

COOPERATION IN NORWEGIAN SEARCH AND RESCUE SERVICES AS SEEN BY VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS

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ABSTRACT

The core concept of the search and rescue services is described by the term cooperation. In Norwegian the term used is “samvirke”, which encompasses a broader set of connotations than cooperation in English. Empirical material from interviews with representatives for voluntary organizations is analysed on the basis of Sennett’s theories on the social triangle (earned authority, mutual respect, cooperation) and craftsmanship. The findings suggest that the social triangle may explain the working elements of cooperation in the Norwegian search and rescue services. They may be summed up by the need to have confidence in each other, and between voluntary and public efforts. When trying to gain increased interest, especially among young people, for engaging as volunteers, it might be of value to build future strategies upon Sennett’s theories on craftsmanship. Cooperation appears to be more than just cross-institutional cooperation in crises. A prerequisite is that voluntary organizations are regarded as competent providers of relevant craftsmanship. Cooperation in search and rescue services is not a principle that can be chosen by decision. It has to be established through processes in real life. This practical cooperation is organization, work and ideology; thus, it is more than ordinary cooperation or coordination.

Keywords – cooperation, search and rescue, voluntary participation.

INTRODUCTION

This study concerns organized participation by voluntary resources in search and rescue services in Norway. The core concept of these services is described by the term cooperation, as here in the presentation on the website of the main rescue coordination centres (HRS 2018):

Norwegian rescue services are carried out through cooperation between government agencies, voluntary organizations and private companies who have resources appropriate for rescue services.

This article is based on experiences of planned voluntary participation in handling of crises and accidents, and its aim is to discuss if cooperation in this sense is an operational

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principle of working together, or if it is more like an ideological view on organization and sound cooperation in critical situations when important values are at a stake.

To study how it works, is important in itself, but especially because the Norwegian expression “samvirke” contains more than usually is meant by cooperation.

In this study, the cooperation will be described and analysed as it emerges in contemporary search and rescue services. The perspective is that of representatives of voluntary organizations regularly participating in search and rescue services. This perspective is not made explicit in governing documents. Still, it has impact on how search and rescue operations are performed. The perspective of the governmental institutions is described thoroughly in regulatory documents and other governmental publications, and shall not be further discussed here.

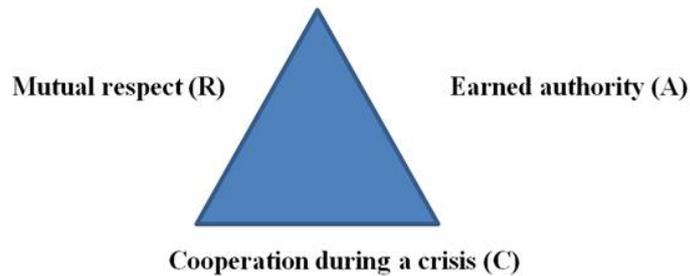
In contemporary international literature, the participation of voluntary organizations in similar situations may be characterized as informal and spontaneous (Whittaker et al. 2015; Twigg and Mosel 2017). Interaction with and managing more random volunteers in disastrous situations has also been explored (Barsky et al 2007).

Boin et al. (2017) discuss the challenges of coordination in crisis management. They regard coordination as the collaboration between response partners and claim as a managerial activity “crisis coordination is about organizing and safeguarding collaborative processes within networks of actors involved in crisis response and/or recovery”. The authors present a relevant discussion on how to avoid fault lines and how to manage cooperation vertically (between different levels in the same structure) as well as horizontally (related to the division of labour between organizations that are not in a hierarchical relationship with each other). The prerequisites for this coordination from the point of view of the voluntary organizations are not analysed.

Several studies of the intersection between public institutions and voluntary organizations have pointed out that the Norwegian and Scandinavian cases in general show a higher degree of integration with each other than found elsewhere (Sivesind et al. 2018; Selle et al. 2018). Among other factors, a mutual respect exists that makes such integration possible. In this study, we will investigate if this close integration also applies to participants in search and rescue operations.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The sociologist Richard Sennett discusses the development of organizations and the cooperation between them (Sennett 2012). He looks for the balance between a strict line of command and more freedom for actions, and the balance between competition and cooperation. Sennett describes a social triangle, where the three sides symbolize earned authority, mutual respect and cooperation during a crisis, Figure 1. The social triangle may be regarded as an image of the informal relations in a work situation. According to this model, it is not sensible to study cooperation separately from respect and authority.

