

Emergency and disaster legislation in Russia: the key development trends and features

Basic trends and directions of legislation development and change

The dissolution of the former Soviet Union and radical political and socioeconomic change have been followed by crucial changes in Russian legislation since the early '90s. Along with other important issues, these include the development and adoption of the first federal laws in the civil defense, environmental protection and emergency management areas. These in turn constitute the legal foundation of respective national policy, including building up the Russian Integrated State Emergency Prevention and Response System.

This process manifests two opposite development trends within the national legislation system as a whole and its emergency and disaster segment in particular. One of these involves *diversification* of the legislation that has been increasingly enriched with new laws and regulations, especially those concerning emergency and disaster policies, that were lacking. By 1998 the body of emergency laws in Russia included 150 federal laws and regulations and 1500 regional acts passed by legislatures of the Russian Federation, not counting hundreds of internal orders issued by federal emergency departments (Gosud-arstvennii Doklad, 1998: 146).

Along with diversification, a tendency towards *integration* of emergency and disaster acts into a specific branch of the Russian Laws has become a characteristic at the federal level of the national legislation systems. On one hand, such integration implies that federal and regional lawmakers are seeking clear-cut systematisation and incorporation of the existing Acts. On the other hand, it involves harmonisation and unification of these Acts on the basis of principles and rules of international law used by the international emergency and disaster related organisations. Although the former Soviet Union, and then Russia, joined world and regional agreements in this field behind Western countries, some critical national emergency and disaster laws were issued with a further pronounced delay, or are still lacking in some important areas.

In addition to these two trends, it is worth distinguishing the *relatively increasing role of mitigation* within the emergency and disaster legislation and policy. This

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implies a gradual drift from a predominantly reactive and adaptive crisis management to a more pro-active and flexible one. Such a drift manifests itself in the lawmakers striving to change the proportion of federal budget expenditure between federal mitigation and response and recovery efforts, in favor of the former. In the fiscal years from 1996–99, the proportion between earmarked mitigation allocations (including the resources of the special governmental fund for emergency response) and those for recovery and rehabilitation from emergencies and disasters were almost equal. In addition, from 1999–2005, the federal government intends to carry out a comprehensive mitigation program to reduce the risks of natural and technological disasters (see Federalnaia Tsele-vaia Programma, 1999).

However, it is important to note that despite the important changes in developed countries of the world and Russia in the late '90s, emergency and disaster legislation (primarily on a federal level) has still been oriented largely towards preparedness, response and recovery. Prevention and mitigation issues have lower priority and a shortage of funds, particularly in Russia.

One reason is the relatively short duration of the change of the national legislation, and respective change of organisational system, which could involve all possible hazardous sources and agents as well as stages of an emergency development. Another reason deals with pressing needs and keeping stereotypes in decision making on sharing scarce resources for emergency management. The funds needed to cope with the debilitating and devastating effects of emergencies and disasters have been solicited more eagerly and in greater volume than for prevention and mitigation. In particular, the proportion between actual expenditures on prevention and mitigation and expenses on recovery and rehabilitation was 1:1.5. This can partially be explained by the financial managers well-justified rush to reduce wherever possible expenditure on prevention,

which may well be useless if no emergency occurs. At the same time such decisions are forced by a strong public demand from the affected communities to spend more and without delay on their own needs when an emergency or disaster really strikes.

Substantial changes in the Russian emergency and disaster legislation are under way, following two main directions. One involves the development of new laws and acts to prevent or decrease the risks associated with new hazard sources and agents that threaten social and environmental safety, or to cope with existing kinds of emergencies and disasters by enforcing new means and methods of legal regulation. Another direction of legislation change implies harmonisation and specification of the existing normative acts by developing and adopting amendments and comments to the existing laws, regulations and instructions. These provide for better distinguishing of areas of responsibility and coordination of the key bodies and services engaged in emergency management.

In practice, both directions are closely inter-twined, thus making a more or less holistic legal basis for regulating prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Such a basis in Russia is constructed on a lawmaker approach that presumes the legal relations between community members, while emergency management constitutes a relatively independent special set different from those existing in the non-emergency environment. This logically requires the development and adoption of a single comprehensive normative act or a compact group thereof as a code, which would cover the total field of emergency management and integrate into a unified system all the laws and regulations in force in this field.

