

Introduction

The Gezamenlijke Brandweer Amsterdam (GBA, loosely translated *Unified industrial fire services Amsterdam*) is a Mutual Aid organization that provides both regular and industrial emergency response in the industrial port complex of Amsterdam (Westelijk Havengebied). The industrial port complex of Amsterdam is located close to the densely populated capital of the Netherlands and has a specific risk profile with activities such as tank storage, recycling, bio based and commodities. In the current situation there is no emergency response available trained and equipped for the specific risk profile of the area, like for example: industrial firefighting and maritime firefighting.

The GBA is established in September 2019 and the organization will start to provide emergency response services focused on the specific risk profile of the area in April 2020. The initiative is a collaboration of three different (groups) of, both public and private, stakeholders. The Port of Rotterdam, The Amsterdam-Amstelland Fire Brigade. The GBA is an independent legal entity governed by a board of representatives from all three stakeholder groups.

GBA: the aims

- 24/7 availability of an operational team, dedicated to firefighting and emergency response in the industrial port complex of Amsterdam, consisting of a minimum of six positions (one team leader, one pumper/truckdriver and four firefighters/hazmat members);
- max. six minutes response time;
- the team is trained and equipped for industrial and maritime firefighting, hazmat-team and emergency response matching with the scenarios of the member companies.

GBA: extra annual service for member companies

- direct response after alarm without delay at the dispatch center;
- On site trainings (to be prepared for the local lay out, local conditions and circumstances) one or multiple times per year, depending on the number and complexity of a member's scenario's.
- On site orientations (to be prepared for the local lay out, local conditions and circumstances) one or multiple times per year, depending on the number and complexity of a member's scenario's.
- Support on pre-planning, policies and business continuity issues (for example annual testing of fire water systems on site of member companies and the practical implementation of emergency response policy);
- in due time, based on industry demand: maintenance services of firefighting equipment and PPE as well as providing local safety trainings (separated fee).

Mutual Aid

The GBA is a Mutual Aid organization. This means collective governance, collective decision making and collective funding. Each stakeholder (group) will deliver one third of the annual budget. This means that the cooperating industry will pay one third of the annual budget as well. Three membership tiers are designed:

Module 1: Member companies with one single type of scenarios with a limited complexity. €20.000 annually.

Services will include (non-exhaustive list):

- Direct connection to the dispatch center to optimize the alarming (process) in case of (the thread) of an incident.
- Annually two emergency response drills by the GBA on site
- Annually one emergency response site orientation.

This option makes it possible to train two GBA emergency response teams every year on a member company's site.

Module 2: Member companies with multiple scenario's with a higher level of complexity. €55.000 annually.

Services will include (non-exhaustive list):

- Direct connection to the dispatch center to optimize the alarming (process) in case of (the thread) of an incident.
- Annually four emergency response drills by the GBA on site
- Annually two emergency response site orientation.

This option makes it possible to train all emergency response employees on a member company's site. Multiple incident scenarios with a higher complexity are incidents that can occur on different places on site and ask for a different deployment strategy, deployment of equipment and additional knowledge.

Module 3: Member companies with multiple scenario's with a higher level of complexity plus the obligation by Dutch law (Wvr:31) to have a company owned fire brigade. €90.000 annually.

Services will include (non-exhaustive list):

- Direct connection to the dispatch center to optimize the alarming (process) in case of (the thread) of an incident.
- Annually six emergency response drills by the GBA on site
- Annually four emergency response site orientation.

This option makes it possible to train all emergency response employees on a member company's site and a part of the team twice a year. The orientations and drills in this option are focused on the incident scenarios that are prescribed in the industrial fire brigade appointment (Wvr:31, Dutch Safety legislation).

The GBA provides member companies with the opportunity to have 100% availability of dedicated and specialized firefighting and rescue capabilities for just a few percentages of the budget.

An organization that joins the GBA needs to maintain their own occupational health and safety department. However the following services can be shared with partners through the GBA and are no longer necessary on-site:

- Industrial fire services
- First response teams
- Fire truck and fire equipment
- Firefighting foam (mobile available amount)

A cooperation organization like the GBA will increase the quality of services and is financially effective. The Q&A on the following pages will provide more detail information about the GBA.

GBA Q&A

By way of this Q&A, information is provided with regarding to some important topics about the decision of your commitment to the initiative of the Unified Industrial Fire Services Amsterdam. If there are any questions that remain unanswered by this document, please contact the Gba manager:

Q1: What does the UIFS-initiative entail and what will the unit provide the companies?

A1: The initiative entails designing and building a multidisciplinary safety center aimed at heightening the safety in and around the industrial port complex in Amsterdam. In the first phase of this process, an emergency service unit will be realized, aimed at commanding and controlling industrial fires, spills, and calamities. This unit will consist of different industrial vehicles and will have a manpower of at least six persons who are available for turnout 24/7. Companies that are a member of this multidisciplinary center will receive (among other things) the following in return for their membership:

- a specialized industrial emergency services unit with a fast turnout time;
- yearly trainings of the unit on the company's site;
- yearly orientations of the unit on the company's site;
- feedback on the plans of the Corporate emergency services;
- support in testing safety installations, like fire water mains.

Q2: What tasks and responsibilities can individual companies transfer to the UIFS?

A2: Companies are responsible for keeping up occupational health and safety department conform the Labour Conditions Act. This will not change due to the newly instated safety center. With additions to the Emergency Service, the execution can be transferred to the multidisciplinary safety center. Commonly used terms for such additions to the Emergency Service are (not exhaustive): "Emergency Service +", "First Responder Teams", and "voluntary" or "non-appointed corporate fire brigade".

