

THE MANAGEMENT OF THE CIVIL DEFENCE SYSTEM OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA – SITUATION AND PROBLEMS*

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The role of the civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia comes to full expression in the modern world full of various sources, forms and holders of threats. Endangerment is manifested through increasing challenges, risks and threats to security, which, without any doubt, cannot be countered only by the human and material resources of the Serbian Armed Forces. The Republic of Serbia has to develop its civil defence in accordance with the characteristics of the global, regional and local environment and its internal circumstances, opportunities and needs. The civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia is a strategic component of the national security system and is intended to protect the civilian population and material resources in peace, war and state of emergency. In recent years, the need for its comprehensive reform within the unified national security system has been recognized in order to ensure the efficient implementation of the function of meeting the needs of the military, state authorities and citizens and the function of protecting and rescuing the civilian population and material resources. The civil defence of the Republic of Serbia, in addition to the Serbian Armed Forces, represents one of the foundations of the defence system and should be the most organized social force that

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provides all the necessary assistance to the endangered population and protects material and cultural goods. Since the civil defence of the Republic of Serbia faces many difficulties in its functioning in practice, there is a need to bring it to a level where it can effectively fulfill all its goals and tasks and provide the necessary protection. In order to achieve this, first of all, the problem of managing the civil defence system has to be solved in a clear and unambiguous way in relation to the current normative solutions.

Key words: management, civil defence, defence system

Introduction

A modern civil defence system has to guarantee resilience and efficiency in the defence, protection and rescue of the civilian population and material resources. It has to be implemented at all levels of society, respecting all the principles that ensure its functioning and development in all conditions. In order to fulfill the functions of this system in accordance with the adopted principles, legislative conditions have to be primarily provided at the highest social levels, which define the responsibilities over the management of the system.

The system of the (civil) defence of the Republic of Serbia is characterized by two interconnected activities from the domain of management – management and command. The expression “management” would best suit the comprehensiveness of the term “management”, because it means the outcome for decisions made in the processes of management and command.¹ Management includes the overall activities that are undertaken in order to perform certain functions necessary for the accomplishment of organizational goals. Command is an activity that directs the subjects of the defence system as a whole in the performance of tasks to achieve goals set by the management.² The management of the civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia should be based on the principles of strategic and crisis management, because the functions of planning, organizing, command and control have to be achievable in all crisis situations in order to manage the system in an efficient manner and thereby enable its continuous and unhindered functioning in all conditions.

Taking into account the generally accepted principles of management and the specifics of the defence system, this paper deals with the issue of managing the civil defence system as an unavoidable part of the defence system and the national security system of the Republic of Serbia, which are accompanied by many doubts and uncertainties.

¹ Nenad Kovačević, Stjepan Domjančić, Mitar Kovač, “Strategijski menadžment u vojnoorganizacionim sistemima”, *Vojno delo* 3/2018, p. 274.

² “*Doctrine of command – temporary*”, General Staff of the Serbian Armed Forces, Joint Operational Command, Belgrade, 2016, p. 7.

The civil defence in the national security system of the Republic of Serbia

The place and role of the civil defence system in the national security system are most often defined in the national security strategy. The national security system is one of the most important systems that determines and preserves the state integrity, which is defined as “a set of activities in five fields of state action: military, political, economic, social and environmental”.³ It is “the form of the social organization and functioning in the implementation of measures and activities on a preventive and repressive plan in order to preserve the sovereignty and integrity of state, its order established by the Constitution, the rights and freedoms of citizens, as well as all other social and international values from all forms of endangerment”.⁴ According to the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Serbia, “The national security system represents a normatively, structurally and functionally regulated entity, whose activities ensure the protection and accomplishment of the national interests of the Republic of Serbia.”⁵ Within this system, the comprehensive and coordinated management and actions in the performance of jobs and tasks is provided in order to prevent, mitigate and neutralize challenges, risks and threats to security and eliminate the consequences of their manifestation.

