Coping with evolving risks and crises:

Producing a REX framework for crisis management in Belgium

Colin Glesner, Université de Liège, SCK-CEN

Our *technological cultures* are increasingly confronted with natural catastrophes, industrial disasters, intentional unlawful acts, or a combination of these elements. As such risks, potentially disrupt societies, methods analyzing previous events and producing useful lessons and recommendations are developed to improve the capacity to cope with new crises and the risks that accompany them. Such methods are comprised within the concept of *Retour d’experience* (REX), which is now an indispensable component of safety and security management. For many years, various industries (e.g. aviation industry, hospitals, nuclear research…) have formalized systematic REX practices aiming at analyzing accidents and incidents. Furthermore, standardized and centralized REX methodologies have been institutionalized in countries such as France. In contrast, Belgium does not have a single REX system, even though many Belgian actors involved in crisis management explicitly call for one. Through an examination of REX approaches in France and in industries and through post-crisis Belgian practices analysis (emergency exercises observations and crises protagonists interviews), this paper seeks to produce a REX framework enabling efficient individual and collective learning from crises and the implementation of preventive measures to better manage evolving sociotechnical risks in the face of a crisis. It argues that in order to be appropriated by the field actors and tailored to the Belgian context, the framework has to be developed and rehearsed with them.

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