In Russia, the *Federal Act of the Russian Federation for Communities and Regions Protection in Natural and Technological Emergencies* (hereafter referred as *Federal Emergency Act*) was adopted in 1994. The Act established and enacted:

- the principles, tasks, functions and key features of organisation of the Integrated State System for Emergency Prevention and Response in the Russian Federation (RISE)
- responsibilities of the federal, regional and local authorities, special federal and

regional emergency services and volunteers in the area of civil protection

- the rules of public preparedness to emergencies and disasters
- the order of financial and material support to communities and regions protection in emergencies
- the tasks, functions and liabilities of the state expertise, supervision and control in the area of civil protection.

Given such coverage, many experts believe this comprehensive act is an umbrella to the existing laws and regulations that *in corpore* create the national emergency legislation. However, even if multifaceted, the Act is not fully comprehensive and even less exhaustive. It regulates protection of people and facilities against natural and technological hazards, but does not concern conflict-type emergencies (mass disturbances, riots, wars) that are or should be covered by the other acts. This is hardly a surprise, given even the best 'umbrella law' is insufficient for building up an integrated *system* of laws to regulate the legal relationship in the emergency management area. To create such a system, one needs a 'package' of interrelated acts that provide regulation both for specific functions of communities and regions protection in emergencies, and for those concerning specific types of emergencies as well as their incorporation or codification.

Typology of emergency and disaster legislation

This is still a dream for Russia, and precipitates a piecemeal and fragmented national emergency legislation rather than an integrated one. However, the country is on the way to bridging the gap, and in the foreseeable future matching the two basic sets of existing emergency acts. These could be conditionally labeled as systems, or integrated and specific, or particular acts. While the former covers the whole gamut of communities, regions and protection functions against any threat and in any type of emergency, the specific acts regulate either a particular or the whole set of emergency management functions in a specific type of crises.

Federalisation or centralisation of Russian emergency legislation is one of its most important peculiarities. Unlike the socio-economic policy of the Western world, for example, in the field of property relations, privatisation and taxation the development of legislation in the subjects or regions of the Russian Federation is still in its infancy. This partially stems from the higher degree of centralisation in the emergency management field in comparison with an economic and social policy in general that requires

respective legislative reinforcement by the federal law. However, centralisation is a peculiarity of Russian history and culture over the centuries, including legal history. The outcome is that regional authorities lag substantially behind the federal government in development and enforcement of laws, while the situation is different in terms of other normative and prescriptive acts (regulations, orders, and instructions).

Integrated Acts provide the basic conceptual framework, principles, goals and tasks of the national emergency management policy in Russia. These include about 40 federal laws, of which we could mention just a few as the most important. First of all, the Constitution of the Russian Federation, adopted in 1993, contains specific paragraphs establishing citizens' rights for life, health and property, and the protection of these is the key objective of the state emergency and disaster policy. Notwithstanding, the Constitution provides for certain restrictions to these rights, to ensure the safety of the people in crises when the Russian President declares a state of emergency (see Konstitutsiya, 1993.)

For example, to provide security to people and protection of constitutional order in such circumstances paragraph 56 of the Constitution implies selective and temporal restrictions of rights and freedoms, excluding basic human rights for life, personal dignity, private life and so forth. These are more extensively described in the 1991 State of Emergency Act adopted in the former Soviet Union, but still in force in contemporary Russia (Zakon, 1991a). The Constitution also delineates the areas of responsibility and competence of both federal and regional authorities of the Russian Federation in prevention, preparedness, response and recovery from emergencies, disasters and catastrophes.

In addition, the *1992 Security Act* (Zakon, 1992a) provides formulation of the basic concepts associated with the mission and goals of emergency management, including 'security', 'safety', 'security and safety system'. It also establishes the principles, main components and functions of a security and safety system in emergencies. Paragraph 10 distinguishes the powers of the federal legislative, executive and judicial bodies within the national security system. While a similar distinction between the federal and regional authorities is also mentioned, it is more clearly formulated in the relevant paragraphs of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, which were adopted one year after it. An inventory of the basic forces and means to ensure the state security and safety policy implementation is specified in Paragraph 12 of

the Security Act, supplemented later by decrees and regulations by the President and government of Russia.

The *Federal Emergency Act* serves as a focus of integrated acts concerning non-conflict peacetime emergencies. Adopted in 1994, it has been supplemented by a series of governmental regulations on classification of natural and technological emergencies and disasters, community preparedness, tasks, functions and organisation structure of the RISE system, its forces and emergency information exchange.

