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Emergence and institutionalisation of inter-organisational coordination structures in extreme events

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Abstract

Extreme events often reveal a mismatch between organisational and problem structures, demanding inter-organisational coordination or new organisational solutions to meet the prevailing needs. Much is known about the functions and roles of new organisational solutions in extreme events, but less about the *processes* underlying them, such as how they are shaped by past events and inform future coordination. Therefore, this study aims to develop knowledge about the processes behind the emergence and institutionalisation of organisational solutions to meet new coordination needs in extreme events, using the Swedish County Administrative Boards' coordination offices for covid19 and the invasion of Ukraine as a case. Based on 94 interviews across different political-administrative levels and organisations, this study reveals that the coordination office emerged as an inter-organisational coordination structure to meet unprecedented needs in covid19 but is now institutionalised to the extent that it constitutes a central aspect of the Swedish crisis management system. It also reveals that a basic level of institutionalisation had already begun in the wildfires of 2018, demonstrating the importance of a decisive event in initiating and shaping organisational adaptation to extreme events, with substantial carry-over effects of practices to future events. From there, the practices in and around the coordination office were institutionalised through increasing returns in relation to incentives, increasing commitments to norms and identities, and increasing objectification of shared ideas and routines. The findings motivate careful consideration of evaluation criteria for new coordination structures that may become permanent. Practices that evolve rather contingently are often taken for granted and embedded in professional norms and identities, calling for explicit considerations of alternative practices during their lifespan. Last, this study would provide a lens to appreciate the importance of the past when understanding present and future coordination structures.

Introduction

Organising the response to extreme events is by no means an easy task. These events, by their nature, typically do not fit with existing organisational structures. Especially not in so-called transboundary crises, where consequences of an adverse event spread across geographical, administrative or sectorial boundaries (Ansell et al., 2010) and often reveal a mismatch between the organisational structure and the problem structure (Christensen et al., 2016). This problem of fit demands to be solved as the needs deriving from the crisis cannot simply be taken care of by existing organisational structures. In other words, it demands inter-organisational coordination and network solutions (Bodin & Nohrstedt, 2016; Bynander & Nohrstedt, 2020; Christensen et al., 2016; Kapucu & Garayev, 2016) or new organisational structures established to meet the new needs (e.g. Dynes, 1970; Kreps & Lovegren Bosworth, 2007).

Research is rich in identifying cases of new organisational solutions for coordination in extreme events (e.g. Bergström et al., 2017; Scanlon, 1999; Quarantelli, 1997). Covid19 is no exception to the problem of fit between organisational and problem structures. Clearly an extreme event to many (Rouleau et al., 2021), the pandemic posed unprecedented challenges to society, resulting in many new coordination needs. Not surprisingly, it displayed several new structures dealing with horizontal and vertical coordination within and between the many involved actors (e.g. Antonsen et al., 2022; Blomstrand et al., 2020).

While existing research shows that much is known about the functions and roles of various organisational solutions for coordination, less is known about how they emerge and are institutionalised over time. How past events shape them, and how they inform future events. In short, little is known about the *processes* underlying them. Such knowledge is essential for understanding how organisational capacity can be fostered and maintained in extreme events. Studying such processes has the potential to develop new insight on how to best prepare for the next event through an increased understanding of the organisational structures that form when extreme events occur, the way these structures are adapted during extreme events, and the way such structures may be translated into regular operation or new policies of crisis management.

Despite often being pointed out as different in its response to covid19 (e.g. Nesse & Frykmer, 2021; Sparf et al., 2022), Sweden, like many other countries, experienced new coordination needs in this event. In Sweden, the county administrative boards (CABs) play a central role in crisis management by coordinating county actors and information between administrative levels. During the pandemic, the CABs rapidly established a County Administrative Boards' Coordination Office (CBCO) to meet both their own internal coordination needs and other actors' needs to coordinate information and activities (Frykmer et al., 2021). Immediately after this CBCO was closed in February 2022, the CABs initiated a CBCO for the new security situation due to the invasion of Ukraine. It means that the CABs continued with now established horizontal and vertical coordination activities in the crisis management system, but for another event. Thus, the CBCO provides an example of where establishing an organisational structure for coordination in one event can contribute to more permanent changes in the crisis management system. Taken together, the CBCO provides an interesting case to study new organisational structures for coordination in extreme events.

