

# In search for Dante

## And crisis collaboration models



Rebecca Stenberg  
**5<sup>th</sup> LEPH 2019**

Edinburgh

2019-10-21 - 23

**CARER**

CENTER FOR ADVANCED  
RESEARCH IN EMERGENCY RESPONSE

# The Swedish crisis management system

- The municipality has a central role in the crisis management system which is very much built upon local responsibility.
- - for citizens life and health
- - for accident and crisis prevention
- - for the ability and resources to cope with a crisis
- - to initiate, support and manage collaboration between different actors and resources in a crisis for a good response.



# The search for Dante

- A 12 years old boy with downs syndrome missing from home the 6<sup>th</sup> and was found the 9<sup>th</sup> of November
- Enormous public and media interest. Municipality employees got leave of absence to search
- Missing People Sweden got more volunteers than they could handle; 2000 - 3000 persons
- Chaotic search situation for the parallel police operation. , difficult to trace and secure evidence Search results got lost. Break down in infrastructure
- Dante was found drowned. The Church had a memorial service and held open during the weekend. Debriefing to some but not others.
- None of the main actors (Police, Missing People Sweden, municipality, Church) saw this as a societal crisis at the time or a reason to collaborate



# Research Question & Methods

- Why didn't the organizational main actors collaborate?
- Why did no one push the big red CRISIS-button and started crisis management collaboration?
- Do we need to distinguish both practically and theoretically between collaboration in different settings?
- A TENTATIVE case study approach, Puzzled together a story from reports, protocols, evaluations, presentations, interviews
- Quantitative and qualitative content analysis of interactions (Hsieh and Shannon 2005)



# Theoretical framework – contrasting two perspectives

- **“Horizontal collaboration”** Established (Scandinavian) emergency collaboration perspective: focus on shared objectives planned in advance and democratic values and long lasting relations (Berlin & Carlström 2011, 2015, Kalkman & Waard 2016, Kristiansen et al 2017, Sorensen et al 2018)
- **“Vertical coordination”** Logistics of the Humanities and Supply chain perspective on coordination of resources from a start to the end (Jahre et al 2009, Tatham & Spens 2016, Kaneberg 2016)
- Gulati et al 2012: “The to facets of Collaboration”
  - **Cooperation** focus planned and negotiated sharing of policy and relations for mutual problem solving
  - **Coordination** focus combining organizational actor’s resources and actions together for a certain cause in a temporary network or chain of activities

# Hallmarks of a crisis

- A severe disturbance
- Time pressure
- Uncertainty
- Temporal
- Complex response with unknown and/or untrained partners

## Findings

- The incident developed all the hallmarks of a crisis (Shaluf et al 2003, Mc Mullen et al 1997, Prytz et al 2016, Johansson et al 2018).
- The municipality and the church decided not to activate the crisis management system (POSOM) due to experiences from an earlier missing person operation.
- When Missing People Sweden was overrun by volunteers, the municipality tried to help but didn't have the knowledge - which only the Police had – who was drowned in new Police resources
- All collaboration was internal. No one initiated crisis collaboration which means that no one saw the benefit of collaboration there and then

# What kind of collaboration do we need in a crisis?

## “Horizontal collaboration” the Scandinavian way

- Long time relations & shared values
- Negotiated objectives in advance
- Collective problem solving transcending professional and organizational boundaries
- Democratic and symmetrical relations and workloads

## Crisis characteristics

- A severe, disturbance during a search operation with strong time pressure
- Sudden and unexpected
- where actors where unknown to each others and perhaps never meet again
- Where volunteers arrived from all over Sweden with unknown abilities and resources creating
- Breakdown in infrastructure

# Conclusions

- It was difficult for the actors to recognize a positive crisis, but the incident had all hallmarks of a crisis
- The municipality could push the crisis-button but would not. Therefore no formal crisis management collaboration was initiated.
- The established “horizontal” emergency collaboration dominating in Scandinavia aimed at building relations and shared policy doesn’t fit the needs in a crisis and is avoided.
- A better collaboration model to use in a crisis is “vertical coordination” aimed at combining resources for a cause can be of considerably more practical use.
- This example shows the needs for theory development concerning collaborative forms for different organizational settings.



# Thank you for your attention!

## Welcome to be in touch!

- **Rebecca Stenberg**
  - Ph.D Psychology, Senior lecturer in business administration and organizing, rescue researcher
  - Board member in the Center for advanced research in emergency response (CARER)
  - Department for business development and engineering, Linköping University, Sweden
- [rebecca.stenberg@liu.se](mailto:rebecca.stenberg@liu.se)
- [Center for Advanced Research in Emergency Response](#)



# The Search for Missing Persons in Sweden - a background

- 10 million people in Sweden
- 25 000 disappearances reported to the Police
- 9000 prio 1-2
- > 600 SAR missions based on the Act of Accident Protection (Mountain SAR + search for missing persons in other cases EFP)
- NGO:s Mountain Rescue, Missing People Sweden, Home Guard, others....
- Phase 1 Search when life's at risk, grave danger, phase 2 investigation.
- Persons with dementia and/or psychiatric illnesses. Both groups are increasing in society
- >130 000 have dementia, 5 % are over 80 years old, expected to double in 2034. About 28 % are found in bad condition and 10% found dead\*
- 170 000 have psychiatric illnesses



\*Of persons object to SAR missions

# CARER

CENTER FOR ADVANCED  
RESEARCH IN EMERGENCY RESPONSE

- 50/50 Linköping University
- and the Contingencies Agency
- Interdisciplinary action research
- 3 faculties, 11 departments, 7 doctoral students:  
Organizing, Informatics and Logistics, Systems &  
Techniques development, Disaster Medicine
- Most projects in collaboration between at least two  
disciplines and empirical partners
- Empirical partners: rescue services, Police, SAR-  
administration, Prehospital care, SOS Alarm AB,  
NGO:s

[Center for Advanced Research in Emergency Response](#)