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PECULIARITIES OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING  
OF CIVIL DEFENCE SPECIALISTS IN UKRAINE  
UNDER A MARTIAL LAW

**Abstract.** The State Emergency Service of Ukraine is a central executive body directed and coordinated by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine through the Minister of Internal Affairs and implementing the state policy in the field of civil defence, protection of the people and territories from emergencies and prevention of their occurrence, elimination of the consequences of emergencies, rescue, firefighting, fire, and industrial safety, activities of emergency services, and hydrometeorological activities. This institution has two higher education schools offering BA training for civil defence bodies and units. At the same time, Russia's invasion of Ukraine has led to a number of changes in educational training programs for civil defence specialists. Understanding the current threats and recognizing the role of civil defence requires revision of the standards of all specialties, in particular in terms of awareness and preparedness for emergency situations, as well as separation of a set of knowledge, competencies and skills into a separate specialty "civil defence".

**Keywords:** civil defence; war; specialist training; rescuer; firefighter.

INTRODUCTION

The war that erupted as a result of Russia's armed invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 shocked almost the entire world. More than 70 years have passed since the end of the Second World War, but nothing has changed in the

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manner warfare is conducted in Ukraine. In addition to military force, it also involves the civilian population in combat. If they are untrained, they become victims of the attacker.

Bearing in mind the Ukrainian experience of protecting the population during the ongoing armed conflict, the aim of this article is to present the legal and organisational responsibilities of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine in the field of civil defence, protection of population and territories in emergency situations. In addition, the organisation of the state civil defence system is described, together with the tasks of rescue entities and the changes introduced in training programmes for civil defence specialists.

The authors put forward the thesis that the understanding of the current threats and the recognition of the leading role of civil defence in the field of civil protection requires a revision of the training standards of all specialties, especially in the field of emergency awareness and preparedness, as well as the separation of knowledge, competencies and skills as a distinct specialty called Civil Defence.

Theoretical and analytical research methods based on the study of the main elements of civil defence training in Ukraine were used to conduct the research and develop the article. Using the authors' own experience, scientific insights have been formulated using the method of observation, which can be helpful in the practical activities of other entities tasked with civil defence training.

#### 1. LEGAL AND ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE OF UKRAINE FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE POPULATION AND TERRITORY

The State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SES), which is subordinate to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine (Order, 2018), is responsible for protecting people and territories from the consequences of emergencies, fires, natural disasters and accidents. In its activities, the SES is guided by the Constitution and laws of Ukraine, decrees of the President of Ukraine and resolutions of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted in accordance with the Constitution and laws of Ukraine, acts of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, and other legislative acts (Resolution, 2017).

In order to fulfil its tasks, the SES of Ukraine has the right to:

- 1) engage: search and rescue units and emergency services of central and local executive authorities, enterprises, institutions, organizations regardless of their form of ownership to eliminate the consequences of emergencies at the

state and regional levels and to conduct search and rescue operations; representatives of central and local executive authorities, local self-government bodies, specialists of enterprises, institutions, organizations (upon agreement with their heads), scientists, representatives of the civil society institutions (upon consent) to consider issues within the SESU competence; bodies, organizations, forces and means of central and local executive authorities, local self-government bodies, enterprises, institutions and organizations (upon agreement with their heads) to participate in civil defence training;

2) to receive information, documents and materials for free from state and local self-government authorities, enterprises, institutions, organizations regardless of their form of ownership and their officials;

3) to convene meetings, form commissions and working groups, hold scientific conferences and seminars on issues within the SES competence;

4) to use relevant information databases of state authorities, the state government communication system and other technical facilities;

5) to use television and radio broadcasting to make public information on civil defence;

6) to represent Ukraine in international organizations on civil defence (Resolution, 2015).

The implementation of the state policy in the field of civil defence is ensured by the unified state system of civil defence, which consists of functional and territorial subsystems.

The unified state system of civil defence is a set of governing bodies, forces and facilities of central and local executive authorities, the Council of Ministers of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, executive bodies of councils, enterprises, institutions and organizations that ensure the implementation of the state policy of civil defence. The unified state system of civil defence operates according to four scenarios (figure 1).

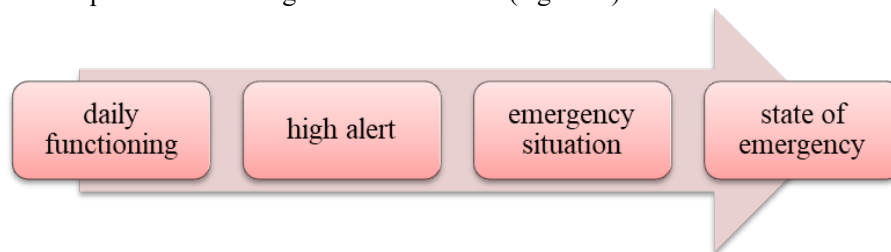


Figure 1. Operation of the unified state civil defence system of Ukraine

Source: own elaboration based on the Civil Defence Code of Ukraine, Bulletin of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, 2013, No. 34-35.