In light of this context, this paper aims to develop knowledge about the processes generating organisational solutions to meet new coordination needs in extreme events. More specifically, the paper sets out to answer the following research question: How did the Swedish County Administrative Boards' coordination office emerge and become institutionalised during covid19 and beyond?

Theory

New institutionalism has proven a valuable theoretical perspective to explain how and why organisations and their practices emerge and persist (Powell & DiMaggio, 1991; Scott, 2014). Organisations are not simply materialising and operating to achieve rational, goal-oriented efficiency. They are governed by institutional rules, which can be regulative (e.g., legislation, policy), normative (e.g., norms, expectations), or cultural-cognitive (e.g., schema, frames) (Scott, 2014). Here, institutionalisation refers to the process through which a practice becomes a convention, expectation or even taken for granted among particular actors in specific situations (Meyer et al., 1987, p. 13). It is best understood as a dynamic, ongoing process (Barley & Tolbert, 1997) in which actors' agency plays a seminal role (e.g. Johnson, 2007; Meyer, 2010; Migdal-Picker & Zilber, 2019).

Many scholars have helped us grasp institutionalisation and its consequences (Scott, 2014). Stinchcombe (2000) was among the first to emphasise the significance of initial conditions, while others have emphasised the importance of decisive events (Drori et al., 2006; Scott, 2014). However, most empirical studies of institutionalisation uncover other underlying mechanisms of *increasing returns*, *commitments* or *objectification*, demonstrating that their combined influence is most formidable when they coincide (Scott, 2014, pp. 70-71).

Rather than aiming for an explanation based merely on a few macro-level conditions and events, van de Ven and Garud (1994) propose focusing on the many micro-level events in which actors confronted with a new situation coinvent ways to deal with it. They contend that after a period of behavioural variation in which actors test and adjust activities as they go, some patterns of activities become increasingly favoured over others (rule-making events) until they dominate and become the convention (rule-following events). As a result, interacting actors co-create and adjust practices, incurring considerable time, energy, and resource costs. North (1990) refers to this as high setup costs, and the concept of *increasing returns* is used to explain why even flawed practices are not altered even when they are apparent (Becker, 2021). North emphasises the relevance of *incentives* and contends that the practices remain because further efforts in the same direction are rewarded, while the costs of switching to an alternative increase over time (Scott, 2014). The status quo is, then, maintained due to a combination of three factors (North, 1990). First, actors hesitate to consider alternatives after devoting time and effort to mastering present routines (learning effects). Second, the contribution of each actor is facilitated by all actors following the same practices (coordination effects). Finally, new actors are motivated to adopt current practices as they appear to be commonly accepted (adaptive expectations). The resulting path-dependent persistence of the practices is especially widespread in contexts with fuzzy feedback and subjective evaluations (North, 1990)—like in crisis management.

According to Selznick (1992, p. 232), institutions hold actors hostage to their history not only through incentives but also through their normative order. This pattern is usually related to *increased commitments*, and conceptions of *this is the way we do it*—often in relation to the *identity* and common practices of particular professional groups (Scott, 2014, pp. 145-148). Although these normative expectations are strongly linked to coordination effects (North, 1990), they are invaluable because they "reduce the need for constant negotiation of expectations and behavioural contracts" (Handmer & Dovers, 2007, p. 30). They can, however, bind actors to flawed practices.

Finally, institutionalisation can also be driven by the *increasing objectification* of the practices (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Such objectification is linked to conceptions of *this is how it's done*, which is a general indicator of more cultural-cognitive elements of institutionalisation

(Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 77; Scott, 2014, p. 148). Here, the mechanism does not concern incentives or identity but the objectification of shared *ideas*. Objectification denotes the development and diffusion of consensus among actors concerning the value and meaning of an idea, where the diffusion changes from imitation to routinisation. While the underlying mechanism is distinct, such objectification is often connected to an increasingly normative core that shrinks the room for alternatives (Tolbert & Zucker, 1996, pp. 182-183). Thus, these shared ideas thicken and harden when diffused (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 76)—not only among new actors but also for those already subscribing to the particular perspective.