In conflict-type emergencies these are regulated by other federal laws involving the activities of state security departments, including the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Defense, the Federal Security Service, the Federal Frontier Service and others. For example, the *Civil Defense Act*, enforced for the first time in the history of the former Soviet Union and Russia as late as 1998, defines the tasks and responsibilities of authorities and state powers in community and regional protection in warfare (see Federalnii Zakon, 1998a).

To a certain extent such a legislator's approach has its own logic that presumes the Federal Emergency Act should supplement and specify the more generic Security Act, leaving alone the Constitution with respect to natural and technological disasters. However, this approach restrains the integration function of the *Federal Emergency Act* and moves it closer to being a specific act. For example, this breaks an organic link between the given act and the *State of Emergency Act*, primarily Paragraph 4(a). More importantly, the *Federal Emergency Act* narrows the scope and comprehensiveness of the RISE system which, according to its logic and title, should be a collective or public security system, thus providing communities and regions protection against *all* kinds of threats.

These shortcomings of the Russian emergency legislation flow from an outmoded conceptual interpretation of crises, focusing on the type of hazards rather than their causes and effect on communities. Such a conceptualisation has been extensively and rightly criticised in the last 10-15 years by international scholars who accentuated the need to use social and sociological criteria (Quarantelli, 1998). Even more importantly, operational organisations and governments in the West consider the all-hazards approach as most applicable and effective in their national emergency management systems. For instance, US and Canadian disaster legislation and management stresses the coverage of all kinds of threats to societal and environmental safety as a key principle.

Specific Acts make another set within Russian emergency legislation. These may be subdivided into two groups: *emergency-specific laws and regulations*, covering particular types of emergencies, and *emergency service-specific laws and regulations*, addressing particular emergency management function or service activities.

Examples of *emergency-specific acts* are the federal laws for social protection of the people affected by the South Urals (Cheliabinsk-65) and Chernobyl radiation disasters, or the laws regulating the use of atomic energy and provision of radiation safety (see Federalnii Zakon, 1993b, 1995e, 1995f, 1995i). Other examples are the 1995 *Road Safety Act*, the 1997 *Hazardous Facilities Act* and the *Hydro Technical Systems Safety Act*, which respectively deal with transportation accidents and accidents at hydropower facilities and emergencies and disasters provoked by these (see Federalnii Zakon, 1995a, 1997a, 1997b).

For geophysical hazards, the respective acts lack federal laws specially regulating community and regional protection, unlike laws that have existed in the West for a long time, such as the *Flood Insurance Act of 1968* and the *Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977* in the USA. In Russia these issues are covered by either respective paragraphs (sections) of the integrated laws or more widely by the presidential decrees and governmental regulations.

The reasons are twofold. Firstly, there is the legacy of Russian historical tradition as a highly centralised country, with executive power dominating legislative power for centuries. Secondly, natural disasters in Russia are relatively less destructive than technological ones which attract most public concern and thus obtain more lawmaking from federal legislators. Whatever the reason, the existing decrees and regulations are insufficient, both in terms of legal power and coverage of natural disasters. Even major floods, the most devastating geophysical hazard in Russia, remain untouched by the federal emergency and disaster legislation.

An analogous problem exists in the legal regulation of the conflict-type emergencies, that practically lack specific federal laws. The unique exception is the 1992 *Defense Act*, which covers civil protection issues in armed conflicts, wars and terrorist attacks (see Zakon, 1992b). Other pressing issues associated with conflict-type emergencies are addressed only by presidential decrees and governmental regulations, referring to specific sociopolitical conflicts (e.g. those in Northern Osetia, Ingushetia and Chechnia in 1994–96). This is further complicated by the exclusion from the

Federal Emergency Act of these type of emergencies and disasters, thereby leaving them out from the organisational framework of the RISE system, as well as from the federal emergency and disaster legislation system.

In another set of emergency and disaster acts—the *functional Acts*—one can distinguish those regulating particular functions or areas of activity of specific emergency services. For example, these include the 1991 *Militia (Police) Act*, 1992 *Penitentiary Criminal Institutions Act*, 1994 *Fire Safety Act*, 1994 *Emergency and Rescue Service and Rights of a Rescuer Act*, 1995 *Federal Security Service Act*, 1997 *Internal Troops Act* (see Zakon, 1991b, Federalnii Zakon, 1995d, 1995g, 1997c). Numerous presidential decrees and governmental regulations supplement these federal acts. Meanwhile, however useful for research and better understanding of the spectrum of existing specific acts, their delineation is to a great extent conditional. In practice, many of these marry both emergency-specific and function-specific characteristics, which cover certain types of emergencies or disasters as well as particular emergency service functions.