The national security system of the Republic of Serbia consists of a management and an executive part, and it is managed by the highest legislative and executive authorities. The management part of the national security system creates strategic, doctrinal, normative, legal, organizational, material and other conditions for its functioning. It also directs its actions in protecting and accomplishing national interests and countering challenges, risks and threats to security. The management part of the national security system consists of the National Assembly, the President of the Republic, the Government and the National Security Council.⁶ The executive part of the national security system provides the preservation of national values and the protection and accomplishment of national interests by its preventive action, effective response and elimination of the consequences of threats to security. The executive part of the national security system performs tasks depending on the type and manner of the manifestation of challenges, risks and threats to security, and it consists of the defence system, the internal security system, the security and intelligence system and other subjects of importance for national security (Figure 1). The executive structure adapts to the character of challenges, risks and threats.⁷

³ Barry Buzan, *People, states and fear*, Harvester Press, New York, 1991, p. 37.

⁴ Ljubomir Stajić, *Osnovi sistema bezbednosti*, FCO, Beograd, 2005, p. 43.

⁵ “National Security Strategy of the Republic of Serbia”, Official Gazette No. 94/2019-13.

⁶ “National Security Strategy of the Republic of Serbia”, Official Gazette No. 94/2019-13.

⁷ *Ibid.*

The defence system is a part of the national security system, which represents a unique system, normatively, structurally and functionally organized, whose goal is to achieve the defence interests of the Republic of Serbia, within which, in addition to the military defence system, there is also the civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia, which is indirectly recognized as an integral part of the defence system of the Republic of Serbia.⁸ According to the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Serbia, the managing bodies of the defence system are the National Assembly, the President of the Republic, the Government and the National Security Council, thus it can be concluded that they also represent the managing bodies of the civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia.



Figure 1 – *The place of the civil defence within the national security system*⁹

The civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia is in the phase of formation; it contains many shortcomings and weaknesses, whose elimination has been tried, primarily by redefining the strategic and normative documents in this field. In this regard, it is extremely important to recognize the place of the civil defence system within the national security system and the defence system of the Republic of Serbia¹⁰, and then define the responsibility over the management of this system, whose importance society is becoming increasingly aware of in the increasingly insecure world in which it exists. The current National Security Strategy of the Republic of Serbia does not explicitly recognize the civil defence subsystem as a part of the national security system and the defence system of the Republic of Serbia, but calls it

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Milica Mladenović, "Planiranje civilne odbrane u Republici Srbiji na strategijskom nivou", *Zbornik radova, Bezbednost i krizni menadžment – teorija i praksa*, Obrenovac, 2018, p. 144.

“other subjects important for national security” and does not create a basis for precise normative and legal regulation of the complete defence system of the Republic of Serbia, which unequivocally consists of the military and civil defence.

The civil defence within the defence system of the Republic of Serbia and the concept of total defence

In most countries of the world, the defence of the civilian population and material resources is provided by two systems: “the military defence system, which prepares for waging a defensive war in the event of aggression against the state territory and its integrity by an external aggressor or internal separatist forces and the civil defence system, which organizes, prepares and acts in war and all crisis situations in peace for the protection, safety and defence of the civilian population, economy, material and cultural goods and the protection of the environment”.¹¹ This is usually defined in the highest strategic document in the field of defence - the defence strategy.

The Defence Strategy of the Republic of Serbia expresses the commitment of the Republic of Serbia to the concept of total defence, which provides a comprehensive response of the defence system to challenges, risks and threats to security significant for the defence of the Republic of Serbia, relying on its forces and potential. Total defence includes the military and civil defence, and is planned, organized and implemented in peace, state of emergency and war.¹² Within the defence system of the Republic of Serbia, the civil defence is focused on preparations for the defence of the Republic of Serbia by non-military means and is implemented in peace, state of emergency and war as “a set of measures and activities aimed at ensuring the successful functioning of state bodies, bodies of autonomous provinces and units of local governments, companies and other legal entities, creating conditions for the life of citizens, meeting the needs of the defence forces, planning and implementing citizen training plans for the defence of the country, coordinating protection and rescue affairs, fulfilling military, labour and material obligation, as well as mobilization.”¹³ The strategic views expressed in this way represent the starting point for the development of the defence system of the Republic of Serbia.