Method

Case study research was deemed a suitable methodology for this study (Yin 2003), based on semi-structured interviews (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). 82 individuals were interviewed across different political-administrative levels and organisations (see Table 1). In total, 94 interviews were performed (one participant was interviewed four times, two were interviewed three times, ten twice, and three interviews were with two participants each). The interviews were conducted between June 2020 and December 2022. All interviews but eight were performed online, lasting between 25 minutes and two hours. Nineteen interviews were recorded using the Teams video recording tool, three participants declined recording (instead, extensive notes were taken), and the remaining interviews were audio recorded. The interviews were either conducted by one or two researchers. In all interviews but 29, the same researcher was present. The interviews were semi-structured, based on questions relevant to the interview. Out of the interview set, 50, 18 and 26 interviews were guided by the same interview guides, respectively.

Participants
Government Offices of Sweden (N = 5)
The Public Health Agency (N = 5)
The National Board of Health and Welfare (N = 3)
The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (N = 7)
Swedish Migration Agency (N = 2)
The National Agency for Education (N = 1)
The Swedish Police (N = 1)
The Swedish Food Agency (N = 1)
The Swedish Board of Agriculture (N = 1)
The Government's coordinator for industry and commerce/the business sector (N = 1)
The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (N = 2)
County Administrative Boards (N = 31)
Regional Health Care (N = 7)
Municipalities (N = 14)
Epidemiologist with insight into national-level leadership (N = 1)

Table 1. Study participants.

All recorded interviews were transcribed and, together with interview notes, imported into the Nvivo software package, which was used to structure the data for qualitative analysis (Bryman, 2008). The data was coded into relevant categories explaining the processes underlying the CBCO, connected to its establishment, persistence and how it contributed to meeting coordination needs during the pandemic and Ukraine invasion.

Results

The empirical findings are presented in two main sections—the first concerning the County Administrative Boards' Coordination Office (CBCO) for covid19 and the second concerning the CBCO for the invasion of Ukraine.

The CBCO for covid19

The first steps of the covid19 CBCO were taken in February 2020 by a group of persons within the County Administrative Boards (CABs). The group developed an initial organisational structure and work process after realising a need for internal coordination of tasks and being contacted by government agencies and the Government Offices of Sweden requesting information from the 21 counties. This initial idea was presented to the county governors, who unanimously decided to establish the CBCO on 12 March 2020. It was based on existing collaboration structures within the CABs' regular crisis management and a previously established coordination office during the wildfires of 2018, albeit then in a more limited version. That was the only time such a structure had been activated before. A CAB representative describes the importance of building upon the previous establishment: *"Everyone* [the CABs] *knew of how we had worked with the fires. There was a trust in that structure. We could, in principle, just press the button and get a rather immediate acceptance for this"*. The CABs had also prepared to coordinate in a similar manner as in 2018, which helped in the implementation, as expressed by a CAB representative: *"this we have talked about doing next time, we planned to do it, so all said 'sure', and they started organising it"*. The CBCO establishment is described as quick and relatively smooth. The structure and processes were implemented and worked within a few weeks and hardly changed during its almost two years of activation, albeit significantly extended compared to during the wildfires.

Although the CBCO was based on the CABs' initiative, its role in covid19 was much defined by the government assignments to the CABs, with over ten tasks to be coordinated through the CBCO. No formal government assignments were given during the previous 2018 wildfires activation. The main task concerned coordinating information from local and regional actors to the Government Offices (so-called common operational pictures). Other tasks mainly concerned supporting regional and national agencies with various tasks, such as coordinating protective gear or setting up testing services. In February 2022, the Government Offices terminated the assignments, and as the CABs had decided to run the CBCO for as long as they were active, it was decided to close it after this.

The CBCO met various coordination needs both internally and between the CABs or county actors, such as municipalities, and other actors across administrative levels. Most importantly, the CBCO became a representative of and point of contact for the 21 independent CABs during the pandemic. Internally, it coordinated responsibilities and contributed to equal and unified action. For other actors, such as the Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) or the National Board of Health and Welfare, the CBCO served as a point of contact for the 21 counties and the local actors in each county. The role as a node is described by a representative from MSB: *"I think it has been very useful to have a clear counterpart. To be able to ask questions to and sort things out and so. Instead of having 21 counterparts like usual"*.