Legal regulation of prevention, mitigation of and preparedness to emergencies and disasters

Almost every integrated and specific act contains multiple paragraphs and sections, regulating emergency prevention and mitigation and providing for development and implementation of measures to facilitate early detection and mitigation of risks and threats to human lives, health, social and economic welfare, national integrity and constitutional order. This should be achieved through legally-demanded expert examination of the project drafts and auditing of the actual activities to filter those considered unacceptable by the safety (risk) criteria. In 1997 alone, the central expert councils of the Ministry of the Russian Federation for Civil Defense, Emergencies and Natural Disaster Response (EMERCOM) and the State Environmental Protection Committee issued more than 130 and 80 impact statements respectively (Gosudarstvenii Doklad, 1998: 151). Russian law also prescribes preventive measures to ensure integral security and safety while carrying out routine monitoring, control and supervision functions provided by responsible state, public and private organisations.

However, the scope and depth of existing emergency acts could hardly be considered exhaustive. The bulk of these involve no more than a general list of requirements

and not a specific mechanism, or respective sanctions for non-compliance. In addition, the standards that should serve as a main calibration instrument for specialists are often reconsidered. Sometimes this weakens these standards to decrease artificially the severity of an emergency, to calm the affected people and avoid liability of responsible agencies and officials. For example, this happened a few times within the last 15 years with the maximum permissible concentration of nitrates in food products and radionuclides in the milk that have been used as safety standards in mass poisonings and radiation emergencies (see Porfiriev, 1993).

Industrial personnel safety and *industrial safety acts* occupy a special place among the laws and regulations related to prevention and mitigation of technological emergencies. In the former Soviet Union and contemporary Russia these are known as Fundamentals of Labor Security Law of the Russian Federation (as amended in 1993) with the basic concept ‘labor security’ being, in our opinion, linguistically incorrect and misleading in substantive terms. Although the above-mentioned act is associated with prevention of technological accidents and emergencies, it is biased towards passive methods of personnel protection against industrial hazards, including compensation payments for post-impact health effects. Meanwhile, prevention and mitigation of disasters by using information-intensive technology and flexible management organisation are scarcely mentioned in the Russian law, unlike other industrialised countries.

In emergency prevention and mitigation-oriented laws and regulations the *land use planning acts*, *construction standards* and *operation licenses* are important. Sanitary and environmental constraints prohibit the construction of hazardous facilities in dangerous proximity to residential districts and force a protection zone around such facilities. These constraints, along with operation license requirements, are established in the 1991 *Sanitary and Epidemiological Welfare of People Act*, the 1991 *Environmental Protection Act*, the 1995 *Environmental Impact Assessment Act* as well as construction standards developed and enforced by Russian construction departments (Zakon, 1991c, 1992e, Federalnii Zakon 1995h). In general, the latter provide efficient regulation of building construction in respect of existing hazards, although the earthquake disaster in Neftegorsk in 1995 revealed this is not always guaranteed (Porfiriev, 1998: 170-190).

Industrial safety declarations for the hazardous facilities are another legal

method of mitigating possible technological emergencies. Although well-known in the West, this regulation instrument is relatively new in Russia. Given the long-term under-estimation of technological safety issues in Russia, it is hardly surprising that government regulation demanding industrial facilities to declare their safety status in a special document was passed as late as 1995. Two years later EMERCOM and the Federal Mining and Industrial Supervision of Russia (GOSGORTECHNADZOR) approved the procedure, and the inventory of both industrial facilities and expert organisations involved in safety declaration. As a result only 5% of those who should have submitted such a declaration did so in 1997 (Gosudarstvennii Doklad, 1998: 154).

In addition to prevention and mitigation, most *specific acts* contain paragraphs and sections regulating emergency preparedness activities. Contingency planning, training and upgrading of emergency workers (fire, militia, rescue, medical care and other personnel), public information and training, fund raising, reserves accumulation and resource mobilisation constitute the basis of activities prescribed. For example, the procedure of accumulating state emergency material and technical reserves is determined by the *State Reserves Development Act of the Russian Federation of 1992*.

As a rule, Russian law distinguishes, albeit not always consistently, the responsibilities and functions of respective authorities and public administration bodies involved in emergency management. The *Federal Emergency and Rescue Service and the Rights of a Rescuer Act* is a notable exception, providing regulation of emergency training. Specific requirements and procedures for planning and personnel training are described in detail in numerous departmental orders and manuals.