According to the Defence Strategy of the Republic of Serbia, the defence system of the Republic of Serbia is a part of the national security system and represents an organized and functional unit of the defence forces and subjects, whose goal is to protect defence interests through the implementation of the military and civil defence.¹⁴ The civil defence system is a subsystem of the defence system and is inseparable from the military defence. The holder of the military defence is the Serbian Armed Forces, and the civil defence is carried out by state bodies, state administration bodies, bodies of autonomous provinces,

¹¹ Radovan Jović, *Zbornik Fakulteta civilne odbrane*, Beograd, 2000, pp. 49-50.

¹² “*Defence Strategy of the Republic of Serbia*”, Official Gazette No. 94/2019.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

bodies of local government units, companies, public services and other subjects and forces of the defence system.¹⁵ According to the Defence Strategy, the defence system of the Republic of Serbia consists of a management and executive part. It is managed by the highest holders of legislative and executive power, in accordance with the Constitution, generally accepted rules of international law and confirmed international treaties, laws and other regulations. The management part of the defence system consists of the National Assembly, the President of the Republic, the Government, the Ministry of Defence, the General Staff of the Serbian Armed Forces and the National Security Council. The Defence Strategy also states: “the civil defence management is carried out within state bodies, state administration bodies, bodies of autonomous provinces, bodies of local government units, companies and other legal entities, in accordance with the law”.¹⁶

The executive part of the defence system, through preventive action, efficient use of forces and elimination of the consequences of threats to security, provides the protection and accomplishment of the defence interests. The structure of the executive part of the defence system adapts to the character of challenges, risks and threats.¹⁷ The executive part of the defence system consists of the Serbian Armed Forces and other defence forces. Other defence forces include state bodies, state administration bodies, bodies of autonomous provinces, bodies of local government units, companies, other legal entities, entrepreneurs and citizens who, in accordance with the law, carry out the defence preparation and the defence tasks (Figure 2). From the aforementioned provisions, it can be seen that other defence forces, in fact, constitute the civil defence of the Republic of Serbia, thus it is unnecessary to call them by a new name in the same document.



Figure 2 - The place of the civil defence within the defence system

¹⁵ Branko Babić, “Civilna odbrana Republike Srbije”, *Vojno delo* 3/2012, p. 200.

¹⁶ “Defence Strategy of the Republic of Serbia”, Official Gazette No. 94/2019.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Analysing the provisions of the Defence Strategy of the Republic of Serbia, it can be concluded that the military and civil defence systems are closely related and cannot function without each other. The civil defence system is focused on preparations for the defence of the Republic of Serbia by non-military means, which shows that the civil defence cannot function without the military defence and vice versa, because they represent subsystems of the same system, whose functioning is conditioned by the existence of all its elements. In accordance with the occurrence of new sources of threats and the overall characteristics of modern warfare, contemporary society has to develop a system of the civil defence that achieves the organizational and functional connection of the total potential of society and their direction towards the effective defence of a country, because “the process of globalization contains many unknown facts that can take on an apocalyptic character at any moment”.¹⁸

The Defence Strategy of the Republic of Serbia defines the improvement of preparations for the civil defence and the development of organizational capacities for the unified management of the civil defence, organizational and human resources capacities for the training of all subjects of the defence system.¹⁹ However, it does not define the civil defence on the same basis as the military defence, it does not define the authority over the system and, therefore, it does not define the management authorities either, but by interpreting and relating the provisions, it can be concluded that the management authorities of the defence system are also responsible for the management of the civil defence system as its integral part. The Strategy defines that the civil defence is also managed at other levels of the state organization, but without defining the manner of management, as well as the mutual relations of management bodies. Shortcomings in the definition of management have not been eliminated in other normative documents either, and there is no precisely defined, unified and comprehensive management of the civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia.

The unified management of the civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia

On the basis of the analysis of the highest strategic documents of the Republic of Serbia, it can be concluded that the civil defence system is within the national security system and the defence system and is within the responsibility of the Republic of Serbia. The defence system management is an organized activity of directing the subjects of the defence system of the Republic of Serbia in the performance of their missions and tasks, which provides the operation and effective response of the defence system to military and non-military challenges, risks and threats (Figure 3).²⁰ This also refers to the civil defence

¹⁸ Stanislav Stojanović, “Bezbednost i izazovi procesa globalizacije”, *Vojno delo* 1/2005, Beograd, p. 41.