In addition, the CABs were represented by the CBCO in several crisis management fora during the pandemic, with coordination as a purpose. For example, in mid-May 2020, the CABs initiated a regular meeting forum for the operationally responsible managers of relevant organisations. Here, the chairperson of the CBCO, the incident commanders of MSB and the Swedish Police, and relevant managers from the National Board of Health and Welfare, the

Public Health Agency and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions met weekly or every second week to coordinate activities and needs.

As a new coordination structure in the Swedish crisis management system, establishing the CBCO was not entirely without friction. First, the role of the CBCO in relation to the 21 separate CABs was described as initially unclear. As a representative from the National Board of Health and Welfare expressed: *"It was not really clear from the start, their role. There were quite a lot of problems during the spring* [of 2020]. *Which I think basically had to do with unclear roles and responsibilities and who had which task"*. Second, a role conflict between the CBCO and MSB is described by several participants. This role conflict mainly involved coordinating actors on a national level and compiling national common operational pictures—two activities that MSB normally is responsible for in crises. The first aspect is described by a representative from MSB: *"If the county administrative boards are nationally coordinated, and they have nationally coordinated the regional levels. Then the national coordination is already done"*, indicating that MSB's role in national coordination could become superfluous.

The CBCO for the invasion of Ukraine

A week after closing the covid19 CBCO, Ukraine was invaded, and Sweden activated its crisis management system again. This time, however, there were clear expectations that the CABs would provide a coordination structure in a similar manner. A CAB representative describes being asked by an MSB representative at an initial meeting among national agencies: *"'Are you not going to establish an office?' because he probably had a good experience of the corona office, 'how will you county administrative boards do?'"*. The CAB representative also explains his/her presence at the meeting, which was before a new CBCO had been established, with: *"I think I represent...it says County Administrative Board* [X], *but I was, I think I am here for all* [...], *to bring questions home"*. Another CAB representative describes internal emails about establishing a CBCO for the invasion of Ukraine already a few days after the attack started, indicating an interest in getting up and running quickly.

On 1 March 2022, a few days after the initial meetings, the county governors decided to establish a CBCO for the invasion of Ukraine *"based on the good experiences drawn during the pandemic"*, as stated in the formal decision. This time, the CBCO was led by another CAB due to its proximity to other governmental agencies and the Armed Forces to facilitate meetings with security clearance, for example, and was staffed mainly by other people. Already at the time of initiation, however, a dialogue with the Government Offices was ongoing, and the CABs expected to receive government assignments similarly to during covid19. This time, the tasks assigned to this CBCO were more specified than those for the covid19 office. Especially noteworthy is that the CBCO should now represent *"one way in"* for national response actors to the CABs and that it should *"secure the flow of information from the national level through the County Administrative Boards to the local level"*, as stated in the county governors' formal decision. This result indicates that coordination tasks executed by the covid19 CBCO were now being formalised and administratively assigned to the new CBCO.

Just like for covid19, this CBCO received several government assignments. Many of these were new, such as assignments concerned migration questions, whereas one was the same as during the pandemic: to provide the Government Offices with regional and national common operational pictures. Similarly to the CAB decision, the government now formalised coordination tasks already done by the covid19 CBCO. Namely, to coordinate the information flow between government agencies, municipalities and county actors and to collaborate with actors like the Armed Forces, the Swedish Board of Migration and the Swedish Civil

Contingencies Agency. This task of being a node for information was important during covid19 but was not part of a government assignment at that time.

Several routines and practices were copied from the covid19 CBCO. For example, administrative routines for the office at large were directly imported into operations. In addition, except for a few adjustments to the new event, the routines and templates for compiling regional and national common operational pictures during covid19 were also used in the new CBCO. A CAB representative describes the benefit of applying known routines and practices: "*it felt quite safe to be able to stand on the corona office like this. Like, this is how we usually do it*". The same representative also shares how they considered changing routines concerning the common operational pictures: "*I think we checked if* [...] *if there was any value in changing* [the routine for common operational pictures]*, but we couldn't find an argument really. So, we kind of continued with the same structure.* [...] *So we just tried to make it as simple as possible*".

Discussion

The results reveal interesting patterns in the emergence and institutionalisation of the studied organisational solution to the new coordination needs arising in Sweden during covid19 and the subsequent invasion of Ukraine.