When a company is appointed to uphold a corporate fire brigade (conform Dutch article 31 of the Safety Authorities Act), the execution of the corporate fire care can be transferred to the UIFS. The company in question remains legally liable for the corporate fire brigade appointment. For companies that do not desire to keep up any additional Emergency Services, participation in the UIFS is a possibility to enhance their Emergency Response and continuity management to better protect their personnel, their environment and their personal assets.

Q3: Who will direct the UIFS and what are the costs for the corporate collective?

A3: UIFS will be a Mutual Aid organization, in which the Safety Authority/Amsterdam fire brigade, the Port of Amsterdam, and the collaborating industrial stakeholders in the area will work together. The organization will be governed by a board of six members: two representatives from the Amsterdam-Amstelland Safety Authority, two from the Port of Amsterdam and two from the collaborating industrial stakeholders.

Q4: How long will a company have to commit itself?

A4: The goal of the UIFS initiative is structural presence in the port area, without an end date. A company that signs up for the UIFS commits itself for a period of 2 to 5 years, dependent on the needs of the company to be secured of the service provision.

Q5: How do individual companies participate in the GBA and how will they be represented?

A5: A separate legal entity will be established of which individual companies will become a member. The legal background will be a cooperative communion in accordance with Dutch law. The legal entity will become a member of the UIFS and provide two representatives for the UIFS-board. Moreover, the entity will financially bind itself to 33% of the yearly exploitation-budget. The individual companies will provide their financial contribution to this joint entity.

Q6: How does the financial allocation for the unified companies work?

A6: Companies contribute a joint 33% to the yearly exploitation-budget of the UIFS. Assuming an indicative exploitation-budget of three million euros, this will result in a contribution of approximately €1.000.000.

Q7: How does the financial allocation for individual companies work?

A7: For the companies, a contribution model has been designed based on three levels:

- € 20.000 a year for companies with a basic-industrial preparatory effort (module 1)
- € 55.000 a year for companies with a regular-industrial preparatory effort (module 2)
- € 90.000 a year for companies with a regular-industrial preparatory effort and also a corporate fire brigade appointment (conform article 31) (module 3)

These contributions have been capped for the first five years. The here presented model is a proposal from the project team. The cooperating companies can choose to design a different contribution model, just as long as the total contribution remains at 33%.

Q8: How are entrants to the UIFS handled?

A8: The financial allocation of the unified companies assumes a maximum contribution to the yearly exploitation of $1/3 =$ around €1.000.000. This amount is divided into a number of units or shares. The number of units that a company contributes is dependent on the modules that are applicable to the company in question. Dividing the yearly exploitation contribution by the number of units results in a price per unit.

Q9: How are resignations from the UIFS handled?

A9: For the workings of the financial allocation model, we refer you to Q&A 7 and 8. Those who resign from the UIFS will drop the number of units, and thus will cause a rise in price. Resignation is limitedly possible, because members are asked to commit to the initiative for a period of 2 or 5 years. To protect those participating in the UIFS from the rise in cost that can come from resignations, each (combination) module has determined capped contribution amounts for the first five years, as shown in Q&A 7.

Q10: Will member companies be prioritized in the case of multiple simultaneous alarms?

A10: The UIFS will turn out to all requests for assistance based on the 'first call' principle. Statistics from the Amsterdam-Amstelland Safety Authority show that a so-called 'simultaneity' happens on average once every 1.5 years. Dependent on the need for assistance, the deployment is differentiated. This way, there is a choice to deploy fewer personnel for a smaller incident type in the public space. Moreover, by means of redistribution, long term deployment of the basic firefighting service can be handed over to a regular unit of the Amsterdam-Amstelland Safety Authority. UIFS will be deployed within the operational confines of the Amsterdam-Amstelland Safety Authority and the alarm and communication lines of the ARC of the Amsterdam-Amstelland Safety Authority. Thus, the employability and fire station order in case of alarm and redistribution is always guaranteed.

Q11: Is there a possibility of 'free-rider behavior' and how will this be handled?

A11: the term ‘free-rider behavior’ is used with regards to companies that receive more services than what they pay for. It is desirable that there is little to no ‘free-rider behavior’ within the UIFS-initiative. A port and industrial area, aside from companies with special risks that require special preparation, also has companies that have no need to arrange special operational fire safety. Additionally, it is possible that these companies don’t feel the need from a continuity standpoint to put in some extra effort. When a fire or a calamity happens, these companies have a right to governmentally organized fire care. To provide this service, the Amsterdam-Amstelland Safety Authority takes part in this initiative and contributes its 1/3 share to the yearly exploitation. The group of companies that do not participate, but do receive assistance from the UIFS during calamities is then not a free riding group; there is explicitly a different way of financing, through the contribution of the Amsterdam-Amstelland Safety Authority. The paying participants will receive extra services for their contribution. See Q&A 1.

Q12: Can the (so-called) “AMAS-materials” be made available for all companies that join UIFS?

A12: The AMAS-materials is aimed at combatting and controlling large liquid surface fires like tank fire scenarios. This requires large amounts of water and foaming agents deployed with heavy-duty pumps and monitors. This has some pros and some cons. A pro: a lot of water brings a lot of extinguishing capacity. A con: a lot of extinguishing water requires proper storage capacities on a site and comes with some logistical challenges. For now, the AMAS-materials will remain exclusively available to the current AMAS-companies, and will be paid for by this group. Should it become evident that these materials can be beneficial for other participants, we can find a way to have them financially contribute to the acquisition, storage and maintenance of the materials.

Q13: What is the intended location of the UIFS?

A13: The UIFS will be located at the ‘Galwin’ in Amsterdam. Construction works are currently in progress.