

## THE COMMUNICATION PREPAREDNESS OF FINLAND FOR EMERGENCIES AND DISASTERS

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### **Abstract**

Emergencies and large-scale disasters call for efficient co-operation between public safety agencies. Seamless communication between authorities is the basis for successful coordination of the rescue operations. In the past different public safety agencies each had their own radio communication systems, in many cases presenting incompatible technologies from different vendors, which prevented communication between authorities during incidents.

Finland is the first country in the world, which has deployed a shared nationwide TETRA radio network for all public safety agencies. The project known as the VIRVE- project, started in 1997 and the network was taken into operational use in November 2002. The VIRVE network, which has today more than 30.000 users has already proved its efficiency and benefits.

At the same time with the VIRVE project Finland also started the renewal of the Emergency Response Centers (ERC). Finland was divided into 15 Emergency Response Center regions, which provide emergency call services for the citizens through a common '112' emergency number. VIRVE network plays an important role in this IERC concept and forms the wireless communication infrastructure for the ERC solution.

This presentation presents the Finnish emergency preparedness solution based on the nationwide VIRVE network and new ERC concept and the experiences from the real operative use of this unique solution.

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### **Biography**

Since his studies in Helsinki University of Technology Hannu Vilppunen has been working 24 years in telecommunications business both in fixed and wireless communication in different positions in R&D, project management and international marketing.

After joining Nokia Networks Professional Mobile Radio in 1996 Hannu has been working in TETRA marketing as Senior Systems Marketing Manager.

Hannu has two kids, teenaged son and daughter. In his free time Hannu likes jogging, singing and gardening.