Figure 1: Social triangle

Sennett claims that cooperation is easier between organizations that have been stable for a long time. A challenge today is that most organizations are unstable in structure as well as in relation to working processes (Binney, Wilke and Williams 2005).

In organization theory, we find several examples of analysing the need for and value of cooperation and coordination. Knudsen (2013) underlines how important networking and inter-organizational coordination is to develop capability in the public sector, Expansion of organizations or more forced mergers seldom seem to give better work relationships. Knudsen also points out trust as crucial to achieving useful and well-functioning cooperation.

In practical cooperation, people with different background must solve problems together. Elements as closeness, equality and complementarity are important (Aubert 1964; Durkheim 1933). In these cooperation situations, it is valuable to see the complementarity. Actors need each other, often just because of some form of inequality (diversity) between them, thus being complementary to each other.

To succeed in practical cooperation depends both on the individuals and on the organizational structure. According to Aubert, the closeness can lead to solidarity as well as treachery. Double memberships are important for the functioning of social systems: members of the same system in one relation act as members of another, or several other systems in other relations. The systems are linked together by common interests and the possibility and need for drawing upon each other's inequality. To realize the values and interests in a cooperation situation depends on understanding of the inequality (Aubert 1964).

Here we are at the core of cooperation as a means for social organization. The actors have common values in the rescuing process. They are unequal in their competence, and they respect the need to work together, not permanently, but to succeed in the situation.

The organizational theorist Karl E. Weick discusses what happens in organizations when people panic and conditions are extremely difficult to handle. He gives the following signs of an organization of resilience that should be able to handle crisis: the ability to improvise, the ability to keep a virtual role system, wisdom as attitude to values and characteristics, and respectful cooperation and trust (Weick 1993). Characteristics like these are quite like the historical anchoring of "samvirke" in the rescue services.

In looking to understand the role of voluntary participation, we have found it relevant to seek further theoretical support from Richard Sennett. Taking part in cross-professional projects, such as search and rescue operations, requires craftsmanship. Sennett (2009:24) claims that all craftsmanship is quality-driven work.

Craftsmanship names an enduring, basic human impulse, the desire to do a job well for its own sake (Sennett 2009:9).

Craftsmen seek to do good work, and they are willing to pass their knowledge on from generation to generation. In his book about “The Craftsman”, Sennett is focusing on the intimate connection between hand and head. He explores the development of skill, stating that all skills, even the more abstract, begin as bodily practices. Sennett’s perspective is that skill (originally based on work by hand) is trained practice, in contrast to sudden inspiration and improvisations.

Sennett claims that all craftsmanship is founded on skill developed to a high degree (Sennett 2009:20). The modern world has two recipes for arousing the desire to work hard and well: one is the moral imperative to do work for the sake of the community, the other invokes competition – it supposes that competing against others stimulates the desire to perform well (Sennett 2009:28).

Talking about the workshop, Sennett calls it “the craftsman’s home” (Sennett 2009, 53ff). He starts by describing the guilds (klan, laug) in the medieval period. Relating it to modern organizations, he states that how the work is organized is important for work spirit (Sennett 2009, 73). This has to do with the more social aspects, e.g. avoiding dictating orders without humanity. The respect for the skill and the craftsmen themselves is linked up to the organization (Sennett 2009, 73):

This is why we should not give up on the workshop as a social space. Workshops present and past have glued people together through work rituals, whether these be a shared cup of tea or the urban parade; through mentoring...; through face-to-face sharing of information

We can find an interesting parallel to Sennett’s presentation of the guilds in older Norwegian organizational life, namely the gildi (guilds) (Opedal 1965).