However, such orders, instructions and manuals are insufficient to cope with the crisis if specific acts or special paragraphs which regulate preparedness are lacking, especially those concerning interaction between responsible state departments and emergency services. This is confirmed by the response to specific non-conflict emergencies, such as the major earthquakes in Spitak (1988, 25,000 deaths) and Neftegorsk (1995, 2000 deaths). Other evidence comes from lessons learnt responding to large-scale conflict-type crises, such as the terrorist attacks at Budennovsk (1995), Kizliar (1996) and Pervomaiskoye (1996), which led to more than 100 deaths.

Among the missing laws are the constitutional and federal acts for chemical safety, transportation of toxic and highly-hazar-

dous materials, and earthquake and flood disasters. Some of these were developed long ago but have not been adopted, or have been adopted quite recently and applied on a limited scale, while others have not even been ear-marked by the legislators as projected for the nearest future.

Legal regulation of response to and recovery from emergencies and disasters

Specific Russian acts also include paragraphs and sections that provide regulation for disaster response and recovery, implying both legal sanctions and motivation to eliminate or alleviate the social and environmental effects of a crisis, irrespective of emergency type. These include search and rescue operations, evacuation, medical care support, relief and compensation to the affected people, rehabilitation and reconstruction of destroyed facilities.

In the former Soviet Union the respective federal laws were lacking till the late 1980s and such activities were carried out within the legal framework of governmental regulations alone. In 1987 the *Enterprise Act* was enforced to compel industries and facilities to compensate for damage incurred as a result of non-compliance to existing standards. The Act also provided for payment of fines to responsible environmental supervision agencies. These sanctions have been kept in the Russian federal law, in particular the *Environmental Protection Act* as amended, *Consumer Rights Protection Act* and *Environmental Impact Assessment Act* (see Zakon, 1992c, 1992e, Federalnii Zakon, 1995h). However, given negligible fines and the near-bankrupt state of enterprises in the economic conditions of the 1990s, these sanctions were much less efficient than expected.

Among the specific acts regulating disaster response and recovery, the *insurance legislation* plays a unique role, both in the former Soviet Union and contemporary Russia. This kind of legislation in many Western countries has an integrated or comprehensive character. This provides expected loss reduction at every stage and phase of emergency management, and is not constrained by compensation to the victims. Moreover, it is primarily mitigation-focused, and stimulates the insured to keep within established standards and recommendations, providing personal and family safety and continuity of business.

However, in the former Soviet Union, insurance was reduced to routine compensation to victims, with peculiarities of payment procedure. In conditions of absolute state ownership of enterprises, the State Insurance Company (GOSSTRAKH)

was a unique monopolistic life and property insurance agency. With compulsory and centralised insurance, GOSSTAKH and its affiliates were empowered to collect premiums from all Soviet citizens and enterprises. Part of the collected premiums was transferred to a special reserve fund, which was used to pay the victims of disasters. Rather than real insurance obligations, these payments were actually allowances for the loss of the breadwinner, permanent disability and so on, which somewhat alleviated the damage incurred by emergencies or disasters. The payment procedure and amount of allowances were specified in regulations issued by the central government, and national and republican insurance laws were lacking. Such a procedure, along with negligible amounts of allowances, impeded the efficiency of the existing insurance system and predetermined its low priority within national emergency management policy.

In contemporary Russia the situation has somewhat improved, with crucial federal laws for insurance development being adopted in the 1990s. These include the *1991 Medical Insurance of the Russian Federation Citizens Act* and *1992 Insurance Act* (see Zakon, 1992b). Some insurance-related norms were also established in *Environment Protection Act Militia (Police) Act* and *Military Servicemen Status Act* (see Zakon, 1991b, 1992e, 1993). Closely associated with these are federal laws that provide additional guarantees and compensations to servicemen who operate in states of emergency and armed conflicts. In particular, such laws include those adopted in 1993 and 1995 in connection with regional armed conflicts in the Northern Caucasus and other hotbeds (see Federalnii Zakon 1993a).

Worth special mention in this context are laws and regulations that establish compulsory personal insurance for emergency personnel, including fire, militia, rescue, medical care and some other workers. These also provide for lump-sum allowance compensation to an emergency officer or their family if they are killed or injured in response or combat action and disabled with further service ruled out. The *1998 Federal Act for Compulsory State Insurance of Servicemen, Militiamen and Tax Policemen* established the allowance to the family of an emergency officer killed in action as equal to a 25-month salary for each family member. The same allowances to a disabled officer range between 25- and 75-month salary equivalent depending on injury severity (Federalnii Zakon, 1998b).