## 2. ORGANISATION OF THE STATE CIVIL DEFENCE SYSTEM

Additional tasks of the unified state system of civil defence during the reconstruction period are: conducting targeted mobilization to eliminate the consequences of hostilities and emergencies; eliminating the consequences of hostilities in settlements and territories affected by munitions; taking measures to restore critical infrastructure facilities of the life support sector; identifying settlements and areas requiring humanitarian demining, marking dangerous areas, clearing (demining) territories; involvement of international assistance in the elimination of the consequences of hostilities and emergencies (Code, 2013).

In case of necessity, emergency and rescue units of other states may be involved in the liquidation of particularly severe emergencies caused by natural disasters or catastrophes (Leshchenko et.al, 2021). These issues are resolved by agreements with the governments of the states concerned, unless otherwise provided by an international treaty of Ukraine ratified by the Parliament of Ukraine (Law, 2000). Types of emergencies by the nature of their occurrence are shown in figure 2.

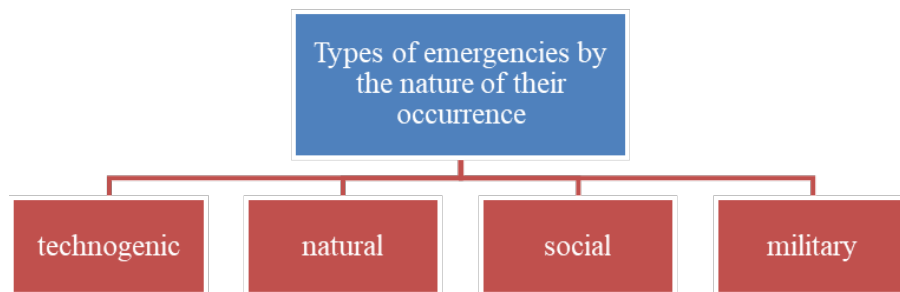


Figure 2. Types of emergencies by the nature of their occurrence

Source: own elaboration based on the Law On Legal Regime of the State of Emergency of 16 April 2000, No. 1550-III.

The civil defence forces of the unified state system of civil defence include operational and rescue service of civil defence, emergency rescue services, civil defence formations, specialized civil defence services, fire and rescue units (subunits), voluntary civil defence formations (figure 3).



Figure 3. Civil defence forces of the unified state civil defence system

Source: own elaboration based on the Civil Defence Code of Ukraine, Bulletin of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, 2013, No. 34-35.

The operational and rescue service of civil defence operates within the SES system (Regulation, 2014).

On the day of Russia’s full-scale military assault on Ukraine, the Prime Minister of Ukraine issued a decree (figure 4).



Figure 4. The decree of the Prime Minister of Ukraine on the day of Russia’s full-scale military invasion

### 3. TRAINING SYSTEM FOR “CIVIL DEFENCE” SPECIALISTS

The system of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine has two higher education institutions that provide professional training of bachelor's degree personnel for civil defence authorities and units. These are the National University of Civil Defence of Ukraine (including the Cherkasy Institute of Fire Safety named after the Heroes of Chernobyl) and the Lviv State University of Life Safety (LSULS). The current list of fields of knowledge and specialties for training higher education students in Ukraine does not include the specialty of civil defence. Civil defence and humanitarian demining specialists are trained within the specialty 263 Civil Security (educational programmes Civil Defence, Engineering Support of Demining, Pyrotechnic and Explosive Operations), which is associated with certain difficulties at the stage of harmonization of the requirements of the relevant Higher Education Standard and qualification characteristics of professions of civil defence specialists. For example, graduates of Civil Security, from the rank of cadet, can work as chiefs of guard (shift, post) of civil defence units.<sup>1</sup> This idea is the basis for the state order for the educational program “Civil Defence”. At the same time, it is obvious that graduates must possess a number of program outcomes and competencies in the fire safety profession. In other words, applicants for the Civil Defence study programme must have sufficient skills in civil protection and fire safety, as well as labour safety, as required by the Higher Education Standard for the specialty 263 Civil Security in the relevant programme outcomes and competencies. The reason for this situation was the “merger” in 2015 of two independent specialties, Civil Defence and Labour Safety, with their own professional requirements, list of positions, functional responsibilities, into a joint specialty 263 Civil Security. Academic staff of universities that train applicants in 263 Civil Security have repeatedly initiated amendments to the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, April 29, 2015, No. 266 on Approval of the List of Knowledge Areas and Specialties for Training of Higher Education Applicants, in particular to the draft Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on Some Issues of Harmonization of the List of Knowledge Areas and Specialties with the International Standard Classification of Education, regarding the division of the specialty 263 Civil Security into two: Civil Defence and Labour Safety. This issue remains open at present.

