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EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS POLICY-MAKING:  
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN  
CALIFORNIA AND ITALY

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## 1 - Emergency Preparedness as Public Policy

It is just a few years that emergency management has been discussed within the policy setting as an important function of government. For long time the "emergency issue" - the occurring of natural and man-made hazardous events that strike human life, property, and safety - had been faced with a "crisis-reactive" management approach<sup>1</sup> that would portray emergency as an exceptional contingency and provide an improvised response to the calamitous event when would occur. Recently a new conception of emergency management has developed, supported both by the findings of twenty years of disaster research<sup>2</sup> and by a wider social awareness of the multitude of risks that modern society has to face nowadays<sup>3</sup>. This new conception is based on a "problem solving" approach that implies day-to-day planning and activities<sup>4</sup>. This approach emphasizes those aspects of mitigation and preparedness that aim at preventing disastrous emergencies either by reducing the degree of risk or by developing capabilities to provide effective response to emergency.

The "emergency issue" is a really complex issue for governmental agencies to deal with. Disaster research has stressed different kinds of complexity that refer to emergency response. First of all complexity comes from hazard differentiation - a flood or an hazardous material incident are different events to respond to. Then an emergency calls for different types of organizational performance that are combinations of task multiplicity and sectoral diversity - i.e. evacuation is just one of the tasks an emergency might call for and it has to be performed by different sectoral organizations like the law enforcement, the fire department, the Red Cross and so on. Finally an emergency crosses jurisdictional border both in terms of impact and in terms of aid - all mass emergencies affect more than one jurisdiction by definition and most of the times affected jurisdictions get overwhelmed and need aid from other jurisdictions. Basically the response to an emergency requires interorganizational and

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<sup>1</sup> W.Petak, "Emergency Management: A Challenge for Public Administration" in Public Administration Review, Special Issue, Vol.45, January 1985.

<sup>2</sup> See publications on disaster topics by the Disaster Research Center at the University of Delaware.

<sup>3</sup> See M.Douglas & A.Wildavsky "Risk and Culture", University of California Press, 1983; Perrow C."Normal Accidents. Living with high-risk technologies" Basic Books Inc. Publ. New York, 1984. Researchers have traditionally identified three types of emergencies: natural, technological and civil (wars, civil disturbances, massacres). "Recently a fourth type of disaster has come under discussion: ecological disasters. These are events that are caused principally by human beings and that initially affect, in a major way, the earth, its atmosphere, and its flora and fauna, rather than human beings. (...) The destruction of the planet's rain forests and the extinction of entire species can be categorized as ecological disasters. Certain forms of technological disaster - such as leakage from a toxic waste site - can cause or contribute to ecological damage" From Drabek T. (ed) "Emergency Management: Principles and Practice for Local Government", ICMA, Washington DC, 1991.

<sup>4</sup> Dynes R. "Community Emergency Planning: False assumptions and inappropriate analogies" Preliminary Paper #145, DRC, University of Delaware, 1990.

intersectoral action that takes place at different levels of government, to perform a multiplicity of tasks that vary in their specificity depending on the kind of hazard. If we define organizational "complexity" as a function of the number of organizational components, the differentiation or variety of these components, and the degree of interdependence among these components<sup>5</sup>, we have to recognize the high degree of complexity that the "emergency issue" implies. This complexity is basically interorganizational because it refers to interorganizational relationships among several different agencies involved in emergency response. The complexity of the "emergency issue" is particularly high because almost all of the interorganizational relations or interdependences the emergency calls for do not have a day-to-day basis and have to be built or designed just for the emergency occurring - i.e. the interdependence between Red Cross and Fire department refers just to care and shelter operation in case of emergency. A government that wants to deal, in terms of public policy, with the "emergency issue" has to face and, possibly, to reduce the complexity that has been described. A way to reduce the complexity of emergency response that has been developing within the new conception of emergency management is "emergency preparedness".

Emergency preparedness refers to all those activities, policies, structures, facilities, and programs promoted in peace time on a day-to-day basis to develop operational capabilities for responding to an emergency<sup>6</sup>. Preparedness tries to reduce the organizational complexity of emergency response through a process of identification, analysis, rationalization, planning and exercising of such complexity. It basically tries to "reduce the unknowns in a problematical situation"<sup>7</sup> and to work on possible solutions. In this way, preparedness provides the basis for the governance of interorganizational action when emergency occurs. Actually an emergency calls for a coordinated and synergetic interorganizational response that requires mechanisms of governance of organizational complexity.

