interviewed three members of the Red Cross. The initial sample of participants was selected based on their experience with crisis management. I interview emergency responders, as my thesis has an operational point of view. Both genders were represented, and their age ranged from 25-56 years. Years of experience in crisis management ranged from 2-18 years. I interviewed nine persons; two from each of the above mentioned emergency response agencies and three from the Red Cross. For practical reasons, all interviews were conducted in Norwegian. All quotes from interviews are author`s translations. I have also applied some interview techniques recommended by Anne Ryen (Ryen 2002: 106). Techniques can be used by the researcher to conduct the interview ahead, examples can be that the researcher “pumps” the informants for further information by responding using

⁶ Qualitative methodology prioritizes proximity between the researcher and the subjects. The researcher is essential in the Interpretation of data, and knowledge is created through descriptions about the world we live in. A quantitative approach, on the other hand, deals with numbers, generalizations and testing of hypothesis. (Kleven et al. 2011, Ryen, A. 2002)

“mm” or “m-he” (Ryen 2010:106). Also, the researcher can ask for examples, ask the informant to amplify or simply ask for more information (Ryen 2010:106). The interviews should be introduced with “grand tour questions” (Ryen 2010). Such questions consist of informal questions, to make the informant relax. These questions are not repeated in the transcription, as the transcription only refer to the questions of the interview guide.

Prior to the main fieldwork I conducted two preliminary interviews. The purpose was to map the area to be addressed, and to get a better understanding of the situation in order to formulate the right questions. In that regard I had to rewrite some of my original questions. Some of the questions that seemed reasonable to me were not that clear for my interviewees. In general, I experienced that terminology in crisis management was not as familiar to those actually working within the field.

A surprising and not so pleasant experience I made when conducting preliminary interviews was that I got emotionally touched. It is not surprising that when digging into the reality of crisis management, experiences from professional rescuers and detailed description of disasters involving children, death, severe injury and family tragedies is challenging. Lessons learned from pre interviews made me feel better equipped when I started interviewing.

When designing the interview guide⁷, I formulated open questions. I wanted to make the informants reflect about the questions I asked. I tried not to ask more than one question at a time, as double questioning often leads to the informant only answering the last of two questions (Lamark 2001:60). Yet, based on the transcription, it may look like this has been done. In case I have asked the informants two questions at once, this is due to interviewers expressing with their body language that they didn't understand the first question, example by raising eyebrows. In that case I have tried to reformulate, to make them understand. (Body language is not easy to transcribe).

When starting interviewing, I experienced that some of my questions didn't make sense. For example asking emergency responders how they *assume* citizens will behave in crisis is inappropriate. Some of my informants had up to eighteen years of experience with crisis management. They don't *assume*, they *know* how people react in crisis. Also, I experienced that information given in one interview could affect the next interview, in terms of what I asked for. If something made me curious I asked the next respondent about the same, and so

⁷ See appendix for the interview guide

on. I therefor had to rewrite my interview guide several times. I also had a few follow up questions, to clarify some minor details. These questions were sent and answered by mail. This is how qualitative method works and demonstrates why the method is a looping process (Hellevik 2009).

When having conducted six individual interviews with professional emergency organizations, I was in a phase in the study where I needed more information on the interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers at the site of emergencies. Instead of interviewing more professional emergency responders, I was interested in other agencies present on the scene. Organized groups of volunteers are often present in emergencies (see figure 1), upon command from the police, contributing with rescuers, knowledge (example in avalanche) and equipment.

In addition to individual interviews, a group interview was conducted. I conducted one interview with two volunteers from the Red Cross. I wanted to do a group interview⁸ to have the respondents reflect on the topic I am studying, hopeful that this setting would provide more valuable information. Group interview is suitable if a researcher needs more knowledge of a phenomenon or wishes to develop the issue further (Jacobsen 2000:141). I followed my semi-structured interview guide, and noticed that the two informants often discussed the issues between them. According to Jacobsen, people often do not reflect on happenings in everyday life. In that manner group interviews may be appropriate if the researcher wants the participants to reflect on subjects, and members of the group may help each other to describe events that may have been difficult to articulate (ibid).

When conducting group interviews, the researcher should be aware of the group dynamic (Jacobsen 2000:144). The researcher should step in if one of the interviewees is dominant *or* doesn't get a chance to speak (ibid). Having this in mind, I introduced the questions to them both at the same time, but also individually.

⁸ Group interview is self-explanatory, meaning the researcher interview a group rather than one at the time (Jacobsen 2000).

Table 2 List of informants:

Informant	Age	Response Organization	Years of experience in crisis management	Gender
Informant 1	40	Police	15	Male
Informant 2	38	Police	7	Female
Informant 3	29	Ambulance service	2,5	Male
Informant 4	43	Ambulance service	17	Male
Informant 5	56	Fire and rescue service	17	Male
Informant 6	38	Fire and rescue service	15	Male
Informant 7	26	Red Cross organization	2	Female
Informant 8	27	Red Cross organization	6	Male
Informant 9	53	Red Cross organization	18	Female

Table 2

All interviews were recorded and later transcribed.

3.2 Textual analysis

The textual analysis is another source of data in the study. Documents as data source can be used differently in conjunction with either quantitative or qualitative methods (Blaikie et al 2010:207). I have only used it qualitatively. Documents as data differ from other type of data as the researcher has limited, if any, controls of the collection (Jacobsen 2000:153). The empirical data exists already, and it is the researchers' interpretation of data that is significant for the findings (Jacobsen 2000:153). "*Documents have content. Such content requires analysis*" (Prior 2004:358). There are four criteria that must be met in a textual analysis, these are: authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning (Scott 1990:19-35). Authenticity means the documents genuineness. Can we trust the document? Is it actually what it purports to be? Credibility is an expression of sincerity and accuracy. Did the authors believe in it? Representativeness can be measured through other similar papers. Does the document have a meaning? This latter criterion is of utmost importance, as it gives significance to the investigated topic.

I conducted textual analysis of the contingency plans for the fire- and rescue services, the police and the ambulance services, laws, regulations and evaluation of Barents Rescue exercise. I find that the documents analysed in my thesis meets all the requirements of a document analysis.

Documents analysed in the study:

- Law on fire and explosion protection
- Barents Rescue Evaluation report
- Contingency plan for the police, part 1
- Procedural handbook for ambulance services
- The Police Legislation
- The Red Cross contingency plan for search and rescue
- NOU 2012:14

As already mentioned, the use of unorganized volunteers in contingency plans is poorly defined. The law on fire and explosion protection briefly terms the ability to utilize unorganized volunteers. The Police Legislation describes to some degrees potential laws that may influence the interaction between the police and unorganized volunteers. The contingency plan for the police, part 1 is a public document. It defines how the contingency in the police is built in a more general level. The contingency plan for the police, part 2 and 3 states the procedures and responsibility of the police in different emergency situations. Unfortunately I have not been able to gain access to these two contingency plans as they are not publicly available. Instead I have asked questions in the interviews and my informants from the police have answered and reflected on the content of part 2 and 3 of the contingency plans. Also the ambulance service has a procedural handbook (“tiltaksbok”). It is not a public document, but fortunately I have been given the opportunity to read through it to search for relevant data for my study. The Red Cross contingency plan for search and rescue is not public available. However, I was having a copy of the two checklists used by the Red Cross organization in Oslo and Østfold. Finally, I have analysed an evaluation report from the Barents Rescue exercise 2013 (www.dsb.no) and the evaluation report of the terrorist attack in Norway, 22end of July, 2011 (NOU 2012:14). The reason for analysing the Barents Rescue evaluation report is that I asked about the exercise in the interviews. The 22end of July commission emphasizes what “an enormous resource an average citizen is in disaster”. In that

respect I find it interesting to analyze how the report regards unorganized volunteers in general, and what recommendations are given accordingly.

When analysing contingency plans I first searched for all relevant information regarding unorganized volunteers. The relevant data I found was limited. Therefore I proceeded to search for data that could be interpreted as facilitating preparedness in crisis management in terms of utilizing unorganized volunteers. I was aware of denominations as “flexibility”, “improvising” and in general all procedures that may encourage professional responders to “think or act outside the box”.

When analysing the evaluation report from the Barents Rescue exercise, I was especially interested in description of markers. Markers are representing actors that in real life will be unorganized volunteers (See table 1 “Golden Hour” Kruke 2012). How is the consciousness towards markers in an exercise setting? Are unorganized volunteers planned for and if so, how are they regarded as potential resources?

The NOU 2012:14 was analysed because unorganized volunteers were a major contributor in the first aid and evacuation after the terrorist attack in Norway, 2011.

There are places both in the interviews and in the text that expressions are termed in masculine form. Examples are *firemen*, “*kjentmann*” and The Norwegian Expression “*den vanlige mann i gata*”. Even though they are written in masculine form, they all refer to both genders.