First, the importance of a decisive event is obvious and a foundational aspect of the study itself—focusing on extreme events. However, the decisive event for the emergence of the studied Swedish interorganisational coordination structure is not covid19 but the extensive wildfires in 2018. Although the coordination structure had a narrower range of objectives and tasks then, the organisation could form almost instantaneously early on during covid19 since it had been assembled before, and the 21 County Administrative Boards (CABs) could quickly reach a consensus that it was needed again. The County Administrative Boards' Coordination Office (CBCO) had, in other words, already acquired a basic level of institutionalisation as several county administrative boards had experienced it and worked within it. The involved professionals had already incurred "large setup costs" (North, 1990) in terms of investing significant time, energy and resources into developing the practices constituting the coordination structure. They had gone through a period of testing different practices (behavioural variation and rule-making) before collectively settling on the set of practices that continued until it closed down after the wildfires were over (rule-following, see van de Ven and Garud, 1994). Hence, when the new coordination needs emerged early in covid19, there was a strong incentive for the CABs to simply mobilise the CBCO instead of inventing another coordination structure. They had even prepared to do it, regardless of whether they would get formal government assignments or not. That way, they reduced the need for investing time and energy into inventing and learning the practices of the coordination structure, the individuals involved knew what to expect from each other from the start, and new people who had not been involved in the 2018 wildfires could just adopt its practices as they were commonly accepted. This explanation resonates well with North's (1990) learning effects, coordination effects and adaptive expectations, even if the results also indicate a commitment to professional norms concerning what activities were deemed necessary. Then, after being established, the CBCO received assignments from the Government Offices, formally legitimising it and its practices through regulative means (cf. Scott, 2014).

The results suggest that the same incentives of increasing returns not only played a vital role in establishing the covid19 CBCO but also in its further development in terms of expanding objectives and tasks to meet the particular needs of that event. This time with more visible effects of increasing commitments to professional norms and expectations. Although there was a strong carry-over effect of practices from the previous wildfire event, covid19 was different and affected all 21 CABs. Immediately after mobilising the CBCO, the involved professionals suggested extended objectives and tasks. They had not only experiences working in the wildfires CBCO but drew on their substantial professional expertise and the established responsibilities of each CAB individually. Here, the mechanism of increasing commitments to professional norms and identities is evident in the results, as all new objectives and tasks were standard for the field. It was simply what professional crisis managers do, although now on a different level. Then, after an initial period of uncertainty among the actors interacting with the CBCO, indicated by their initially ambivalent feelings about the CBCO visible in the results, more and more time, energy and resources were invested at the same time as all actors involved increasingly found themselves knowing what to expect from each other—even among the actors initially experiencing the CBCO as organisationally threatening, largely duplicating their own responsibility. These developments can be partly explained by the mechanism of increasing returns, which is further substantiated by the generally positive evaluations of the

covid19 CBCO in the results, suggesting that further application of the same practices was rewarded while the potential costs of changing them increased over time (cf. Scott, 2014). However, increasing commitments also seems important in explaining the results as the practices became increasingly part of professional identities. Moreover, the results also indicate a substantial degree of routinisation of the practices in and around the covid19 CBCO over the two years of activity, which means that they were increasingly performed without explicit attention to why. The practices simply become something the actors do without the same kind of reflection afforded them in the initial phase. This pattern can be explained by the mechanism of increasing objectification and is prevalent in human affairs (Scott, 2014; Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

The degree of institutionalisation of the CBCO as an integral part of the Swedish crisis management system is most evident in the almost instinctive establishment of a new CBCO immediately after the invasion of Ukraine started. The results indicate that the same mechanisms of increasing returns and commitments to normative expectations played important roles in establishing this CBCO too. This time, not only CAB staff had incurred large setup costs, but all actors contributing to the coordination of the covid19 event. Irrespective of the new CBCO having some new tasks, they had invested time, energy and resources to learn their parts of the coordination, knew what to expect from each other in the management of that event, and expected new people who had not been previously involved to adopt practices that were now commonly accepted. However, the new CBCO maintained most of the internal practices of the previous CBCO regardless of being staffed by other people than the CBCOs for the covid19 and wildfires events. Although that could at least partly be explained by North's (1990) adaptive expectations—that new actors are motivated to adopt current practices as they appear to be commonly accepted—considering the current central role of the CBCO in the crisis management system, it is more plausible that the practices remained because they had become part of the professional norms and identities of the CABs' crisis managers. Simply what professional crisis managers do.