With this theoretical background from sociology, cultural sociology and organizational theory, we can get a better understanding on how the cooperation in search and rescue services work, and what kind of individual competence, interests and values that bring the action to succeed.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION IN SEARCH AND RESCUE

Search and rescue services in Norway are regarded as a governmental responsibility. This is defined in a royal decree of 19 June 2015 (Ministry of Justice and Public Security 2015). When enforced in November 2015 it substituted a decree of 1980, which in turn built upon parliamentary decisions back in the early 1960s.

The Norwegian search and rescue organization is set up with one local rescue coordination centre (LRCC) for each police district of Norway. These local centres report to one of the two joint rescue coordination centres (JRCC), located in Stavanger (Sola) in Southern Norway and Bodø in Northern Norway. The local centres are mainly responsible for land-based operations. The two regional centres are responsible for aeronautical and maritime search and rescue. The regional centres are also obliged to support and supervise the local centres, both related to ongoing missions and by having a superior role related to development and maintenance of plans.

The principle of cooperation as a formalized element of the Norwegian public search and rescue system appears to have been perceived as obvious, without any deeper discussions, in the process of designing the national search and rescue system by the Norwegian Parliament in 1963 (St.meld. nr. 86 (1961–1962)). The systematization of voluntary cooperation related to crises though is much older, based on the core values cleverness and reciprocity: “Today you, tomorrow me”.

A case-based discussion on such cooperation, related to fire insurance schemes in the 1800s, is given by Opedal (1965). Historically practical cooperation is based upon a rooted willingness in the population to use their capacity and competence to handle incidents that impact local communities (Aasland and Braut 2018). We may presume that voluntary participation in search and rescue missions stems from a general human imperative to help each other in critical situations.

Despite the long-lasting tradition of voluntary work connected to handling of accidents and crises, the content and impact of this participation are not thoroughly studied. Still, in general media voluntary contribution is often commented upon, usually with positive wording.

There has been an important development in voluntary organizations since the 1960s (Mageli 2014). They represent the answers to the need in modern societies both for voluntary work and for specialized knowledge. Because of the trust they have among ordinary people, they can defend and advocate their role as important actors in cooperation in today’s rescue system.

It is noteworthy that generalized public criticism towards voluntary participation in search and rescue work is practically non-existent. One exception is related to incidents during Easter 1967, when 17 people were killed due to bad weather in the mountains (Corneliussen 2017; Andersen 2018). This led to a public debate on the effectiveness of the voluntary rescue groups. The media accused them of being too passive. After the incident, the organizations representing voluntary resources in the search and rescue services initiated huge, systematic and lasting improvement processes, mainly financed by the organizations themselves.

A more recent, but quite isolated, example of criticism against voluntary resources and their apparent autonomy can be found in a formal complaint after an unsuccessful mission related to a BASE parachute jump in 2000 (Bjørngen 2018:315). The charges were rejected after a public investigation.

Through recent research it is claimed that while the authorities set the goals and present wishes with specified requirements related to coordination and cooperation, it is dependent on the actors themselves to find out how to do the work when in action (Gjerde and Winsvold 2016; 2017). They use the words originally presented by the Spanish poet Antonio Machado: “there is no road, the road is being formed while you go” as a metaphor (Gjerde and Winsvold 2017:39; Vallevik 2008).

CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

In recently published literature on major incidents and disasters, the need for local community engagement, mobilization of the population and citizens’ involvement is highly profiled (Lakoff 2017; Jones 2018). This is regarded as an essential condition for dealing with community-wide challenges in an efficient way, with reference made to wartime incidents, natural catastrophes and wide outbreaks of diseases. Often the response from the authorities and their resources has appeared to be inadequate (Lakoff 2017).

Fimreite et al. (2014a) show how difficult it may be in practice to get the principle of cooperation in search and rescue in Norway to function as intended. This principle makes the constitutional accountability of the minister to the Parliament and the public obscure. Fimreite et al. (2014b) argue that another principle in search and rescue, namely the principle of responsibility, seems to dominate and that coordination always must be executed in the shadow of and subordinate to the principle of responsibility.