3.3 *Research robustness*

There is consensus among social scientists that research shall be valid and reliable. Whether or not research is reliable and valid, is a matter of trust (Ryen 2010). I will in the following address the reliability and validity of this study.

3.3.1 *Reliability*

Reliability means trustworthiness (Ryen 2010). In research, high reliability means low affection of measurement error (Kleven 2011). Traditionally, reliability is characterizing the trustworthiness of measurements on time of measuring. Meaning the results would have been the same if any other researcher were conducting the same interviews. Therefore, common used synonyms of reliability are consistency, stability and preciseness (Kleven 2011).

3.3.2 Validity

The term “Valid” originates from Latin, meaning “strong”. Oxford dictionary defines valid as *effective because made or done with the correct formalities* (Hornby 1974). Validity is related to the relevance of the data for the issue (Hellevik 2009). When assessing validity, we distinguish between internal validity and external validity (generalizability).

3.3.3 Ensuring reliability and validity

Qualitative method has been criticized for being subjective and based on the researchers’ observations and interpretations (Ryen 2010). The empiric is contextual, and there is no such thing as objective certainty in qualitative methodology, and critics claims validity and reliability is questionable (ibid). Validity becomes questionable if the researcher does not attempt to refer to, or discuss, divergent cases, whereas reliability may be complained due to lack of access to the data material (Ryen 2010). To accommodate the critics the researcher should record and transcribe all interviews, refer to or discuss deviating examples and make use of primary sources (Kleven 2011).

To ensure reliability, all my interviews were recorded and transcribed. In this matter, the data collections are being made open and transparent. When transcribing, all recordings were transformed from words to text. Recordings were accurately written. All interviewed agreed on being taped. I did not experience the recorder as a hindrance of the interview. Rather the opposite, as one of the ambulance service professionals noted when I asked permission to quote him in my thesis:

You don’t have to e-mail the quotes to check if you have understood me right, you have it recorded (informant 3).

Concerning subjectivity I realise that I am who I am and see what I see. The interview setting is personal and contextual. I also experience that I became more and more comfortable interviewing after conducting the first 2-3 interview. Nevertheless, I had in mind always to try to be as objective as possible. For example, I asked informants to verify their statements by repeating or deepen their answers to make sure I had understood them right. However, the question of subjectivity will always be a matter of discussion when it comes to qualitative methods.

To ensure validity I have been aware of the following: When interviewing and analysing data I was conscious of the tendency to emphasize information that conform to the researchers

perceptions, so called “confirmation bias”. During the process of data collection there were examples of deviating findings. These are being discussed in the discussion section.

There are, however challenges regarding the validity of the conclusions. The succeeding section will count for the limitations in this respect.

3.4 Challenges

Five out of six interviews were conducted when the informants was on duty. There was constantly a possibility the informants had to leave the interview for a mission. Especially the ambulance personnel were busy. I had to wait several hours on the first interviewees. When he finally had time to do the interview, he had to do the interview while eating lunch. For the next ambulance personnel interview, I had asked for a woman. Unfortunately she was busy all day, and for practical reasons she was replaced with a man. The interviewing situation was a bit stressful, and I felt I had to rush through the interview guide, posing the risk that the interview would be interrupted, or worse, cancelled. The least stressful interviews were those with the fire and rescue personnel. Although, they too made it clear from the beginning of the interview that if the alarm goes on, they had to run. Fortunately it didn't, and I had plenty of time both on grand tour questions and digging into their experience of crisis management.

Although the interviewing situation was a bit stressful at times, all interviewees were positive I could contact them later if it should turn out I needed more information. I formulated a few follow ups, which I sent to the respondent by e-mail. All respondent answered my additional questions by mail.

3.5 Limitations

The qualitative nature of my study limits its generalization of the topic studied. However, it provides insight about emergency responders and their awareness of the utilization of unorganized volunteers. The study has an operational point of view. I have interviewed emergency workers working in the sharp end⁹, not the blunt end¹⁰. I chose to interview volunteers from the Red Cross, even though there are many more voluntary organizations in Tromsø. Other voluntary organizations may have provided more information to my study, but due to time limits, I chose to interview only these from the Red Cross. Furthermore, all nine respondents worked currently in Tromsø, and data from interviews may indicate that practice and experiences are different elsewhere. Tromsø has a great number of available emergency

⁹ The sharp end refer to the “the field” in emergencies (Kruke and Olsen 2012)

¹⁰ The blunt end refer to the bureaucracy, workers doing the planning and paper work (Kruke and Olsen 2012)

responders, both professionals and organized volunteers, in case of emergencies. Also, the community is relatively small in area, so emergency response won't take long when/if disaster strikes. Accordingly generalization is difficult. Even so, the study provides insight in the logics of emergency responding agencies.

Lastly, neither of the respondents had experienced large scale disasters. Fortunately, catastrophes are rare in everyday life. Coping with everyday emergencies are thus a test on how emergency responders will act and cope within the constraints of the institution.

3.6 Ethics

Finally I will account for the research ethics regarding the researcher and the informants. I contacted all the informants by mail, where I described the aim of the study. All the professional emergency rescuers did receive the interview guide prior the interview. The interviews conducted with the members of the Red Cross did not get the interview guide sent in advance, because the interviews were conducted more or less ad hoc. Instead I gave them brief information about the study before I started interviewing. All informants were informed of the volunteer participation, the use of recorder and the ability to withdraw from the interview at any time. All were given the possibility to read through quotes stated by them in the text.

I conducted a notification test on the website for Data Protection Official for Research¹¹. The test showed that I have neither directly nor indirectly identifiable personal data registered in my project, meaning the project will not be subject for notification.

¹¹ NSD (Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelige datatjeneste, personvernforbundet for forskning) www.nsd.uib.no

4 Findings

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings. It offers data on the emergency responders' beliefs, values, laws, procedures and training. All of which provide emergency responders a cognitive framework to be used when interacting with unorganized volunteers. The findings will be presented in accordance with the research questions.

Findings in the study emphasize how the interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers are influenced by formal and informal practices. The presentation will be divided into two main sections; formal rules of action, and informal practices. While presenting the data I will reflect on what factors facilitate and what create obstacles for the interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers.

4.1 *Formal rules of action*

This section will present an overview of the formal rules of action, guiding the emergency responders within the emergency agencies studied (boundary spanning personnel). The section will be divided into subsections, which are laws and procedures, contingency plans, training and exercises, challenges and finally a summary discussing the findings.

4.1.1 *Laws, procedural handbooks and checklists*

Any emergency respondent is obliged to act in accordance to laws. Of the three professional emergency responding agencies studied, only the fire and rescue teams have law that addresses issues related to unorganized volunteers. The Law on fire and explosion protection (Brannvernloven, chapter 2, §5) states:

Any citizen present at the scene of an accident, explosion or fire, are obliged, to the best of their ability, to assist in minimizing damage.

Any citizen is obliged to assist the fire and rescue service in rescue and extinguishing, whenever the scene commander demand, and make property, material, and if needed, human resources, available for such emergency response.

The police have no laws describing the interaction or ability to utilize unorganized volunteers. However, the police legislation encourages for improvisation when emphasizing (Politiloven chapter 5, §27):

The police shall take the necessary initiative to avoid danger and minimize damage in times of crises and disasters

“Necessary initiative” implies all actions necessary, including utilizing unorganized volunteers. Police has the overall command on the scene. Their primary concern is to investigate emergencies in case of criminal acts and secure the area. They are in charge of the coordination among actors and organizing the scene. When arriving at the site of an emergency they too have a checklist to organize their work at the scene (Informant 1). Police has little attention towards unorganized volunteers. The following statement illustrates the priority of the police:

When arriving the scene, our main concern is securing the area, saving lives and evacuate injured. This is common to all emergency response organizations. But in addition we will have to investigate the event. Our plans do not include unorganized volunteers (Informant 1).

In other words: unorganized volunteers are not part of the formal rules held by the police. If unorganized volunteers are being utilized in emergencies, this is due to reasons related to informal aspects. This will be addressed later in this chapter.

Regarding the use of unorganized volunteers, a fire and rescue respondent noted:

Fire and rescue are in charge of the site of an emergency until police arrives. Upon authority of the emergency commander [fire and rescue], we may demand help among the average citizen being present. There may be craftsmen, businesses with mechanics nearby, carpenters even, whom you may use. Even if there is a class [people] on a bus; you may utilize resources [humans] from that bus, as unorganized volunteers (informant 5).

But even though the respondents from the fire and rescue service were aware of the possibility to utilize unorganized volunteers, this is not their main concern. The fire and rescue have as an overall focus to extinguish fire (Informant 6). Their primary focus in emergencies is not to interact with unorganized volunteers, rather the opposite:

We are extremely focused that a fire scene is dangerous, and a risky place to be, so we want all people to remove. It is a reflex. We declare the area safe for other professional emergency responders. We are so focused on extinguishing fire, having attention toward other tasks [like coordinating/utilizing unorganized volunteers] is difficult (Informant 6).