In addition to the mechanisms of increasing returns and commitments, the results suggest increasing objectification to play a central role in the immediate establishment of the CBCO for the invasion of Ukraine and in the institutionalisation of the CBCO as an integral part of the Swedish crisis management system in general. This mechanism is visible, combined with increasing commitments, in the expectations—even from actors initially negatively inclined to the covid19 CBCO—of mobilising the CBCO again and in actors assuming their CBCO roles even before the coordination structure was established again. The CBCO had become something they simply do without much explicit reflection.

In summary, the County Administrative Boards' Coordination Office (CBCO) emerged as an inter-organisational coordination structure to meet unprecedented coordination needs in covid19 but has now become institutionalised to the extent that it constitutes a central aspect of the Swedish crisis management system. However, its scaffold was already provided by an earlier yet much more limited coordination structure, affording the initial direction of the institutionalisation of practices within the CBCO. From there, the practices in and around the CBCO were institutionalised through increasing returns in relation to incentives, increasing commitments to norms and identities, and increasing objectification of shared ideas and routines. Although it has been suggested that the combined force of these three mechanisms is greatest when they align (Scott, 2014, pp. 70-71), this study demonstrates that such alignment is likely to be incremental. The mechanism of increasing returns commences as soon as any initial behavioural variation results in some pattern of activities becoming increasingly favoured and starting to dominate (cf. van de Ven and Garud, 1994). While professional norms and expectations are generally carried over already at the start from whatever contexts the

actors can imagine as similar, the mechanism of increasing commitments can either reinforce or alter them or create new ones, depending on what practices end up being implemented. However, this study suggests that the importance of increasing commitment is increasing over time, which has been suggested elsewhere (e.g. Becker, 2021). Increasing objectification, on the other hand, is generally of relatively less importance concerning the actual practices initially, since it takes time for something to become routinised to the extent that it is taken for granted, before becoming increasingly important compared to the other two mechanisms. However, it is important to remember that many other things that affect inter-organisational coordination are already taken for granted due to such objectification, for instance, county or municipal borders, the value of a common operational picture, crisis management principles, etc.

Conclusion

This study aims to develop knowledge about the processes generating organisational solutions to meet new coordination needs in extreme events, using the Swedish County Administrative Boards' Coordination Office (CBCO) as a case. The results show the emergence and institutionalisation of an inter-organisational coordination structure that can now be considered an established body in the Swedish crisis management system.

The study demonstrates the importance of a decisive event in initiating and shaping organisational adaptation to extreme events, with substantial carry-over effects of practices to future events. Such a carry-over effect is evident in the studied case, from the wildfires in 2018 to covid19 to the invasion of Ukraine. The institutionalisation of the organisation and its practices appear to have been initially driven by incentives related to increasing returns, with the CABs and then other actors investing more and more energy and resources into the inter-organisational coordination structure, with increasing commitments to professional norms and expectations providing initial directions and playing an increasingly important role over time. Although the formal instructions from the Government Offices only legitimised the CBCO post hoc, such formal legitimisation is likely to play an important part in future mobilisations. However, not necessarily explicitly, as the study indicates how the increasing objectification of shared ideas leads to a significant degree of routinisation that turn the CBCO and its practices into something taken for granted—something they simply do in extreme events.

Although it is difficult to generalise from a single case, similar mechanisms are likely active in the institutionalisation of other inter-organisational coordination structures that emerge in response to a particular event yet end up constituting permanent, central parts of their respective crisis management system. That would have several important implications. It would motivate careful consideration, as early as possible, of the criteria against which the coordination structure should be evaluated later since practices that evolve rather contingently, in the beginning, tend to become persistent, entrenched in professional norms and identities, and taken for granted—even hidden in plain sight. It would encourage more experimentation and explicit consideration of alternative practices during its lifespan and provide arguments for ensuring that crisis managers' education and training are continuously updated and relevant to what we can anticipate in the future. More generally, it would provide a lens to appreciate the importance of the past when understanding the present status of the coordination structure and its importance, in turn, for the future of the crisis management system. However, more research is needed on the emergence and institutionalisation of inter-organisational coordination structures in other contexts to test and potentially further expand the generalisability of the study's findings.

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