This is also apparent in a report from the Office of the Auditor General in Norway examining the systems for safety and rescue (Document 3:8 (2016–2017)). The Office of the Auditor General make visible that the Ministry of Justice and Public Security both have a responsibility towards their own sector and towards the totality of public emergency preparedness. Among the weaknesses described in the report are confusion about roles and responsibility between the underlying parts of the organizations, weaknesses caused by use of different ways to perform the coordinating role, and lack of leadership and following up of the security work done by the County Governors at a regional level.

There are many relevant actors at different levels of society, and it is a demanding task to establish well-functioning cooperation between all available resources. The Office of the Auditor General describes the weaknesses (Document 3:8 (2016–2017)). Many of the participants have been frustrated about internal conflicts, disagreements over use of power and even tug-of-wars inside the Ministry. In the report, though, it is claimed that on local and regional levels it seems that the core of practical coordination as a guiding principle has been durable, despite many reorganizing and restructuring attempts from above.

The work of voluntary organizations in Norwegian search and rescue services is described in two recent reports financed by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (Gjerde and Winsvold 2016; 2017). Their findings indicate that, at least at a local level, cooperation between the public resources (police) and the voluntary organizations functions well. The

voluntary organizations, though, would like to be warned earlier when an incident occurs, and they feel that the police should have better knowledge about their resources and competences.

Even though the coordination seems to function during actual operations, the voluntary organizations lack close cooperation between missions, e.g. by means of exercises and evaluations (Gjerde and Winsvold 2016). The voluntary organizations also claim that needs related to emergency preparedness have not been brought into the current major public reforms in Norway, such as the reorganization of the police and the restructuring of the municipalities (Gjerde and Winsvold 2017). The organizational changes come first, and thereafter the emergency preparedness systems have to be adjusted accordingly.

Research have pinpointed the need to use the principle of coordination in search and rescue, even before and in the aftermath of severe incidents, not restricting it purely to joint efforts in specific search and rescue missions (Gjerde and Winsvold 2016; 2017). The study of possibilities (“Mulighetsstudien”) (DSB 2015), and the follow up to this study (Ministry of Justice and Public Security 2016), are administrative documents strongly supporting this view too.

Based upon these expectations, it is of interest to study further what positive incentives might stimulate and support systematized voluntary participation.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

In this study a purely qualitative design has been chosen to try to acquire a deeper understanding of the processes which inspire and support the voluntary organizations to engage in the quite challenging work related to search and rescue services. The material consists of information from two types of sources.

Partly we have approached governing documents and current public reports dealing with the development of search and rescue work in Norway. We have also performed semi-structured interviews with strategically selected leaders at an operational level from five voluntary organizations, all of which have been central in operational search and rescue services through recent decades.

The five organizations, and the five leaders were carefully selected based upon their long-lasting experience as participating actors and operational leaders in the field. We therefore regard them as a strategically selected set of interviewees (Malterud 2011).¹ In the interviews, we were seeking to get their opinions on needs and expectations of cooperation based upon their extensive experience, making this an intrinsic, exploratory study (Hancock and Algozzine 2017).

The interviews were seeking information and soundings about experiences of cooperation, training of personnel and development of competence, and sense of trust and confidence between the actors in search and rescue work.

During the interviews, written notes were taken. The interviews were not recorded by electronic means. The final analysis of the material was performed by grouping the expressions from the informants according to the social triangle presented by Sennett. A

summary of findings was presented to the informants for comments before the writing of this article.

All five informants have given their informed consent to take part in this study. They have also agreed to be identified in the acknowledgements as they have acted on behalf of their organizations, not focusing on personal attitudes and providing individual information.

FINDINGS RELATED TO THE SOCIAL TRIANGLE

In the analysis of the material from the interviews, we first grouped the different statements according to the five in-advance announced themes for the interviews. From the five interviews combined, we were able to isolate in total 69 statements related to cooperation. In the following analysis of the material, the expressions related to cooperation were classified according to the three sides of the social triangle: earned authority, mutual respect and cooperation during a crisis.

When summing up we can isolate 24 statements related to earned authority, 33 about mutual respect and 34 dealing with cooperation during a crisis. The sum is higher than 69 because some of the statements may be related to two or all three sides of the triangle. It is not sensible to analyse this material quantitatively, partly due to the design of the study and partly due to statistical limitations. Still it is worth noting that the younger organizations, such as VARG (Voluntary Alpine Rescue Group) and SEPG (Scouts' Emergency Preparedness Group)), have a slight tendency to focus more on earned authority than the more established ones, such as LRCS (Local Red Cross Society).¹ A selection of typical expressions are cited in indented italics below.