When declaring the area as safe, we are even more focused to protect the public [than to include the public in emergency response] (Informant 6).

As such, formal rules held by the fire and rescue teams may both facilitate and constraint the interaction with unorganized volunteers. On one side the interaction is facilitated through the law of fire and explosion protection. The law encourages emergency responders from the fire

and rescue to utilize the average citizen on the scene, if needed. On the other hand, fire and rescue services are trained to keep the average citizen in secure areas, away from the fire.

For the ambulance services the focus on the patient is of primary concern. They are trained in first aid care and use of medical equipment (Informant 3, 4). The health care system is characterized by “*a logic of medicine*” (Johansson 2013:8)¹². The procedural handbook of the ambulance service describes many different possible medical conditions. There is a chapter concerning the procedures when coming to the site of an emergency. The first paramedic arriving at the scene is responsible for reporting status of the emergency. This report includes position, event, possible threats, number of patients, type of injuries and available resources present. The latter point, “*available resources and the need for further assistance*”, does not specify what type of resources. However, both informants (Informant 3, 4) from the ambulance service were clear that unorganized volunteers are a resource in this respect. “*The average citizens are the one to save lives*” (Informant 3). Regarding crisis management on the scene, the procedural handbook provides a checklist to be used by the leader of the paramedic (“operativ leder helse”). The worksheet suggests mapping all available resources on the scene and identifying persons who possesses local knowledge (“kjentmann”). Also the fire and rescue noted the importance of recognising such locals as they are familiar with the construction of buildings, number of residents, and knowledge of people in the building etc. (Informant 5). Such locals may provide valuable information of the area, for example regarding avalanche, knowledge of potential resources such as access to buildings and available equipment on the scene (Informant 5, 6). Such information is essential and may be vital (Informant 6).

The Red Cross is another relevant organization dealing with unorganized volunteers. The first priority of the Red Cross organized volunteers is to “prevent and relieve suffering” (Informant 9). Besides, the three respondents (Informant 7, 8, 9) from the Red Cross all emphasized the growing awareness for the use of unorganized volunteers. However, it is crucial to organize them. One informant from the Red Cross stated:

We have seen that they [unorganized volunteers] are a huge resource, but we need to organize them somehow. Otherwise they will become a “time thief” instead of a resource (Informant 9).

Another respondent from the Red Cross emphasized:

¹² “A logic of medicine” refers to a health care system where the health and well-being of the patient is in focus (Johansson 2013).

We need a system to organize the unorganized volunteers, both before, during, and maybe especially after the crisis (informant 7).

The Red Cross volunteers regarded themselves as the link between professional emergency responders and unorganized volunteers (Informant 7). In that respect it would be natural for them [the Red Cross organization] to develop plans for the utilization of unorganized volunteers (Informant 7, 8). See 4.1.2 for further discussion.

4.1.2 Contingency plans

Contingency plans for Norwegian professional emergency agencies, do not describe how emergency responders best can take advantage of unorganized volunteers (Procedural handbook for the ambulance service, Contingency plans for the police, part 1). Neither the police, nor the ambulance nor the fire and rescue organization provide their actors with formal tools on how to utilize unorganized volunteers. The Red Cross organization on the other hand is aware that there is a growing need for formal instruction on how to interact with unorganized volunteers (Informant 9). The Red Cross in Tromsø does not have a written document on how to manage, interact with, or utilize unorganized volunteers (Informants 7, 8, 9). Yet they intend to develop this kind of plan (Informants 7, 8, 9). So far, knowledge of how to best interact with unorganized volunteers are based on experiences and improvisation in the field (Informants 7, 8, 9). However, the Red Cross organizations in Oslo and Østfold have written documents on how to interact and/or utilize unorganized volunteers (Informant 9). The contingency plans are designed as checklists to be used in search and rescue operations. The Red Cross organization in Tromsø is currently developing similar contingency plans (Informant 7).

The contingency plan concerning interaction with unorganized volunteers made by the Red Cross Organization in Oslo consists of two checklists. One checklist is intended for the commander, and the other for the team leader¹³. The unorganized volunteers shall be considered in many aspects; relevant knowledge/experience, suitable clothing, age and the volunteers relation toward the missing person (in search and rescue operations). Unorganized are not allowed equipment from the Red Cross like GPS, inter-com or tracker. In search and rescue operations unorganized volunteers shall be given areas considered to be the least complicated.

¹³ A search and rescue action normally consists of several teams. Every team has one leader, and there is also an overall leader in command (Informant 9).

When briefing unorganized volunteers prior to search and rescue operations the Red Cross organized need to collect personal information (List of names and telephone numbers), and inform unorganized in how to gather information when searching. Unorganized volunteers are briefed whether or not to shout for missing people, the use of sight, hearing and other senses during search, the use of cell phones, procedures in case of findings and finally the overall focus on the missing person.

The checklist also emphasizes the responsibility of the police towards unorganized volunteers, regarding follow-ups, information and briefings.

The contingency plan made by the Red Cross organization in Østfold, consists of four checklists. One checklist used by the commander emphasizing the responsibility of the Police. The commander shall have in mind that teams from the Red Cross should be prioritized before organizing unorganized volunteers. In case unorganized volunteers are used in search and rescue operation, they shall be set to search the least complicated area. These areas will be searched by professional teams at a later stage. Unorganized volunteers will not have access to equipment belonging to the Red Cross. Cell phones may be used for communication purposes only.

The second checklist covers briefing of unorganized volunteers and should consist of the following: the importance of not leaving the team, information about search and rescue, the use of senses, how to spend time and not rush, whether or not to shout for missing persons, code of conduct, the importance of confidentiality, information about personal safety, the significance of informing the team when leaving the group/leaving for the day, procedures in case of findings and finally the overall focus on the missing person.

The third checklist emphasizes the importance of the team leader introducing himself for the unorganized volunteers, and map their experience and background.

The fourth checklist highlights the responsibility of the leader of the unorganized volunteering group. He should gather unorganized volunteers in a closed area, collecting names and personalia and always having an overview of who is in and who is out. The checklist describes the requirements with regard to proper clothing, age limits, physical shape and personal relation between the volunteer and the missing person. All checklists have a final point regarding the overall focus on the missing person.

The content of the two plans regarding unorganized volunteers, operated by the Red Cross, is relatively identical. The checklists are designed for search and rescue, suitable in avalanche and when people are missing. The checklists are not designed for other type of emergencies (Informant 9).

The checklists are formal rules of action both facilitating and constraining interaction with unorganized volunteers. The fact that the Red Cross recognize unorganized volunteers as potential helpers demonstrate how the checklists itself are facilitators for the interaction between unorganized volunteers and the organized Red Cross. Nevertheless the checklists also constraint the interaction between unorganized volunteers and the organized Red Cross, as civilians are selected and used according to different criteria. Yet, the checklists provide the organized Red Cross with formal rules of action. In addition to informal aspects, the checklists (formal rules) provide the members of the organized Red Cross a cognitive framework to be used when facing unorganized volunteers in emergencies.

The organized Red Cross, in addition to other organized volunteers, will not be present in emergencies in “the golden hour” of emergencies (Informant 9). In exercises conducted by professional emergency responders- and services they train as if the Red Cross organization and other volunteering organizations will be present at the scene in the “golden hour” of an emergency. But in real life, it is most likely that professional emergency responders will have to rely on unorganized volunteers in the golden hour, rather than organized emergency response organizations (Informant 7, 8 and 9). However, the respondents from professional emergency agencies did not regard this as a problem (Informant 1, 5).

Contingency plans are written documents on how to prepare and train for an undesirable event. The above findings illustrate that emergency responders have limited plans on how to interact and/or utilize unorganized volunteers.

4.1.3 Training and exercises

Exercises provide context to test both the training program and the plan (Perry 2004). The above findings demonstrate that emergency responders have limited contingency plans on how to interact and/or utilize unorganized volunteers. Hence, the emergency responders do not train on this matter. The findings in the following section illustrate the lack of attentiveness towards unorganized volunteers in a training context. The informants disagreed on whether training on the interaction with unorganized volunteers was necessary or not. One informant from the police claimed the main purpose for exercising with organized

volunteering groups is to get to know each other [emergency responders] and each other's procedures, not how to interact with unorganized volunteers (Informant 1). Whereas informants from the Red Cross emphasized the value of both having a written plan and also train for the use of unorganized volunteers (informant 7, 8).

