

RESCUE OPERATIONS AFTER AN EARTHQUAKE

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Carrying out rescue operations after an earthquake is a complicated and demanding task. Because rescue must be accomplished quickly, all countries in which destructive earthquakes are likely to occur must have advance preparations for rescue operations. All elements, organizations, and public services that can help in any possible way, must be prepared to do so. They must know which tasks to perform and in what ways to perform them, and they must also have the necessary assets, supplies, and equipment needed for performing the anticipated rescuing tasks.

Rescue operations after an earthquake in Yugoslavia are the responsibility of the organization called "civilna zaštita"--civil defense; this organization also undertakes rescue efforts in the case of all other natural disasters and destruction caused by war. The operations are, as a rule, directed from civil defense headquarters. These headquarters also conduct the rescuing tasks after an earthquake in which they direct the operations of all the organizations, bodies, and services involved the process.

The civil defense headquarters are operative professional bodies consisting of professionals for all the tasks that civil defense must perform in all emergencies. Each particular headquarter has a commander in chief, commanding officer, and members of the headquarter--all professionals, qualified for the specific activities of civil defense. Thus each such headquarter has a professional for first aid and treatment of the injured, a professional for extinguishing fire, a professional for rescuing people from the ruins of buildings, a professional for veterinary first aid, a professional for building shelters, for radiological-biological-chemical protection, and others.

Civil protection headquarters are organized within the working organizations, communes, local communities as the smallest socio-political communities, in towns with a number of communes, and in the republic.

Each headquarter directs the rescue operations after an earthquake within its territory. In order for the work to proceed smoothly and effectively, all the headquarters have detailed plans for rescue actions after an earthquake. These plans specify all the rescuing tasks to be