Earned authority

Sennett (2012:152) claims that earned authority manages the everyday experience of inequality in a particular way. It moderates humiliation in the relation of command and obedience.

In our material, a story about this is presented by the Voluntary Alpine Rescue Group (VARG):

Climbers always have been in need of taking care of and helping themselves, because nobody else was in position to do it.... The role of VARG has become more and more clear during the years, and they know what decisions are under VARG's own responsibility.

Authority in cooperation is established on the basis of competence emerging in practice through real life experience and training together with personnel from other organizations. Authority has to be earned. It appears to be difficult to establish authority by decision.

All of the organizations in some or way or other emphasize the need for maintaining self-governance, even during actual search and rescue operations. Typical expressions are:

The groups themselves must be in a position to say “no”, that is to be responsible for their own work and safety. Safety should be judged on the basis of local presumptions.

There is a high degree of self-selection to the groups as well as to each single mission. If you do not feel for it, you do not participate.

The reason why this must be so when engaging voluntary resources becomes clear in view of this statement:

Many of the missions are challenging, meeting mutilated bodies. Some are also technically challenging.

Some also point out that the authority of the knowledge gained by voluntary organizations should not be limited to search and rescue missions. Through their efforts the voluntary organizations get experiences that could be used by others, e.g. in preventive work:

[At a scenic point] professional staff must be engaged in prevention and follow-up of tourists. Why should [an urban festival] be required to have emergency personnel present, but not the tourist industry at our national nature icons? But, really, there are not that many incidents at these spots!

Related to authority, there seems to be no real potential for conflicts between the voluntary organizations. Their basic position is that there is a need for all voluntary forces in emergency preparedness and rescue activities. A shared vision between the voluntary resources based on local knowledge is helpful to the public rescue chain.

The informants point out that there may be an upcoming challenge with relation to earned authority. There is an increasing likelihood of disappointing the public, as the public has higher expectations than the organizations’ competence can guarantee. Still, the general situation today is, as expressed by the Scouts (SEPG):

Nobody dares to “downtalk” the voluntary work!

Several of the organizations mention the need for locally based knowledge, which also can guarantee a kind of authority. The Society for Sea Rescue (NSSR) expresses this advantage for the voluntary organizations in the following way:

Even though it’s a nationwide organization, it has strong local roots – 126 years history of being present at local level.... The principle of cooperation is a modern continuation of former seaman craft and neighbour support.

Mutual respect

Lack of mutual respect between the voluntary organizations does not appear to be a problem. Perhaps this has to do with the fact that the Norwegian cooperation has been a working principle for several decades. One statement signals that lack of mutual respect is a sign of immature systems:

In the beginning there was some competition among different voluntary organizations.

Now the desire and need for more and closer contact seem to prevail. Keywords for the voluntary organizations' wishes are exercises, evaluation and learning exercises, as on these subjects the voluntary organizations are not in a position to take an administrative role by themselves at a local level. The responsibility for establishing such inter-organizational processes is unanimously placed with the police, as coordinators of the search and rescue services.

This challenge is also coupled with the need for a more systematic and predictable approach to making resources available for the voluntary organizations.

Cooperation during a crisis

The complexity of the search and rescue system is described by several organizations. Therefore, it is important to focus not on the organization but on the mission and the means available for solving the task together. Introducing the new common, land-based radio system for emergency services is characterized as a watershed in the intersection between public and voluntary resources.

There may be some local differences related to coordination on the planning level, but usually they are not visible in actual operations. There exists a well-functioning division of tasks between different voluntary organizations, based upon local conditions. All organizations point at the police as the most obvious point of contact and coordination, not least because the police also respect the autonomy of the voluntary participants. One expression of this is as follows:

One is feeling as a member of the chain, not only someone "in addition".