The informants also disagreed on whether or not they train on how to utilize unorganized volunteers. The opinion depended on the fact if their organizations train for the use on unorganized volunteers or not. Two of the Red Cross respondents claimed they did not train on how to utilize unorganized volunteers (Informant 7, 8), but the third respondent from the Red Cross, stressed they did (Informant 9). One of the policemen even replied he did not remember if he had ever been educated in the use of unorganized volunteers (Informant 1). The contingency plan for the police stresses that it is crucial for the police to participate in exercises with other emergency response agencies (The contingency plan for the police, part 1). Exercises should be based on cooperation with other agencies providing emergency response; the military, the community/municipal management and administration, local businesses, organized volunteering groups and the public [unorganized volunteers].

There is no written plan on how to exercise, or interact with unorganized volunteers in any of the professional emergency response agencies. It may seem that the attention towards unorganized volunteers is absent. The respondents had not experienced exercises where training in utilizing unorganized volunteers was part of the plan. Neither the Barents Rescue¹⁴ exercise nor other full scale exercises in the area of Tromsø included unorganized volunteers when training for emergencies (Informant 2). However, informants agreed training for utilizing unorganized volunteers is possible (Informant 7, 8). One of the informants from the Red Cross stressed there is no reason why they should not train in utilizing unorganized volunteers.

If there is as plan on how to utilize the average citizen [unorganized volunteer], the chances are greater the potential [unorganized volunteers] will be better utilized. If we exercise for the use of unorganized volunteers then everybody know this is a resource we may utilize. But today [unorganized volunteers] are a resource that is more or less pushed away (Informant 8).

Another participant from the Red Cross emphasized the value of exercising for the use of unorganized volunteers:

¹⁴ <http://www.dsb.no/no/Ansvarsomrader/Nasjonal-beredskap/Aktuelt-Nasjonal-beredskap/Evaluation-Report--Exercise-Barents-Rescue-2013/>

You may scream out what resources you need [in emergencies], and briefly map the skills and knowledge [of unorganized volunteers]. To give [unorganized volunteers] a task they feel comfortable and familiar with is rewarding for their self being (Informant 7)

Lack of resources and time was however mentioned as an obstacle (Informant 5). One informant from the fire and rescue service noted that if they should exercise in the use of unorganized volunteers this would be at the expense of other exercises:

We may exercise on the use of unorganized volunteers from tomorrow on. Unfortunately there are no available resources to do so (Informant 6).

All nine respondents agreed that unorganized volunteers may be utilized to a greater extend. Some of the respondents had not reflected on how this is practicable, whilst other had a clear understanding of how this may be achieved:

I think we may utilize the average citizen to a larger extend, but it requires that we take them [unorganized volunteers] into account when we train. We may practice in the use of civilians, thinking: “If there had been anyone present here now, we may have utilized them to certain tasks”. We may visualise there are a lot of people present, or a few, and then we have at least thought through the possibilities to utilize them [unorganized volunteers]. Then it is easier to utilize them [unorganized volunteers] [in emergencies] and organize them (informant 7).

Exercises are formal rules of action, providing emergency responders a setting to test the training program and the plan. As mentioned above, the professional emergency responders interviewed lack both procedures and written plans on how to interact with unorganized volunteers. Hence, interaction with unorganized volunteers is absent in exercises and training. The Red Cross in Tromsø, on the other hand, are currently developing contingency plans including unorganized volunteers. The Red Cross in Oslo and Østfold have developed similar contingency plans, as a consequent of increasing need to organize unorganized volunteers at the site of emergencies. So far, the organized Red Cross in Tromsø do not train in utilizing unorganized volunteers, but the informants from the Red Cross all agreed doing so would be both possible and reasonable. Having thought through different scenarios where unorganized volunteers could be utilized would provide the organized Red Cross a formal rule of action when facing unorganized volunteers in emergencies.

4.1.4 Challenges in the use of unorganized volunteers

A number of challenges were emphasized related to formal aspects of the use of unorganized volunteers. These include problems regarding confidentiality:

Unorganized volunteers do not have to be aware of the discretion aspect in emergencies (Informant 9)

In addition, once unorganized volunteers are incorporated in plans, there are requirements regarding HSE¹⁵ and internal controls (Informant 5, 6). Moreover, one informant pointed unorganized volunteers do not have access to inter-com. As such there may be a problem communicating (Informant 9). Challenges regarding proper clothing were also mentioned:

Unorganized volunteers are often not properly dressed for the applicable weather conditions (Informant 9)

Unorganized volunteers do not wear proper outfit for firefighting (informant 6)

Other challenges come from unorganized volunteers` lack of skills:

Unorganized volunteers lack knowledge on use of equipment (informant 5)

Unorganized volunteers are not familiar with an emergency situation, nor the tasks that may be carried out (informant 6)

One respondent from the ambulance service pointed they were not allowed to demand unorganized volunteers to assist in emergencies (Informant 3):

We can't order unorganized volunteers to assist us. The police are allowed, not us. We don't have the authority to do so (Informant 3)

Another informant from the ambulance service stressed unorganized volunteers are not paid, and this constrained him from using the average citizen in emergencies (Informant 4).

Another obstacle refers to the unorganized volunteers' lack of insurance:

There is a problem regarding insurance. If I give them a task, and they get injured, they have no insurance (Informant 9)

The above mentioned statements all illustrate formal rules of action constraining the interaction with unorganized volunteers. When facing an emergency situation these factors are a part of the emergency responders' cognitive scheme, guiding the responders' evaluation of the situation. The rules provide meaning to the emergency responders' choice of action. One of the respondents also pointed out the importance of taking care of unorganized volunteers after they have participated in an emergency response operation (informant 7). Contrary to professional emergency responders and organized volunteers, unorganized volunteers are not offered any debriefing:

¹⁵ Health, Safety and Environment

They [unorganized volunteers] are being left to themselves after assisting in crisis. Maybe they are frustrated or have questions, or maybe they wonder did I do it right. It is crucial for the well-being of the person, but also if he or she will participate again in the future, that they have opportunity to talk to somebody. There is for example “The Red Cross Care”. They may be helpful in this respect. We can give them phone numbers and names, and offer them debriefing if needed (informant 7).

Also, the organized Red Cross are trained in accepting commands, but unorganized volunteers may experience commands as negative, and then the leader of the team [organized from the Red Cross] will have to spend time explaining, whereas the organized Red Cross will accept orders immediately (Informant 9).

Professional emergency responders prioritizes use of own personnel or other professional emergency responders. However, if these resources are insufficient unorganized volunteers may be utilized in emergencies. As one policeman noted:

“It depends on how many resources I have got. If I have sufficient resources, I don’t have to use unorganized volunteers, but if I don’t have the capacity to respond, it is natural for me to involve people who are present” (Informant 1).

This latter statement illustrates that availability of resources may be both a formal and informal factor guiding the emergency responders when interacting with unorganized volunteers. If professional emergency responders have enough resources (formal), they don’t need to use unorganized volunteers. However, if they lack professional emergency responders on the site, it is more likely unorganized volunteers will be used (informal).

One point stated by an informant from fire and rescue emphasizing the unorganized volunteers need to help:

We know from previous [cases] that people having minor injuries [in accidents] may be relieved by the opportunity to be a fellow human. Instead of ripping them out of the scene, putting them in an ambulance, it may be better to remain in the bus [in case of a bus accident] to take care of other injured and give emotional support. It may relief their own sorrow and despair (Informant 6).

The above finding illustrates a number of challenges related to formal rules of action. Challenges related to informal rules of action will be discussed in section 4.2.3.

4.1.5 Summary

The description of unorganized volunteers in written documentation is limited. The fact that the average citizen may be utilized in emergencies is mentioned only once (The Law on fire and explosion protection). Neither do the three professional emergency agencies studied

practice on the use of such resources. According to Norwegian law, citizens present at the site of a traffic accident are obliged to assist, in accordance with their ability, to limit damage. The Norwegian law on road traffic emphasizes the responsibility of people being involved in accidents, or being first on the scene, to assist humans (Vegtrafikkloven Chapter 2 §12). Still, there is a lack of focus on the interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers.

Formal rules facilitating the use of unorganized volunteers are poor. Only the Law of fire and explosion protection point unorganized volunteers may be used in emergencies. Other laws and procedures were not that clear in this respect; however there are regulations facilitating for improvisation. Regarding accidents and disasters, the police legislation stresses that the police are responsible for “initiating remedial actions” to prevent and reduce serious damage. The procedural handbook for the ambulance service stresses the need to map all available resources. Even though it is not written, my informants from the ambulance service regarded unorganized volunteers in this respect.

The contingency plans for the Red Cross organization applied in search and rescue actions are formalized use of unorganized volunteers. The Red Cross organization is aware there is a need to organize people assisting in actions. Although the checklist is limited to emergencies like search and rescue, there is a growing concern that unorganized volunteers participating in emergencies must be organized somehow.