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<sup>1</sup> See the handbook *Dovidnyk kvalifikatsiynykh kharakterystyk profesii pratsivnykiv sfery tsyvil'noho zakhystu Ukrainy*, available at [https://vk24.ua/regulations\\_and\\_jurisprudence/nakazi/dovidnik-kvalifikaciinih-harakteristik-profesii-pracivnikiv-vipusk-64](https://vk24.ua/regulations_and_jurisprudence/nakazi/dovidnik-kvalifikaciinih-harakteristik-profesii-pracivnikiv-vipusk-64).

At the same time, Russia's invasion of Ukraine has led to changes in the educational programmes for training specialists in civil protection (Order, 2018). The educational programmes of the LSULS include the implementation of the normative discipline Identification of Explosive Ordnance, an increase in the practical component of organizing emergency response, and the integration of a training module on the use of unmanned aerial vehicles to perform the tasks of the SES of Ukraine.

The need to ensure the protection of civilians from war crimes committed almost daily by the armed forces of the Russian terrorist forces has led to changes in legislation and given rise to the prospect of reforming and developing the system of state supervision in fire and industrial safety (Shapoval and Vovk, 2023). In turn, this is reflected in such educational components as Technogenic Safety of High-Risk Objects, Engineering Protection of the Population and Territories, Radiation, Chemical and Biological Protection, Activities of Management Bodies in Emergencies, Automated Control Systems and Communication.

In order to improve the training system and develop endurance and strength among personnel, improve professional skills and skills of working with equipment and machinery, academic staff together with the SES of Ukraine prepared a new version of the Standards for Training Exercises, which are tested, among other things, in practical classes of cadets of higher educational institutions of civil defence (Pozdeyev et al., 2023). The development of management skills in crises was intensified by conducting staff training exercises in cooperation with local executive authorities and local self-government bodies, which was reflected in the Order of the SES of Ukraine, No. 552, On Approval of Methodological Recommendations for Organizing and Conducting Staff Training with Civil Defence Authorities, September 29, 2022.

Significant changes have occurred in the involvement of future specialists in information and outreach work with various segments of the population, both within the normative discipline Emergency Training of the Population and during various trainings in cooperation with local governments and social services.

## CONCLUSIONS

Undoubtedly, the ruinous impact of Russia's military aggression on all spheres of Ukraine's activity, the transition from sustainable development to ensuring life during martial law, directing efforts to overcome the consequences and minimizing losses among the population and critical infrastructure facilities

are changing the requirements for professional training of future civil defence specialists. The urgency and often heroic nature of the tasks performed by the employees of the SES of Ukraine today is undeniable. Understanding the current threats and recognizing the role of civil defence requires a revision of the requirements of the Standards of all specialties, in particular in terms of awareness and readiness to act in emergencies, as well as separation of a set of knowledge, competencies, and skills into a separate specialty, “civil defence”.

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SPECYFIKA SZKOLENIA ZAWODOWEGO  
SPECJALISTÓW OBRONY CYWILNEJ NA UKRAINIE  
W STANIE WOJENNYM

Streszczenie

Państwowa Służba ds. Sytuacji Nadzwyczajnych Ukrainy jest centralnym organem wykonawczym kierowanym i koordynowanym przez Radę Ministrów Ukrainy za pośrednictwem Ministra Spraw Wewnętrznych i realizującym politykę państwa w zakresie obrony cywilnej, ochrony ludności i terytorium państwa przed sytuacjami nadzwyczajnymi, zapobiegania ich wystąpieniu, eliminacji skutków sytuacji nadzwyczajnych, ratownictwa, gaszenia pożarów, bezpieczeństwa pożarowego i przemysłowego, działalności służb ratunkowych i działań hydrometeorologicznych. Instytucja ta posiada dwie szkoły wyższe zapewniające studia licencjackie dla organów i jednostek obrony cywilnej. Jednocześnie inwazja Rosji na Ukrainę doprowadziła do szeregu zmian w programach szkoleniowych dla specjalistów obrony cywilnej. Zrozumienie obecnych zagrożeń i uznanie roli obrony cywilnej wymaga rewizji standardów wszystkich specjalności, w szczególności w zakresie świadomości i gotowości na wystąpienie sytuacji kryzysowych, a także wyodrębnienia zestawu wiedzy, kompetencji i umiejętności w osobną specjalność "obrona cywilna".

**Słowa kluczowe:** obrona cywilna; wojna; szkolenie specjalistyczne; ratownik; strażak.