Combined statements about cooperation at present and in future

The informants suggest that cooperation is an expression of a living principle not defined in detail in governing documents. It is continuously developing in a dynamic relationship between the different public and voluntary search and rescue organizations, and between them and the rest of the society. Some of the organizations wonder about where the intersection between voluntary and professional tasks will be in the near future.

Two overarching expressions supported by all the five organizations are:

Cooperation ("samvirke") – just the word is stimulating!

We do not get into work if it is not the principle of cooperation. We never go into action standing alone, or separately, in rescue missions.

FINDINGS RELATED TO CRAFTSMANSHIP

Analysis shows that public governing documents and reports do not give any detailed descriptions of the expectations of the voluntary organizations. Neither do they present any formal or informal requirements related to recruitment and training of volunteers. A study of possibilities ("Mulighetsstudien") (DSB 2015) and its follow-up document (Ministry of Justice and Public Security 2016), though, stress the need for joint exercises between public and voluntary resources, aiming to develop, test and train cooperation.

But neither of these studies take the discussion further on to detailed requirements and qualifications.

The relevant expressions from the interviews are presented in two categories below.

Experience and training

All informants acknowledge the need for particular training for persons aiming to take part in search and rescue operations. It is not enough to be an interested person of good will.

The climber's association VARG is explicitly aware that they operate in dangerous situations and that, just by doing what they do, they may be considered irresponsible. They have procedures for analysing both every single mission and the accidents suffered by their own personnel, thus helping them to act in a serious and sound manner.

Until recently, the lack of a formalized requirement for documentation and reporting of activities and factual situations has been regarded by several of the organizations as an obstacle in the way of the exchange of experiences and learning. The 2017 initiative from the JRCCs to establish a system for collecting standardized reports from the participants in the search and rescue services is highly appreciated.

All five organizations express that they want to cooperate with the other voluntary organizations as well as the public participants. For example, in connection with rescue missions on mountain walls, the need for division of work according to technical competence is obvious. But the organizations prefer to take care of their own work and use their own people when taking responsibility for their part of the mission:

One also needs thorough knowledge about the competence and quality of each single member. Often problems arise when persons are supplied from other groups.

They are used to cooperating with public agencies such as the police and the health services, and all of them seem to appreciate that the police govern, rather than the health services:

The lines are clear when the police govern.

Police are more precise than the [health service].

In practice they would like to see closer cooperation with the municipal fire brigade, as that organization represents the sharp end of the municipal rescue resource.

They also point out that there is a need for differentiation between rescue missions and preventive actions. Four of the five organizations exemplify this with experiences from the last few years related to missions at Trolltunga, Kjerag and Preikestolen. These are very demanding mountains with a wide spread symbolic value. They claim planned and unplanned preventive actions have immediately shown effects, decreasing the need for rescue missions:

The cause behind no more missions at... stands at the parking place. [Alluding to the ward at the parking place who is eagerly informing about the trail.]

[Name of the place] showed a totally new situation in 2017 when guides were engaged to follow the tourists. We are now back there where we should be as a rescue organisation.

Even though all organizations ask for more sharing of knowledge across organizational borders, they acknowledge the obstacles in practice. The overarching organization for the voluntary organizations (FORF) is not strong enough to carry the responsibility and workload for this. Perhaps it is a task for the JRCCs (Joint Rescue Center); it is a question asked by some of them, for example in connection with the current process on establishing a national registry of available resources for search and rescue purposes in Norway:

The next watershed will be the new common register of resources.

The organizations also appraise the use of new communication technology as a backbone for “samvirke” in the search and rescue chain. But they claim that new technologies are not necessarily a positive development in this sector, especially technologies aimed at general purposes, not designed specifically for search and rescue purposes:

One specific challenge: IP phones – [the coordination centre] must ask for position! It does not show automatically, as on cellular phones.

Ambitions and self-confidence

Generally, the voluntary organizations are clear about their willingness to do a job. However, they are quite clear about the need for mutual learning and the necessity of having several meeting points. This certainly also means carrying out training exercises. And they must have the possibility to refrain from engaging in a mission when resources are not available or unfit.

The success factor #1 is to get something back! That means there need to be several meeting points for the voluntary staff.