There are some practical and ethical obstacles concerning use of unorganized volunteers in emergencies. Practical challenges may be lack of access to inter-com, they are not paid for their assistance in emergencies, nor do they have insurance. The average citizens lack knowledge of emergency situation and are not familiar with procedures, nor are they trained in the use of emergency equipment. They are not implemented in contingency plans or training procedures. Ethical obstacles may be regarded in terms of confidentiality; unorganized volunteers may be under age and they may not be properly dressed for emergencies. The informants from the fire and rescue service (Informant 5, 6) where the professional emergency responders that had the strongest awareness unorganized volunteers may be utilized in emergencies. But they were also the informants pointing to the health, safety and environment requirements regarding involving unorganized volunteers. The informants from the ambulance service (Informant 3, 4) emphasized that they are not allowed to demand unorganized volunteers to help them, only the police. Nevertheless, the ambulance

services repeated several times the importance of improvising in crisis management. Utilizing unorganized volunteers are indeed part of this, and will be discussed below (Chapter 4.2.1). The respondents from the police (Informant 1, 2) regarded many of their tasks as absolutely not appropriate for unorganized volunteers, such as live action (shooting) and criminal acts. In exercises, markers are not considered to be a potential resource for professional emergency responders. Rather, they [markers] are given the task to act injured and dependent on help. Also, according to informants from the police and the Red Cross markers are not being briefed properly in how people actually behave in emergencies. Points mentioned above are all examples of formal institutional logic constraining the utilization of unorganized volunteers. Last, but not least, preparing for crisis requires resources. To include training on the use of unorganized volunteers more money must be granted (Informant 6). However, developing contingency plans, planning and performing for exercises are time- and resource consuming.

4.2 Informal practices

This section will provide an overview of the informal practices that are guiding actions of emergency responders (boundary spanning personnel) within the emergency agencies studied. Primary issues related to informal aspects that are the drivers of the interactions between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers are (1) personal experiences and perceptions and (2) internal discussions among colleagues. These may both facilitate and constraint interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers. The section will address issues related to citizens' behaviour, communication, improvisation and challenges regarding informal practices. Finally a summary of findings will be provided.

4.2.1 Personal experiences and perceptions

Different experiences on how citizens' behave in emergency situations influences the interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers.

Studies emphasizes that contingency plans must conform to the actual behavior of people on a disaster site (Auf der Heide 2004:364, Dynes 1990). And who is better to know how people behave in emergency, but the emergency responders working in the field? All the emergency responders in the study had a variety of experiences with citizen behaviour in emergencies. People react with stress, fear, chock, sorrow and despair (Informant 1, 3, 5). But also calmness and compositeness were observed reactions amongst people (Informant 2, 3, 4). All responders had experienced acute stress responses like freeze, flight and fight behaviour

(Cannon 1915) amongst people on the scene. Fight was the most prominent citizen behaviour, which is illustrated in the following two statements:

Some are cool and some are hysteric. But in general, people are calm. I would say only ten percent are not able to control themselves (Informant 3)

My impression is that people are reasonable; they act calm and professional, if you can say that about people (Informant 5).

However, two of the respondents from the Red Cross organizations experience that civilians [unorganized volunteers] participated in crisis when they were alone or few, but once there where many people present the willingness to act decreased (Informant 7, 8). Also, some informants experienced that in recent years, people tend to care less:

Civilians are becoming more and more cynical, everyday life is busy (Informant 4).

There are situations where people are just passing. I experience that people just pass when there are people lying down on the street (Informant 8)

The respondents discussed the tendency to care less if more people or emergency responders are present in the following way:

Maybe someone is afraid of doing anything wrong, and therefor backs off. They forget that it is important to be emotional supportive. To ask someone "How are you" or to be a fellow human may be enough (Informant 7)

The most important in first aid is to act. You can't do anything wrong. To actually do something is to do the right thing (Informant 8).

When asked which tasks would be reasonable to delegate to unorganized volunteers in emergencies, they all agreed that the tasks had to be simple and precise (Informants 1-9). Tasks like carrying equipment, blocking of traffic, directing traffic, carrying stretchers, give emotional support to victims or injured, taking care of people in shock (there is a chance people in chock may start wandering around, a respondent from fire and rescue noted (informant 5)), search and rescue in avalanche, heart compressions, extinguish fire and carry water. One of the policemen described how he could scream out and ask if there are professional medical responders present: "Does anyone have medical expertise?" (Informant 1). Also the Red Cross organised were aware citizens` skills and proficiencies: "If there is a nurse, give her a first aid task instead of carrying stuff or maybe some of the unorganized have avalanche knowledge" (Informant 7). Informants found it appropriate to map the

competence of unorganized volunteers, before delegating tasks (Informant 7, 8). But unorganized volunteers do not need a lot of practice to be a resource. As one fireman noted:

They [unorganized volunteers] do not need insight in extinguishing of wildfire to be a resource. Considering removing dried grass from the area, give them a shovel. Or they may carry water hoses, carry stuff and water. There are many tasks that may be delegated to citizens [present in emergencies]. (Informant 5)

The above findings illustrate citizens' behaviour in emergencies, and how emergency responders think and value unorganized volunteers. The way emergency responders perceive unorganized volunteers guides the interaction with citizens willing to help in emergencies. These aspects may both facilitate and constraint the interaction. Nevertheless, they are informal factors, part of a cognitive scheme held by emergency responders and helps allocating attention in emergencies. Knowledge about citizens' actual behaviour is important when exploring if unorganized volunteers may be utilized to a greater extend in emergencies. Communication is another central aspect when studying the interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers.

Different perspective on how to communicate is a crucial aspect when interacting with, and utilizing, unorganized volunteers. Unorganized volunteers are far more willing to assist if they are given instructions (Informant 7). However, the respondents disagreed how to best communicate with, or delegate tasks to unorganized volunteers:

You can't use a type A¹⁶ leadership style when managing unorganized volunteers. This type of management requires that the people you are set to lead know what you are talking about (Informant 8).

On the other hand, both the police and the ambulance personnel emphasized the importance of being as specific as possible when ordering unorganized volunteers for assistance:

If I order [an unorganized volunteer]: "Go pick up the oxygen bag", I can't expect that he knows [what bag I mean], so, I need to be specific: "Go to the ambulance, where the tailgate is open and pick up the blue bag, and bring me the blue bag" (Informant 3).

[When ordering assistance from unorganized volunteers]: "There is a yellow vest in the [police] car. Go and put it on and go directing the traffic in that other direction!" (Informant 1).

I interpret the way both the police and the ambulance service communicate with unorganized volunteers to be a type A leadership style. The way the police and the ambulance service

¹⁶ The Red Cross organization classifies styles of leadership into five categories, ranging from A-E, where A represents the most authoritarian, and E is the most including (Informant 9).

approaches the unorganized are more authoritative than the organized Red Cross recon it the best way to communicate. However, the way they all communicate with unorganized volunteers is based on their personal experiences on what is the most practical. Findings illustrate that emergency responders are not trained how to communicate with unorganized volunteers, nor is it described in plans or procedures. The informants communicate with unorganized in different ways. How the emergency responders communicate with unorganized volunteers is guided by their personal beliefs of what they conceive as appropriate, and this influences the way communication is conducted. Some emergency responders believe in a commanding form of communication (Informant 1, 3), whereas others rely on a “softer” way of communicating (Informant 7, 8).

The focus of the research is to understand the interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers, and how emergency responders may utilize unorganized volunteers the best way. Informal aspects of interaction between emergency response organizations and unorganized volunteers are shaped through values and “taken for granted” perceptions (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008). Another aspect by informal practices and personal experiences in particular, is improvisation. Environment is unstable therefor improvisation is important in emergencies. Emergency responders are not driven by command and control principles, but a logic of appropriateness.

Findings presented in the previous chapter, illustrate lack of written documentation in plans, laws and regulations concerning the use of unorganized volunteers. Nevertheless, my informants in this study all gave the impression unorganized volunteers are being utilized in emergencies. This fact is reflected on by the respondents in the following way:

I am not trained to utilize unorganized volunteers, I just do it. As police, you have to use common sense (Informant 2)

If an unorganized volunteer offer me practical help, of course I accept if I need it (Informant 2)

Crisis management is about improvising (Informant 3)

We have to depend on public assistance. Sometimes we are only two men working together in a team (informant 1).

Crises are unpredictable, and unforeseen things may occur. It is important we do not reject [unorganized volunteers] right away, but keep them in mind in case we need further resources (Informant 7).

The above statements exemplify how the respondents improvise in emergency response. The fact that unorganized volunteers are being utilized in emergencies, despite limited formal rules of action is due to informal practices. The emergency responders act in accordance to personal beliefs. The emergency responders interact with unorganized volunteers because they (emergency responders) consider appropriate to do it. Throughout the interview several respondents referred to examples where unorganized volunteers had been utilized in emergencies. Ironically none of the emergency respondent agencies were trained in such response, except from one respondent from the Red Cross organization who claimed she was trained (Informant 9). But when digging into what kind of education she had received I interpret her knowledge to be more or less based on informal exchange of experience, than of formal education/training. The informant claimed they had “table top” exercises, but the cases discussed were not planned for, nor written (Informant 9). The respondents’ utilization of unorganized volunteers was enabled by the actors’ ingenuity.

