

## **Finland - Airplane accident in Jämijärvi on Eastern day 20.4.2014**

Salli Saari

During Eastern 2014 there was a skydiving festival in Jämijärvi. More than 200 skydivers and their family members and friends had a yearly gathering during the Eastern in Jämijärvi. On Sunday already eight groups of skydivers had jumped successfully and the ninth group with the pilot and 11 skydivers were on their way till 4000 km up in air. When they were almost ready to jump the airplane suddenly lost its manoeuvrability and ran straight towards the earth and when it hit the ground caught fire. The pilot and two skydivers could jump off the airplane, eight died. Those who were looking at the skydiving started to search the airplane and the survivors. It took its time to find the burning plane in the forest and it took also long time to get help to the accident place.

During the evening psychological first aid was organised to those who saw the accident and took part in the searching by the personnel of Satakunta District Hospital (80 km from the accident place) and Red Cross volunteers. Almost all the victims (all survivors and 4 deceased) were from Tampere, from another district hospital. Those who took the responsibility of the psychological first aid tried to find somebody to take the responsibility of organising in Tampere, but because of Eastern they did not get in contact with anyone.

The Ministry of Social and Health Affairs has made a contract with Vantaa Crisis Centre that in case of major accidents will coordinate the psychosocial support. In this case Vantaa Crisis Centre was contacted from the accident place and it started to coordinate the crisis work on Monday in Tampere. In Monday there were a meeting for the family members of the deceased and also a meeting for those who were in the accident place and saw the accident.

On Tuesday there was a meeting with the Acute Psychiatric Department of Tampere city, who took responsibility of this kind of crisis work at the first of April, two Chief Medical Officers of the district hospital in Pirkanmaa (Tampere), two crisis workers from Vantaa Crisis Centre and the leader of Finnish Red Cross preparedness team for major disasters. Now the Tampere city took the responsibility of the crisis work of both survivors and those 5 deceased and the local crisis teams took the responsibility of those three others and their family members.

All family members of the deceased are invited to a peer support gathering in 13. - 14.12.2014 organised by the Finnish Red Cross group of psychologist for major disasters. We wait for 50-60 participants and we have 16 psychologists taken responsibility of leading the peer groups. The District Hospital in Tampere takes care of all economic costs of the gathering. The gathering will start by the report of the Accident Investigation Board of the reasons leading to the accident.

This case shows how vulnerable the crisis organisation can be even in a country with good preparedness for crisis work, when the accident does not happen in the area where the help should come from and when it is happening during a special holiday time. In Finland that

municipality where the accident happens has the responsibility to organise psychological and medical first aid. In this case the most of victims of the accident came from Tampere city and from another Hospital District and they should continue with the crisis help for the family members of the deceased and for the survivors of the accident. Because of Eastern the crisis workers of Tampere could not be reached and because there was no physically injured in this accident the Pirkanmaa District Hospitals accident plan in Tampere was not activated. This accident and the experiences organising the crisis help for the victims has leaned a lot for all organisations responsible for the psychosocial support and services in Finland.