The staff rather would like to provide real help to a Chinese, than to train on helping a Chinese.

The groups themselves must be in a position to say “no”, that is, to be responsible for their own work and safety. Safety should be judged on the basis of local presumptions.

In general, the voluntary organizations appreciate leadership from a superior body talking with a unanimous voice, instead of several public agencies trying to take the lead.

DISCUSSION

In elaborating responsiveness to others, Richard Sennett seeks to explore cooperation as a craft (Sennett 2012):

I emphasize skill and competency because in my view modern society is de-skilling people in the conduct of everyday life. We have... greater conduits between people thanks to modern forms of communication, but less understanding

of how to communicate well. Practical skill is a tool rather than a salvation, but, lacking it, issues of Meaning and Value remain abstractions.

By discussing one of the oldest types of organizations, the workshop, Sennett brings in the Rochdale principles, formulated by Robert Owen in 1844. These principles were introduced in the time of the Industrial Revolution in England, based on the old workshop experiences. (Sennett 2012:44) The Rochdale principles: openness, active participation, profit sharing and promotion of education, are also the founding principles of practical cooperation – a trading and production principle that still is in development and active use.

Sennett's social triangle is an illustration of the elements necessary for success when people carry out practical work together. The dimensions beyond a traditional structure or a bureaucratic organization have to do with skills, mutual respect and experience earned by cooperating during a crisis. It is difficult to come closer to the content of cooperation in search and rescue than Sennett's description.

There is a challenge in practical cooperation between the professionalism, that is necessary in the public part of search and rescue, and voluntary or personally based skills. Sennett (2012:129) claims that:

modern capitalism has unbalanced competition and cooperation, and so made cooperation itself less open, less dialogic.

This observation can enlighten the balance between professionalism, which is highly paid and highly respected, and voluntary work, which is not part of the formal work structure but is necessary for a good workshop or a successful cooperation.

As for the principle of cooperation, this is certainly a horizontal coordination. The structure and culture of the principle function as a tool to avoid coordination and communication problems. Most of today's organizations are not stable, and it is interesting to note that the three sides of the social triangle could also be a description of cooperation. Trust is, anyway, a fundamental value and a sign of good cooperation.

It seems to be important for the participants to understand their role in the system and to perform according to their skills. A core challenge for the leaders is their capability to see the totality of the operation, and to set available resources to work at an operational level, rather than commanding from above. Training together seems to be paramount, according to the findings from Gjerde and Winsvold (2016:43). Their findings are supported by this study. This is also in accordance with the needs depicted in current administrative documents (DSB 2015; Ministry of Justice and Public Security 2016).

In this study the basis for the craftsmanship, as expressed by volunteers in crisis management, has been of particular interest. Gjerde and Winsvold (2017) have studied the motivation of the volunteers in search and rescue work. They found that some participants wish to be like dedicated professionals and work at the sharp end of the operation. On the other hand, according to our findings many volunteers fear being given tasks they feel they cannot manage.

It is important that both the leaders of voluntary organizations and the superior search and rescue leadership at a public level understand and accept the sensible balance here. The aim must be to develop realistic norms for voluntary participation and to use the specialized skills of the participants and take advantage of their training in “samvirke”, enabling them to do the work with all the different skills combined.

As mentioned earlier in the text, the expression “there is no road, the road is being formed while you go” has been used as a metaphor for lacking plans (Gjerde and Winsvold 2017:39). A possible connotation of this expression therefore is that the work is done through inspiration and improvisation, (Twigg and Mosel 2017). According to our findings, this may be disputed. Our findings from the voluntary organizations that operate at the sharp end of cooperation is that they are highly skilled in and think positively of cooperation, and that it is developed not by coincidence but by planned and objective-oriented activities lasting for decades. They think that their work should be explicitly acknowledged as craftsmanship by the public authorities responsible for search and rescue services.

It is not enough to say how much the voluntary resources are appreciated in actual search and rescue missions. To help this system survive into future, our findings suggest that there is a need for the public authorities to design, and even support financially, activities for planning, training and evaluating the voluntary organizations together, and together with the public and professional resources. Relying on Sennett, this should be done by respecting the fundamental conditions for developing and maintaining craftsmanship. In this discussion, Sennett elaborates on expertise (Sennett 2009:247):

How can an expert act sociably if he or she lacks a strong professional community, a strong guild.