We are not trained [in utilizing unorganized volunteers]. I guess it is a result of experience (Informant 8)

The coordination among emergency responders and unorganized volunteers on the scene, were characterized by use of “common sense” (Informant 2). Moreover, the respondents were aware that they had to interpret, or “read” (Informant 6) potential unorganized volunteers and what could be reasonable tasks to delegate to them:

You have to be sure when utilizing unorganized volunteers. If they turn their backs on, and hide [maybe they are not the right ones to use]. You have to read them (Informant 6)

The above statement illustrate how improvisation may both facilitate and constraint interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers. Nonetheless, improvisation is informal aspect based on personal experiences, and influence how emergency responders interact with unorganized volunteers.

4.2.2 Internal discussions among colleagues

Besides personal experiences and perceptions, internal discussions among colleagues are informal factors influencing interactions between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers. All six respondents (Informant 1-6) from professional emergency response organizations had positive experiences with unorganized volunteers. Either from own experience, or from stories told by colleagues:

We have heard stories where unorganized volunteers have been utilized, successfully (Informant 1)

Also the organized volunteers from the Red Cross discussed internally the use of unorganized volunteers. These discussions usually take place after participating in actions where unorganized volunteers have been present (Informant 9). According to my informants the use of unorganized volunteers is a topic for discussion because there is increasing consciousness toward this group as a potential resource (Informant 7, 8 and 9). The organized Red Cross may discuss different scenarios where unorganized are present, and how they will cope with it (Informant 9). An informant from the Red Cross claimed they have been discussing the use of unorganized volunteers in management training (Informant 8). The need to pay attention towards unorganized volunteers is increasing:

FORF¹⁷ has focused on the utilization of unorganized volunteers recently. They [FORF] have noticed a growing need to focus on unorganized volunteers, especially after search and rescue actions where crowds of people are showing up. There are some challenges related to this, and they [FORF] have started working on it (informant 7).

The respondents from the Red Cross stressed how they discuss internally the challenge when coordinating unorganized volunteers, concerning vocabulary and the way they speak to each other (Informant 7, 9). Often, the organized Red Cross may use sardonic humour to cope with difficult situations (Informant 8, 9), but this is not appropriate when unorganized volunteers are present. The informants from the Red Cross stressed they discussed internally how to communicate with unorganized volunteers and which task would be appropriate to give unorganized volunteers in search and rescue operations (Informant 7, 8 and 9). The other emergency response organizations in the study did not discuss unorganized volunteers to the same extent as for the organized Red Cross. One of the informant from the police even stressed she didn't remember if they had been ever discussing internally unorganized volunteers (Informant 2). Another informant from the police pointed they are discussing internally emergency situations where unorganized volunteers have been present (Informant 1). Informants from the ambulance service and the fire and rescue emphasized they had heard stories told by colleagues where unorganized volunteers had been utilized successfully (Informant 3, 6). However, neither claimed they discussed unorganized volunteers with colleagues very often (Informant 3, 6).

¹⁷ FORF stands for voluntary organizations rescue forum (Frivillige organisasjoners redningsfaglige forum)(Translation is done by the author).

Internal discussions among colleagues are informal means influencing the way emergency responders perceive unorganized volunteers. The organized Red Cross were the organization discussing the interaction with the average citizen to the greatest extent. Especially challenges concerning unorganized volunteers were discussed among the organized Red Cross (Informant 9). Moreover, stories were told were unorganized volunteers had been utilized successfully (Informant 1, 3, 4), all of which provide the emergency responders with informal practices made available in emergency situations.

4.2.3 Challenges in the use of unorganized volunteers

Though unorganized volunteers are considered by emergency responders as a blessing, they can also be a hindrance to professional rescuers. Among my informants, the latter is not a big problem. As far as people on the scene interfere it is easily coped with:

As far as people [unorganized volunteers] on the site are a hindrance, we ask them to remove
(Informant 2)

Hysterical people can be a hindrance, so we give them a task (Informant 3).

Findings so far have demonstrated the capability of unorganized volunteers, and their willingness to assist both professionals and the organized Red Cross. However, all respondents expressed a number of challenges when utilizing unorganized volunteers. These include concern about the well fare of unorganized volunteers:

Unorganized are not trained, how will they react to injured and wounded, or even dead people?
(Informant 7)

One respondent from the ambulance service claimed he could not know what state of mind unorganized volunteers are in (Informant 4). Whereas another respondent from the ambulance service stressed he could not know what to expect of unorganized volunteers (Informant 3). Respondents agreed they felt some sort of responsibility for unorganized volunteers:

Once unorganized volunteers are included, you have a responsibility for them and their welfare (Informant 6)

The scene of emergencies may be overwhelming. We have no idea if unorganized volunteers are capable of coping with traumas and injuries. Sometimes we have to protect them [unorganized volunteers] from the sight of traumas (informant 7).

All of the above challenges are related to informal constraints. The respondents' beliefs and values concerning the welfare of the unorganized volunteers, uncertainty regarding mental conditions and the responsibility of including untrained may hamper the interaction between

emergency responders and unorganized volunteers. When facing an emergency situation these factors are informal aspect constraining emergency responders from utilizing unorganized volunteers.

4.2.4 Summary of informal practices

There are two primary issues related to informal aspect that are the drivers of the interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers. These are (1) personal experiences and perceptions and (2) internal discussions among colleagues. Personal experiences and perceptions are related to citizens` behavior in crisis, communication and improvisation. The emergency responders had a variety of experiences of how unorganized volunteers behave and act in emergencies. In general, people are calm and act rationally. However, the respondents also had experienced that unorganized volunteers turned their backs on, or behaved hysterically. Nonetheless, all of these experiences regarding citizens` behavior in crisis influence how emergency responders interact with unorganized volunteers, and which task they (emergency responders) perceive as appropriate to people willing to assist in emergencies. Communication is another issue related to personal experiences. The respondents approached unorganized volunteers in different ways concerning communication. The ways emergency responders speak to unorganized volunteers are based upon their personal beliefs of what is the most appropriate according to the situation they (emergency responders) are facing. Finally, regarding personal experiences and perceptions influencing interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers, improvisation is of utmost importance. Especially the ambulance services emphasized the importance improvising in emergencies. Both the police, the fire and rescue services, ambulance services and the organized Red Cross utilizes unorganized volunteers “if needed”, regardless of lacking material practices. If emergency responders find it appropriate to utilize unorganized volunteers, the average citizen will indeed be used. The informal aspects by interaction constraining the use of unorganized volunteers are many. The emergency responders were uncertain how unorganized volunteers will react in real emergencies. The emergency responders also asked questions like: Are unorganized volunteers emotionally prepared? What agenda do they have? Meaning; are they participating for own curiosity, or worse, to sell pictures/information to the media. The professional emergency responders had a clear idea that in everyday life, coping with everyday emergencies, Tromsø has a wide range of emergency agencies and do not need further assistance. If they don` t need assistance, they don` t ask for it/accept offer. Yet, they realize that if large scale disaster strikes public

assistance is valuable and crucial. But many of my informants were unsure how unorganized volunteers will react to injured, wounded or even dead people. Furthermore, unorganized volunteers are a diffuse and uncertain group of people. Professional emergency responders claim they do not know who will be present in emergency or what skills they have. These above findings are all informal obstacles for the utilization of unorganized volunteers.

What stands out as the most prominent reason unorganized volunteers are being utilized in emergencies, despite lack of formal facilitators, is personal experience and perceptions. Both professional emergency responders and the organized Red Cross have heard stories told by colleagues where unorganized volunteers were utilized successfully. Research, in addition to emergency responders own experience, shows people are first on the site; they keep calm and provide emergency aid (Informant 3, 4, 7, 8, 9). The organized Red Cross was the informants that discussed internally to the greatest extent how unorganized volunteers best can be utilized on the site of emergencies. This may be interpreted both as a facilitator and constraint. It may be a facilitator in that respect that the overall impressions of the experience with unorganized volunteers were positive. The informal constraint is discussed in the above section. All respondents had a clear understanding of what tasks could easily be delegated to unorganized volunteers. In that respect, they considered the average citizen as a resource.