¹⁹ “Defence Strategy of the Republic of Serbia”, Official Gazette No. 94/2019.

²⁰ “The Doctrine of Command in the Serbian Armed Forces”, General Staff of the Serbian Armed Forces, Ministry of Defence of the RS, 2016, p. 7.

system. Since the management of the civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia is one of the components of the defence management, this field should inevitably be specified by normative and legal regulations.

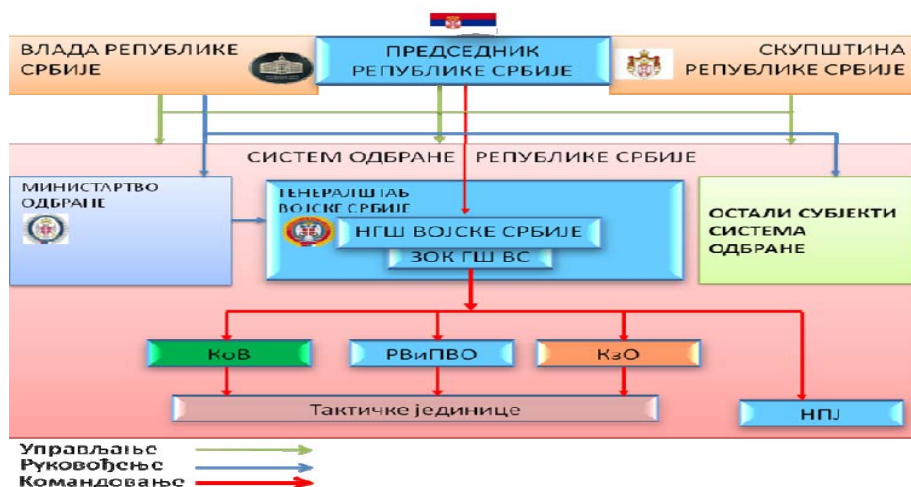


Figure 3 – Management and command in the defence system of the Republic of Serbia²¹

According to the existing legislation, the management of the civil defence system is the responsibility of the management part of the defence system, and it is carried out within state bodies, bodies of autonomous provinces, bodies of local government units, companies and other legal entities.²² The management of the civil defence system is within the responsibility of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, that is, the Ministry of Defence.²³ The National Assembly is in charge of developing adequate normative and legal regulation in the field of the civil defence, while the implementation of the defence policy and the civil defence policy, the adoption of by-laws and other general acts is within the responsibility of the Government of Serbia. The Ministry of Defence, through the Minister of Defence, the General Staff of the Serbian Armed Forces and the Serbian Armed Forces, coordinates and implements the developed defence policy. The General Staff of the Serbian Armed Forces is a part of the Ministry of Defence and performs tasks within its responsibility, in accordance with the law and the authorities of the President of the Republic and the Minister of Defence.²⁴ The management bodies of the civil defence system are responsible for all activities of planning, organizing, managing and controlling all

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² "Defence Strategy of the Republic of Serbia", Official Gazette of the RS, no. 97/2019.

²³ Luka Kastratović, *Razvoj sistema civilne odbrane u Republici Srbiji – Novi model*, Inovacioni centar Fakulteta bezbednosti, Beograd, 2015, p. 187.

²⁴ "The Doctrine of Command in the Serbian Armed Forces", General Staff of the Serbian Armed Forces, Ministry of Defence of the RS, 2016.

activities of the system that contribute to the development and maintenance of the defence and protection capability of society and the achievement and maintenance of the highest degree of efficiency of the civil defence system.

In the existing normative and legal regulation, there are no provisions that precisely define the management of the civil defence system, which means that there is no appropriate basis for the development of this system. In addition, the absence of precisely defined managing bodies increases the level of endangerment of the civilian population and material resources, because there is no legislative responsibility for their protection. The management of the civil defence system is directly related to the assessed challenges, risks and threats and the authorities, because it implies the implementation of all necessary activities in the system in order to reach and maintain the lowest possible level of endangerment of the civilian population and material resources, while the authority holders have a direct responsibility for the establishment, functioning and development of the system.