Gjerde and Winsvold (2016:35) present some questions related to possible decreasing interest in taking part in voluntary work. In trying to turn such a trend and gain renewed interest, especially among young people, in engaging as volunteers, it might be relevant to build future strategies on Sennett’s theories on craftsmanship. Ensuring that the participants are able to combine demanding tasks with pride in their work seems to be important (Sennett 2009:194):

Pride in one’s work lies at the heart of craftsmanship as the reward for skill and commitment.

Practical cooperation has been well founded and systematically approached in search and rescue services over five decades. But the transferral of the principle during the last few years to also encompass emergency preparedness systems other than search and rescue may obscure the core principles traditionally laid down. (Aasland and Braut 2018).

The main voluntary resources in search and rescue missions in Norway (e.g. the Red Cross Society and the Norwegian Society for Sea Rescue) represent long-lasting and fairly stable organizations and ways of working over the years, including the way of interacting with each other and with public organizations and resources.

This stability is in contrast to continuous changes in the organization of the state authorities and other public institutions. Despite their formal responsibility for rescue and

safety services, they have made countless attempts to reorganize at central and regional levels, partly due to criticism in the aftermath of serious incidents. This may be seen in the processes related to the revision of systems for emergency preparedness in Norway following the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004 and the terror attacks in Norway in 2011.

CONCLUSIONS

Cooperation in search and rescue is characterized by joint working efforts across organizational boundaries at a local level when acute and unpredicted incidents occur. It is more than just cross-institutional cooperation in crises. It also cannot be regarded solely as a principle of governance or coordination of subordinate organizations.

In the findings in this study, we have explained the important elements of the concept of cooperation using Sennett's social triangle and the fundamental Rochdale principles, combined with confidence and trust in each other and the overarching structure. These elements seem to be long lasting and robust as well as flexible and adjustable to quite different situations.

Returning to Sennett (2012:ix), the discussion and historical references are about people living together, how they use their skills in everyday life, and how they cooperate doing practical work. He discusses responsiveness to others, such as listening skills in conversation, and the practical application of responsiveness at work or in communities.

As pointed out by Aubert (1964), the need for each other's inequality and trust based on common values links together the professional resources of the team with the societal experience from the volunteers.

Sennett's approach, as well as the claims of Aubert, fit well into the intentions of the cooperation model as discussed by Norwegian administrative and political authorities in the early 1960s. Still, they are not really recognized in a system acknowledging effectivity, formal structure and professionalism as important organizational values. It seems to be too difficult to combine local thinking about civility and skills with the formal structures imposed from above.

In addition to being acknowledged as participants on an equal level with the public resources in search and rescue operations, the voluntary organizations also expect to be regarded as competent providers of relevant craftsmanship.

Practical cooperation is not a principle that can be chosen by decision. It has to be established through processes in real life. Cooperation in search and rescue services is organization, work and ideology, all in one – not merely cooperation enforced from above.

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There is obviously a growing interest in studying public participation and engagement of the civil society in dealing with population-wide challenges (Lakoff 2017; Jones 2018; Quick 2018). The content of the Norwegian concept of cooperation may turn out to be valid in an international context. But one has to keep in mind that organization of search and rescue services, just like any other public policy instrument, is closely connected with general political and social values of the society concerned (Peters 2015:116).

NOTES

- 1 The following organizations kindly agreed to take part and share their experiences in this study: Local Red Cross Society, (LRCS), Odda Røde Kors Hjelpekorps, Sverre Molven. Norwegian People's Aid, (NPA), Norsk Folkehjelp Strand og Forsand, Arne Alsvik. Scouts' Emergency Preparedness Group, (SEPG), Speidernes Beredskapsgruppe Sør-Vest, Ivar Anton Nøttestad. Voluntary Alpine Rescue Group, (VARG), Rogaland Alpine Redningsgruppe, Ture Bjørgen. Norwegian Society for Sea Rescue, (NSSR), Redningselskapet, Ronny Pedersen.

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