4.3 Summary

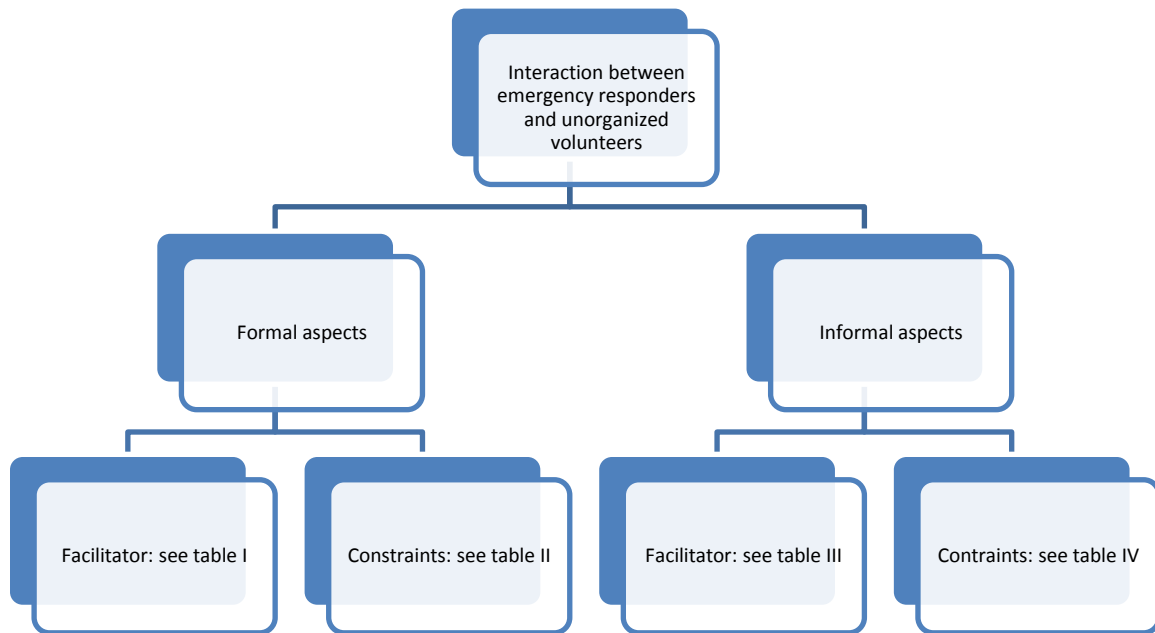


Figure 2. Interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers

Interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers is guided by the institutional logics within their organization. Figure 2 illustrate an overview of formal and informal aspects, both facilitating and constraining interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers.

Table I-IV provides an overview of the findings.

Table I:

Formal rules of action facilitating interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers:
Regulatory framework

Table II:

Formal rules of action constraining interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers:
Lack of access to inter-com
Unorganized volunteers are not paid
Unorganized volunteers have no insurance
Lack of knowledge of emergency situations and use of emergency equipment
The contingency plans for the Red Cross organization for search and rescue actions
Not familiar with emergency procedures
Unorganized volunteers are not included in contingency plans, training procedures or the HSE requirements
Sufficient professional emergency responders

Table III:

Informal aspects facilitating interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers:
The emergency responders` personal experience
Stories told by colleagues
Citizens behaviour in emergencies
Lack of professional emergency responders on the site

Table IV:

Informal rules of action constraining interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers:
Citizens behaviour in emergencies
Uncertainty regarding the unorganized volunteers motive for participating in emergency response
The unorganized volunteers mental state of mind
Uncertainty regarding who will represent the average citizen in emergencies

To sum up, professional emergency responders have no written plans on how to interact or utilize unorganized volunteers. Nor do they train in how to use this group. Nevertheless, findings illustrate that unorganized volunteers are utilized in emergency, as a result of informal practices, and improvisation in particular. The interaction between professional emergency responders and unorganized volunteers is not random. Actors in an organization are guided by formal and informal aspects.

Institutional logics consist of underlying structures that legitimate the actors' choice of behavior. Formal logics are observable, such as laws, rules and contingency plans. Informal logics are more diffuse, referring to culture and values. The following chapter will discuss the findings.

5.0 Discussion

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the empirical data collected, based on the analytical framework of the study.

Disasters create uncertain environments for organizations. Emergencies are difficult to predict (Perry 2004, Perry and Lindell 2003), and thus the environment creates special demands on the emergency responders. Consequently, crisis management is about decision making under high degree of uncertainty (Aven 2010). Emergency responders are the boundary spanners of their organizations. Organizations will have to interact and adapt to the environment to survive, and perform their functions (Duncan 1972). The study exemplifies how emergency response organizations operate in complex, dynamic environment and how emergency responders interact with unorganized volunteers. Moreover, the study emphasizes how responses are contingent on the emergency situation and resources available. Boundary spanning activities is a crucial activity to ensure the efficiency of response operations. However, the thesis highlights the lack of material practices (formal rules of action) when interacting with unorganized volunteers. Besides, the study has identified a series of challenges related to the utilization of unorganized volunteers.

Friedland and Alford (1991) stressed that individuals in organizations rely on logics to guide their everyday interactions and provide them with meaning and motive to lead behavior. Such institutional logics provide individuals with the conciseness of self; their values and interests, providing meaning and facilitating purposive action (Thornton and Ocasio 2008). As such, logics provide rules for social behavior and criteria by which some things are possible and some are not. Individuals and organizations follow rules they perceive as appropriate to the situation they are facing. The results from the previous chapter demonstrate that the institutional logics of the agencies studied are both formal and informal. Formal logics refer to structures and practices, informal logics speak of values, beliefs and perception (Thornton et al, 2012). Some of the formal logics constraints, and some facilitate, interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers. The same principles apply for informal logics.

Professional emergency responders interact with unorganized volunteers on the scene. The environment of crisis is unique and may be chaotic and unpredictable. However, the interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers is not random. When professional emergency responders and organized Red Cross arrive at the site of an

emergency they allocate attention towards unorganized volunteers according to different institutional logics. Whether or not it is appropriate to utilize unorganized volunteers depends on institutional logics within the organization. Some of these are formal, some are informal.

The respondents from the study all had a clear understanding of the priority of their tasks when arriving at the site of emergencies. The police have the overall command at the scene. They are organizing the emergency response, but also investigating the event in case of criminal acts. The fire and rescue are in charge of the situation in the absence of the police. But their primary concern is to extinguish fire and secure the area. The ambulance services prioritize lifesaving activities and take care of injured people on the site. The organized Red Cross (and other organized volunteers) is participating in the emergency response only upon command from the police. They are trained to handle crisis, have first aid knowledge and know the routines and tasks of the professional emergency responders present (through large scale exercises). Emergency responders act in accordance to formal rules of action. Laws, procedures, contingency plans and training are all formal rules of actions guiding the emergency responders in emergencies. The police are trained in organizing the scene of emergencies. Through regularly training and exercises they practice on different scenarios that may occur in emergencies. The police legislation emphasizes the responsibility of the police in emergency situations. The contingency plan, part 1 for the police highlights the tasks that are to be performed by the police at the scene. Plans and exercises are formed according to laws and duties. Unorganized volunteers are not part of any of the formal rules of action held by the police. The fire and rescue services, on the other hand, have one formal rule of action facilitating the use of unorganized volunteers. The law of fire and explosion protection emphasizes how citizens may be utilized in accidents, if the fire and rescue team commander demand to. However, this is nothing they train for, nor is it written in contingency plans or procedures. The formal rules of action facilitating for the use of unorganized volunteers held by the fire and rescue services are limited to the five sentences in the Law of fire and explosion. The formal actions constraining the fire and rescue services are thus more. Both respondents from the fire and rescue service claimed training for utilizing unorganized volunteers could be a good idea. However, lack of money, time and resources seem to be the main reason they did not train in how to best utilize unorganized volunteers. Also challenges concerning HSE were mentioned.

The different agencies studied have different institutional logics providing their actors with “rules of action”. This means they will approach unorganized volunteers in different ways.

The informants from the Red Cross were the emergency response agency that had the strongest awareness of unorganized volunteers. According to the informants from the Red Cross, unorganized volunteers had to be organized somehow to utilize them to the best of their ability. The Red Cross experienced a growing need to focus on the interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers. In order to accommodate such need, they prepared to strengthen the formal practices in terms of developing contingency plans. The fire and rescue services were the only emergency response agency having the interaction between unorganized volunteers enshrined in law. They were aware of the possibility to utilize unorganized volunteers in emergencies. However, the organization lacks both plans and procedures on how to utilize unorganized volunteers. Also, the respondents from the fire and rescue services were trained to prioritize extinguishing of fire and keeping people safe. As such, their formal practices constraint them from utilizing unorganized volunteers. Neither the police had formal practices on how to interact or utilize unorganized volunteers. Nevertheless, they were fully aware the possibility to do so in case the situation required. This latter example demonstrates that the values and beliefs of the police may facilitate for utilizing unorganized volunteers. The ambulance services were the respondents who experienced emergencies most frequent. The procedural handbook held by the actors facilitated using unorganized volunteers if needed. The respondents were conscious of the notion of improvisation as an important aspect with crisis management. This was demonstrated indeed in examples given by the informants.

