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## Why control rooms interoperability can help to save lives

Interoperability is an essential element in the management of both daily rescue activities and large scale emergencies. When applied to rescue systems (technical rescue, medical, police) or civil protection organisations, it means that every single control room must use the same way to exchange data. Until some twenty years ago, there was a scattered situation in which telephone systems as well fax, radio and cellular networks were used. At the moment even if control rooms (and the application softwares that manage them) use widely Information Technologies, the possibility to ensure a continuous flow of information between the bodies carrying out rescue (ambulance, technical rescue, police) and between them and those that are part of the chain that ensures the safety to people (Civil Protection, Red Cross etc. ) interoperability is not ensured as well.

In fact, fully interoperable control rooms can assure a faster, more effective and more reliable information flow. When systems receiving the rescue call can automatically transfer data about position, personal identification, kind of the required rescue, not only there are zero possibility of misinterpreting or transferring in a wrong way the same data, but their passage is speeded up, most of all when they are to be sent to multiple rescue bodies at the same time. This feature, in particular, becomes fundamental in large scale emergencies, in which large numbers of people are involved: through the use of a an interoperable system, not only the data important to the rescue operations could be shared, but also those on assistance to the population. The jigsaw of victims identification, management of health of groups of people, reunification of families, management of the shelter, could solved through the exchange of data in a continuous, reliable and immediate.

As in most developed societies the realization of a single system that manages the aid and assistance to the population is not feasible in a short time, the goal of making interoperable a number (usually very high) of management systems of rescue / assistance can be achieved through the adoption of a single data exchange protocol. Such measure, which does not imply challenging activities on software, has already helped to achieve important results, anche in termini di uso più efficiente delle risorse disponibili.

The paper will describe in summary what has been done to attain the above objectives through the adoption of the CAP (Common Alerting Protocol) standard, adopted by the WMO (World Meteorological Organization), FEMA and other organizations operating at global, regional or national level to enhance the emergency management systems.