However, the insurance market and national insurance policy in Russia are still in the cradle and in respect to emergency

management are primarily compensation focused. In addition, despite the positive changes in the 1990s, a number of important specific acts that would regulate property and other liabilities of individuals and organisations in disasters are lacking. These include damage risk insurance, insurance of hazardous facilities, liability for risk associated with the possible effect of an accidents or emergency, and others that are widely used in the West. In this context the *1992 Insurance Act* (Zakon, 1992b) could be interpreted as an integrated one only with substantial reservations, and in the foreseeable future should be rather considered as a specific act.

Within specific emergency and disaster law, worth distinguishing are the acts that regulate *the status of and regime of activities within specific emergency or disaster areas*. In Russia, some of these have existed for many years, leaving alone a substantial greater number of 'short-living' crisis zones. However, a comprehensive federal law that would provide clear-cut criteria for distinguishing and establishing the status of these areas, and serve as a 'legal umbrella' for already-existing specific acts and governmental regulations that cover concrete cases, is lacking so far. Even the integrated *Federal Emergency Act*, which provides the definition of these areas, only mentions a procedure for establishing their boundaries by field emergency coordinators. In this respect the *Environmental Protection Act*, which determines the status and schedule of activities within environmental emergency and disaster areas, could serve as a unique exception.

To a certain extent the existing law lacuna is filled by the federal laws, which regulate the status and economic activities within specific radiation disaster areas. These are a legacy of the South Urals major accidents in 1957 and 1961, nuclear testing near Semipalatinsk in Kazakhstan in 1950–60s and the Chernobyl disaster in 1986. Such federal laws, although delayed considerably, were eventually developed and enforced in Russia. However, specific acts covering other disaster areas (e.g. South Siberia, Tatarstan, Bashkortastan and Kalmik republics) that have considerable environmental contamination and degradation, are still lacking. Instead, the regional executive bodies and local administrations rely upon the general clauses of the national *Environmental Protection Act* or specific government regulations.

Last but not the least, the emergency legislation that regulates response and recovery involves two other important areas. One is relief aid to affected communities, in particular to refugees. Another

is post-impact measures to prevent or mitigate future disasters. Within these, particular emphasis should be on investigation and research of the preconditions and causes of the crises to reveal organisational pathologies, responsible persons and contingencies that led to such crises.

In Russia, federal emergency and disaster relief laws and refugees acts have not yet been developed. Meanwhile, official records cite more than 700,000 refugees living in Russia in 1998. The situation looks much better in respect of federal laws, which regulate investigation of the causes of accidents, emergencies and disasters. Some of these acts have been effective since the former Soviet Union, although with some changes in titles and amendments. In this context one could mention the respective clauses of the 1996 Criminal Code of Russia, the 1984 Code of Administrative Offenses (the Tort Law amended as 1997) and some others (see Kodeks, 1998, Ugolovnii Kodeks, 1996). Specific paragraphs of these acts, along with numerous regulations and instructions of the responsible federal ministries, address the issues of carelessness, non-compliance to industrial and technological safety rules and other violations of the law that lead to emergencies and disasters.

For instance, the *1995 Operation Search and Investigation Act* and the *1995 Federal Security Service Act* provide regulation for early detection, revelation, prevention and conduct of counter operations against terrorist attacks, hostage seizure and other criminal conflict-type emergencies (see Federalnii Zakon, 1995b, 1995c). However, given the generic character of these and some other acts that are not specific to the emergency management field, this area of emergency legislation needs further development and sophistication.

Conclusion

The experience of the Russian emergency and disaster legislation reveals ambiguous trends in its development and practical implementation at the brink of the new century. On the one hand, the number of federal, regional and departmental acts has increased, covering a wide range of critical aspects of emergency management and respective juridical relationship between its stakeholders. But the scope and depth of existing legislation is still far from meeting the real needs of civil protection and crisis management in Russia. This calls for a more thorough and critical analysis of the past efforts made on a national level in this area. In addition, the world experience of coping with non-conflict and conflict crises is worth more intensive and comprehensive

study, particularly that accumulated by the most industrialised countries. Successful marriage of these areas of research and implementation in practice, with particular consideration of the natural, cultural and social commonalities and peculiarities, would bring substantial improvements in both national and international emergency and disaster legislation.

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