As a part of the process of the establishment and implementation of the civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia, a special authority for managing the civil defence within the Ministry of Defence has to primarily be defined.²⁵ That body existed as the Sector for Civil Defence and Defence Preparations, which placed special emphasis on training the population for the needs of the country's defence. The management bodies of the civil defence system need to be established at all other levels of the state organization, which most experts in the field agree with (Figure 4).

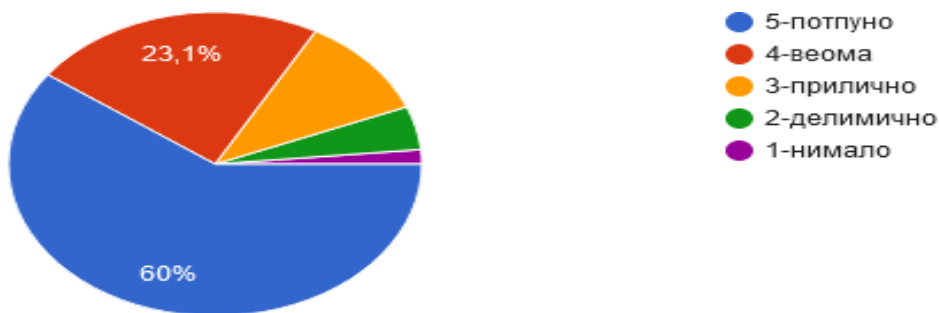


Figure 4 – Respondents' opinion on the need to establish a body for managing the civil defence system at all levels of the state organization

In addition to the performance of the training of the personnel in the reserve forces, who have not completed their military service, the attention of the Sector (Figure 5) would also be focused on providing assistance to the subjects of the defence system in the training of other categories of the population. The Sector for the Civil Defence

²⁵ Milica Mladenović, The research carried out within the preparation of the doctoral dissertation "The development of the civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia in the function of reducing a threat to the civilian population and material resources". The research was conducted with a survey questionnaire on a sample of 67 respondents, and their results served as the basis for the validation of the research results.

and Defence Preparations should also be responsible for coordinating protection and rescue affairs with competent state authorities. The fields of the activities of the Sector for the Civil Defence, in which citizens who are familiar with them are actively involved, would refer to the implementation of the military, labour and material obligation, as well as mobilization tasks. The re-establishment of this Sector is extremely important for the defence of the country. Its main tasks would be:

- the development of state policy proposals in the field of the civil defence and the protection of population and territory in crisis situations and the organization of its implementation and execution in practice;
- the management of the civil defence system. The Sector would have the function of coordinating the activities of state administration bodies and local government bodies in the field of the civil defence;
- the implementation of the control function. Control in the civil defence system should be carried out by the Sector with the aim of ensuring that executive authorities, local government bodies and other organizations strictly adhere to legislative, normative and legal acts, norms, standards and rules in the field of the civil defence;
- the implementation of preventive measures aimed at countering challenges, risks and threats, reducing their scale and consequences, as well as performing actions in the process of eliminating the consequences of crisis situations;
- the organization of an adequate system of training professional personnel for the needs of the civil defence and training of population for the civil defence activities.



Figure 5 – The proposal of the organizational chart of the Civil Defence Sector²⁶

²⁶ The author's view - research within the preparation of the doctoral dissertation.

The civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia fulfills its place and role in complex political, economic, social, security, technical, technological and other circumstances, which means that its management primarily depends on compliance with the state of the key factors of the external and internal environment and the needs and capabilities of state.²⁷ The management of the civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia should be a part of the unified management of the defence system and should be implemented at all levels of the state organization.

Conclusion

In the existing normative and legal regulation, there are no provisions that precisely define the management of the civil defence system, which means that there is no appropriate basis for the development of this system. In addition, the absence of precisely defined management bodies increases the level of the endangerment of the civilian population and material resources, because there is no normatively and legally defined responsibility for their protection. Within the process of the establishment and implementation of the civil defence system, a special authority for managing the civil defence within the Ministry of Defence has to be defined. Furthermore, the management of the civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia should be a part of the unified management of the defence system and should be carried out within state bodies, bodies of autonomous provinces, bodies of local government units, companies and other legal entities.

