Situational awareness systems to support civil protection preparation and operational decision making

Situational awareness systems for EU, national, regional and local buyers should be cost effective and interoperable, integrate different technologies (sensors; sub-systems for surveillance, manned and unmanned systems, early warning systems, communication systems, satellite-based systems), result from public-private cooperation, and demonstrate resilience and relative self-sufficiency.

Situational awareness systems need to be customizable by specific civil protection authorities, and adaptable to various risks and crisis scenarios (for instance: climate-related hazards, industrial accidents, earthquakes, biohazards, space weather events, etc.), especially in the context of cross-border cooperation. Where needed, the involvement of other first-responders should be sought (i.e. water management authorities for flooding situations), in order to ensure full interoperability of systems.

The action will identify new and promising solutions, develop and agree on the core set of specifications of a specific system, on the roadmap for research still needed for its development, and the related tender documents upon which to base future (research services and system) procurements.

The EU may contribute to subsequent actions (PCP, PPI, other types of funding, ...) aiming at implementing tender procedures to develop, test and validate prototypes of such a system.

In line with the EU’s strategy for international cooperation in research and innovation[[COM(2012)497]] international cooperation is encouraged, and in particular with international research partners involved in ongoing discussions and workshops, with the European Commission. Legal entities established in countries
not listed in General Annex A and international organisations will be eligible for funding only when the Commission deems participation of the entity essential for carrying out the action.

For grants awarded under this topic SEC-02-DRS-2016, beneficiaries will be subject to the following additional obligations aiming to ensure exploitation of its results:

The proposals must necessarily state the participants' commitment to make the standards, specifications, and all other relevant documents generated in the action available at actual cost of reproduction to any law enforcement or first responder organization established in an EU or EEA country.

To ensure that the outcome of the CSA becomes also available to EU Member State national authorities as well as EU agencies not participating in the CSA for further procurement purposes, the proposal must necessarily state:

(1). Agreement from participating procurement authorities to negotiate, in good faith and on a case-by-case basis, with non-participating procurement authorities that wish to procure a capability or a product fully or partly derived from the action, the use of the information required to run such a procurement process, and solely for that purpose.

(2). Commitment from participating procurement authorities to consult with any legal entity generating information to be released for the purpose set out in paragraph (1), unless contrary to applicable legislation.

(3). Commitment from participating procurement authorities to negotiate the use granted under paragraph (1) on Fair Reasonable and Non-Discriminatory (FRAND) terms.

The respective option on additional exploitation obligations of Article 28.1 of the Model Grant Agreement will be applied.

Indicative budget: The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of € 1.5million would allow for this topic to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

A major difficulty for civil protection actors to take proper, coordinated decisions for efficient actions (in relation with prevention, preparedness, surveillance, and in particular: response in times of crisis) results from insufficient situational awareness. This is even truer in the context of the EU Civil Protection mechanism[[Decision 1313/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council]]: reinforced cooperation across borders calls for improved cross-border situational awareness.
Technologies close to maturity and prototype tools exist, including some issued from previous FP7 R&D projects, that gather or provide data and information from a wide variety of sources useful to improve situational awareness in time of crisis. But no system that satisfactorily integrates these technologies and tools, and fuses these data and information, is available yet. Additionally, there is a theoretical framework which should be focused to understand the psychological, cultural, language and societal dimension of situational awareness in order to prevent, prepare and manage crisis situations.

Short/medium term

- Improved cooperation among civil protection services across the EU and Associated Countries
- Improved cooperation between hazard-monitoring institutes and civil protection services
- Improved exchange of experiences amongst (public) stakeholders on civil protection in relation to operations within the disaster risk management cycle (prevention, preparedness, surveillance, response);
- Improved European humanitarian Enhanced Response Capacity

Long term

- Lower operating costs for European humanitarian actions

Further to the CSA’s successful achievement, the European Commission may consider calling for a PCP/PPI co-fund action in the future.

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