The findings of the study highlight a lack of formal practices among professional emergency responders regarding interaction with unorganized volunteers. There are limited descriptions of how to utilize unorganized volunteers in emergencies (Brannvernloven, Checklist for search and rescue response). The organized Red Cross has checklists regarding search and rescue. However, the Red Cross is most likely not present in the “golden hour” of crisis, nor are the checklist suitable for situations other than search and rescue.

As highlighted in theory, informal practices may serve as a supplementary if formal procedures fall short (Sydnes 2011). As such, formal procedures and informal practices are intertwined (Sydnes 2011, Thornton et al. 2012). The reason unorganized volunteers are being utilized in emergencies, despite lack of formal practices, is mainly due to informal aspects, held by the actors within the emergency response organizations. Informal aspects are shaped through personal experiences with unorganized volunteers and discussions among colleagues regarding use of unorganized volunteers. The average citizen is considered to behave

reasonable in crisis and act rationally. Moreover, the respondents communicated with unorganized volunteers in different ways. Communication is guided by perceptions held by emergency responders and what they conceive as appropriate. As noted before, improvisation is crucial in dynamic and complex environment. The respondents claimed unorganized volunteers were utilized in emergencies, due to improvisation. Stories told by colleges where unorganized volunteers were utilized successfully, are also factors that guide emergency responders when interacting with unorganized volunteers.

In sum, the actors within emergency organizations are guided by formal and informal aspects. Some of these factors constraint and some facilitate interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers. These “rules of action” provide the actors with a framework to be used when interacting with unorganized volunteers on the scene. Whether or not unorganized volunteers are used is a matter of appropriateness. The institutional logics anchoring the organization allocate the attention of the actors interacting with unorganized volunteers. The actors’ framework consists of laws, regulations, training, values and beliefs. All of which provide the emergency responders a cognitive understanding of whether or not it is appropriate to utilize unorganized volunteers in the situation they are facing. Findings illustrate that the emergency resource need in Tromsø are well covered, at least when it comes to small scale “everyday” emergencies. However, if disaster strikes, the informants claimed there is a lack of resources available. Hence, the average citizen will be a valuable resource in this respect.

6.0 Conclusion

This study has addressed two research questions. The first questions inquired into *how emergency response organizations interact with unorganized volunteers through formal and informal means*. As noted in theory, society and social relations are not just about the circulation of material structures, but also about culture and symbolic (Thornton et al 2012). Formal logics are specific and observable and provide rules and regulations written in plans and laws. Informal logics refer to values and perceptions held by the actors within organizations (Thornton and Ocasio 2008). However, formal rules and informal practises are intertwined (Sydnes 2011). Formal procedures mainly connect roles and functions but not individuals (Selznick 1948 cited by Sydnes 2011). Informal aspects may serve as a supplemental aspect where formal organizational structures fall short (Sydnes 2011).

I conclude that emergency responders have limited formal practices on how to interact with unorganized volunteers. The interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers are driven by informal practices. These are personal experiences and internal discussions among colleagues.

The second research question concerned *what factors facilitate and constraint interaction between professional emergency responders and unorganized volunteers*. As noted by Glynn and Raffaelli (2013) the choice of actions made by actors in an organization are not free and independent. Rather, choices and interaction are influenced by institutional logics which either facilitate or constrain organizational action (ibid). My findings illustrate a number of factors both facilitating and constraining interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers. These factors are related both to formal and informal aspects. (See Figure 2, Table I-IV). Based on the findings, it is interesting to explore if it is possible to build on facilitators in order to utilize unorganized volunteers to the best of their capacity.

6.1 Contribution

If disaster strikes, people who are nearby will most likely contribute in the emergency response. Professional emergency responders and organized volunteers will have to interact and cooperate with unorganized volunteers. Little attention has been paid to explore how unorganized volunteers can be included in contingency plans in order to utilize them to the best of their ability. More information about the interaction between unorganized volunteers and emergency responders on the site would help us to establish more knowledge on this matter. As there is a lack of knowledge in disaster and emergency response literature on how

to utilize unorganized volunteers, my thesis has intended to contribute with knowledge in this field.

6.2 Practical implications

Crises are unpredictable and undesirable. Training for emergencies is a crucial element in emergency preparedness. In this respect, crisis management is a test of the quality of plans and training (Perry 2004). Emergency preparedness involves planning, training and written plans (Perry and Lindell 2003). Plans are a living document that needs to adapt to constant changes (Perry and Lindell 2003). Findings from the study illustrate there is a change in attentiveness toward unorganized volunteers. The informants from the Red Cross organization claim there is need to focus on unorganized volunteers, and also develop a system to organize the average citizen in emergencies.

The practical implication in this study is to strengthen the “material practises” in order to utilize unorganized volunteers in the best possible way. First of all, unorganized volunteers have to be regarded as a resource. Once acknowledged, the average citizen should be included in emergency planning. As emergencies are unpredictable, my informants claimed training on specific unorganized volunteers is a challenge. “You never know who is present”. However, Perry and Lindell (2003) stresses contingency plans to specific are impossible, and should rather focus on “principles of response”. Hence, mapping the skills and knowledge of unorganized volunteers may be a principle in emergency response.

Second, preparing for crisis requires training and exercises. There are mainly three types of exercises: table top-, functional- and full scale exercises (Perry 2004). Considering unorganized volunteers, they may be included in a number of ways. In table top exercise members of an emergency organization discuss different possible scenarios. Emergency responders may visualise that unorganized volunteers are present in the emergency situation and picture what tasks could possibly be delegated to them. In this way they have at least thought through the possibility to use unorganized volunteers. This also applies for the functional exercise.

Third, when it comes to full scale exercises emergency responders have the opportunity to practise on utilizing unorganized volunteers. Markers are usually given the mission to play injured, and not capable to assist emergency responders. However, in real life, unorganized volunteers are the one to save lives and participating in the golden hour of an emergency situation (Kruke 2012, Auf der Heide 2004, Helseloot and Ruitenbergh 2004). Markers must be

briefed on the actual behaviour of people in crisis, similarly for the emergency responders. In this matter the interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers are based on accurate assumptions of the behaviour of people, instead of false (Dynes 1990).

Fortunately catastrophes are rare. However, if disaster strikes all resources must be mapped and utilized to the best of their ability. Hence, unorganized volunteers may be crucial in this respect and contribute improving organizational resilience in emergencies.

6.3 Issues for further research

Given the result of this study I will finally give recommendations for further research. As my study is limited to Tromsø, a similar study from other communities with less professional emergency response resources available would provide more information about the interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers. Also, conducting a table-top or functional exercise with focus on utilizing unorganized volunteers, prior a full-scale exercise, would offer more knowledge to the subject matter.

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Appendix: Interview guide

Title: Emergencies and the use of unorganized volunteers

Research questions:

How do emergency response organizations interact with unorganized volunteers through formal and informal means?

What factors facilitate and constraint interaction between emergency responders and unorganized volunteers?

PERSONLIGE SPØRSMÅL

1. Hvor mange år har du jobbet i politiet/brann/ambulanse?
2. Hvor mange års erfaring har du fra krisehåndtering?
3. Alder/ kjønn

UORGANISERTE FRIVILLIGE / BEFOLKNINGENS ATFERD

4. Hvordan tror du befolkningen vil oppføre seg i en krisesituasjon? Hvorfor?
5. Har du eksempler på type atferd?
6. Har du erfaring med uorganiserte frivillige i krisesituasjoner? Eventuelt Hvilke?
7. Tenker du om denne gruppen som en hjelp eller et hinder i en krisesituasjon? Hvorfor?
8. Om folk på stedet blir satt til å utføre praktiske oppgaver, tror du de er i stand til det? Hvorfor/ hvorfor ikke.
9. Hvilke oppgaver kunne vært hensiktsmessig å delegere til folk/ uorganiserte frivillige på stedet?
10. Tror du man kan utnytte denne ressursen enda mer? Evn hvordan?

BEREDSKAPSPLANER

11. Beskrive Beredskapsplanene deres uorganiserte frivillige, hvorfor/ hvorfor ikke tror du det?
12. Hvis dere kommer til et skadested, og uorganiserte frivillige allerede er i gang med å utføre førstehjelp, evakuering og annen type hjelp. Hvordan forholder dere dere til det?

TRENING/ ØVELSER

13. Trener dere på bruk av uorganiserte frivillige? Hvorfor/ Hvorfor ikke? Eventuelt hvordan?

14. I storøvelser trener dere sammen med sivilforsvaret, røde kors og andre frivillige organisasjoner. I praksis vet vi at de har en responstid som ofte er langt større enn det det trenes med, hva tenker du om det?
15. Barents Rescue/andre øvelser: Hvordan benyttet dere de uorganiserte frivillige?
16. Er det mulig å trene på bruk av uorganiserte frivillige?

Er det mulig å ta kontakt med deg om jeg ønsker flere opplysninger? Eventuelt på mail.