The civil defence system, as a system that the effectiveness of the defence of the Republic of Serbia depends on, has to be given much greater attention in the future, especially at the highest levels of the state organization. Solving the issue of managing the civil defence system is a necessary and urgent step, whose undertaking provides the functioning and development of the system and ensures the achievement of the set goals of the system, which, in this particular case, the entire national security depends on.

The management of the defence system, according to strategic provisions, belongs to the highest holders of legislative and executive power. However, the Defence Strategy does not regulate the civil defence on the same basis as the military defence, it does not define a responsibility over the system or the management authorities, either, but by interpreting and relating the provisions it can be concluded that the management authorities of the defence system are also responsible for the management of the civil defence system as its integral part. On the basis of the analysis of the highest strategic documents, it can be concluded that the civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia is a part of the national security system and is an indispensable part of the defence system and is under the jurisdiction of the state and institutions of the state of Serbia. Therefore, it can be said that the management part of the defence system is simultaneously the management part of the civil defence system. In strategic documents, the civil defence system is recognized as one of the pillars of the defence of the Republic of

²⁷ Nenad Kovačević, Stjepan Domjančić, Mitar Kovač, "Strategijski menadžment u vojnoorganizacionim sistemima", *Vojno delo* 3/2018, p. 271.

Serbia, so the question arises as to how one has come to a situation where this system does not exist in practice, if it is clear that it represents a part of the defence system, whose managing bodies are precisely defined.

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S u m m a r y

The civil defence system is, by its structure and organisation, an extremely complex system that requires the creation of specific conditions for its establishment and development. An appropriate strategic, normative, planning and organizational basis is primarily necessary for its establishment. The entire civil defence system with all its elements has to rest on prescribed, clearly defined, planned and organised activities. The civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia confronts the entire range of potential dangers that, under the given conditions, require an energetic, planned and directed action. The scope and consequences of the phenomena and events that have led to the development of this system show its strategic dimension, and its role comes to full

expression in the modern world full of various sources, forms and holders of threats. Threats are manifested through numerous challenges, risks and threats to security, which, without any doubt, cannot be countered only by the human and material resources of the Serbian Armed Forces. The Republic of Serbia has to develop its civil defence by the characteristics of the global, regional and local environment and its internal circumstances, opportunities and needs. The civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia is a strategic component of the national security system. It is intended to protect the civilian population and material resources in the world, war and state of emergency. In recent years, the need for comprehensive reform within the unified national security system has been recognised in order to ensure the effective implementation of the function of meeting the needs of the army's resources, saving the civilian resources and the civilian roles of the population and construction. The Civil Defence of the Republic of Serbia, in addition to the Serbian Armed Forces, represents one of the foundations of the defence system and should be the most organised force of society that provides all the necessary help to the vulnerable population and material aid. Having in mind that the civil defence of the Republic of Serbia is conducted with numerous difficulties in practice, there is a need to bring it to the level that it can effectively fulfil all its obligations and requirements for the elections. To achieve this, the problem of managing the civil defence system has to be solved clearly and unambiguously about the current solution. The management of the civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia should be a part of the unified management of the defence system and be carried out within state bodies, bodies of autonomous provinces, bodies of local government units, businesses and other legal entities. Within the process of the formation and implementation of the civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia, a unique body for managing the civil defence within the Ministry of Defence has to also be defined. The precise definition of the subjects and methods of management ensures that the civil defence of the Republic of Serbia is constituted as a homogeneous, complete and unique system that successfully protects the civilian population and material resources. The civil defence system of the Republic of Serbia has to be included in the most significant aspects of the defence and protection of the civilian population and material resources in peace and all crises. In addition, it has to ensure the engagement of the country's comprehensive human resources and all other potentials of the defence forces and simultaneously fulfil all the tasks of the code of international humanitarian law. The complexity of the functions of the civil defence system and the need for its functioning in peace, state of emergency and war require efficiency and effective organisation and precisely defined management subjects.

Key words: *management, civil defence, Republic of Serbia, defence system*

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