
5. Promoting Cooperation with Member Countries, International Organizations and NGOs

5-1 Urban Search-and-Rescue Training in Singapore

(1) Basic concept

Asia is the most disaster-prone region in the world. The natural disasters that have occurred here in recent years have been the most severe, prolonged and widespread ever experienced in the region. Moreover, the regional vulnerability tends to increase due to rapid urbanization, insufficient speed in building an infrastructure capable of coping with urbanization, the coupling of independent risk sources (interaction of natural hazards with chemical, technological, lifestyle, and social risks), and insufficient management capacity.

The Singaporean government holds an annual training course for search and rescue officers, and over the past nine years, the course has included trainees from outside Singapore. Training is provided on the search-and-rescue expertise required in urban disaster situations. The training facility complex of the Civil Defence Academy (CDA) of the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) is one of the most advanced facilities in Asia. In an effort to utilize their expertise and facilities, ADRC has been inviting fire fighters and rescuers from member countries to participate in this training course since 2001. Officers from Sri Lanka, and Armenia participated in this year's course.

(2) Dates

11 to 22 January 2010 (2 weeks)

(3) Details

1) Participants

2 crew members (from 2 countries: Sri Lanka, Armenia)

2) Lecturers

SCDF Staff

3) Training program

a) Lectures

- Principles of USAR operations
- International marking system
- Overseas mission sharing
- Confined-space rescue operations
- Emergency behavior management
- Single/Mass Casualty Management
- INSARAG System

b) Drills & Practice

- BA search procedures and techniques
- Evacuation of casualties with/without equipment
- High angle rescue techniques
- Shoring methods
- Simulation exercises

(4) Overview

The SCDF established the CDA in 1999. The Academy houses a high-tech training facility that includes computer-controlled simulators like the LPG bullet tank fire-fighting simulator, and the nine-story fire fighting and rescue training tower. These provide trainees with realistic indoor and outdoor training scenarios in fire-fighting, rescue, paramedical, and other emergency functions. Trainees range from full-time Civil Defence National Servicemen and regular staff, to members of the public and foreign trainees.

This training course is particularly beneficial to international participants since they have few opportunities to learn search-and-rescue skills in such a well-equipped facility. The information and knowledge gained from experienced instructors will be of great help for their careers and for the advancement of search-and-rescue capabilities in their countries. In addition, this project provides a great opportunity to develop the network of fire fighters and rescuers around the world.