This paper focuses on emergency preparedness as public policy to develop capabilities able to face, reduce and govern the complexity of emergency response. Basically it focuses on what governments do - structures, programs and strategies - for emergency response. According to disaster research studies, emergency preparedness is first of all emergency

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<sup>5</sup> La Porte, T. "Organized Social Complexity", Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1975.

<sup>6</sup> <sup>(6)</sup> It basically includes the development of response plans, identification of resources, exercising, and training. In particular emergency operations plans, warning systems, emergency operation centers, emergency communications networks, emergency public information, mutual agreements, resource management plans, and training and exercises for emergency personnel. Waugh W., John R. "Handbook of Emergency Management", Greenwood Press, New York, 1990.

<sup>7</sup> Quarantelli, E.L. "Organizational Behavior in Disasters and Implications for Disaster Planning" DCR Report Series #18.

planning. Emergency planning has been portrayed as a "continuous process"<sup>8</sup> in which the development of a written plan is only a small part of the total planning process. Besides emergency planning, and in some way part of the same process, preparedness means identification of resources within the jurisdiction and outside it. Actually all the interdependences in emergency response are based on resources; emergency response is basically resources management. Besides planning and resources identification, emergency preparedness means "exercising" - rehearsals, drills. Plans have to be tested, resources management has to be exercised, the government of emergency complexity needs rehearsal. Emergency planning, resources identification and exercising are basic dimensions of emergency preparedness that will be analyzed in this paper.

The paper will compare emergency preparedness in two different countries, California and Italy, trying to stress the main differences and similarities in terms of policy making. Policy-making is "an extremely complex analytical and political process to which there is no beginning or end, and the boundaries of which are most uncertain"<sup>9</sup>. A way to reduce the analytical complexity of the policy-making process has been the distinction between two different, even though interconnected, phases of this process: policy formulation (policy design) and policy implementation. The paper will adopt this analytical distinction. It will focus first of all on the emergency preparedness policy design, both in California and Italy, analyzing the organization of the statewide emergency system and the strategy developed at the state level. Then the paper will take an implementation perspective on specific local areas within the two countries to figure out what actually happens, in terms of emergency preparedness, at the local level, where the emergency occurs. The local areas that have been empirically investigated are the San Francisco Bay Area in California (specifically the city and county of San Francisco and the city of Oakland within the county of Alameda) and the Region Lombardia in Italy (specifically the province of Bergamo and the province of Sondrio)<sup>10</sup>.

## **2 - Emergency Preparedness Policy-making in California**

The emergency preparedness policy-making in California is strongly affected by the federal emergency policy. Since the California emergency preparedness policy design basically follows the federal one, it is important to analyze the origin of this design within the federal disaster policy. To study a policy design it means to focus on those tools - defined

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.; Auf Der Heide, E. "Disaster Response. Principles of Preparation and Coordination" The C.v.Mosby Company St.Louis 1989.

<sup>9</sup> Lindblom C.E. "The Policy-Making Process", Prentice-Hall, Inc. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1968, p.4.

<sup>10</sup> The empirical research took place in 1992 and was based both on interviews to emergency managers at different levels of government and analysis of the documentation provided by local and state public agencies involved in emergency preparedness policy-making.

by legislation - that have been chosen to face a policy issue: organization structures, programs and strategies<sup>11</sup>. The paper will focus on these aspects.

## **2.1 - U.S. Federal Emergency Policy: An Overview**

The main features of the federal emergency policy design refer to three concepts: "integration", "agreement" and "localism". The federal policy has been trying to achieve the goal of "integration" among the several different organizations, levels of government, sectors and tasks involved in the emergency management; it is basically based on "agreements" among the actors involved; and it tries to build and develop emergency capabilities at the really local level ("localism").

### **2.1.1 - An Integrated Emergency Policy**

In the last years the U.S. federal government has been supporting and promoting an emergency policy based on the concept of "integration" that tries to be an answer to the "intergovernmental, intersectoral and interorganizational nature of emergency management"<sup>12</sup>.

The concept of "integration" as different from that of "coordination" has been defined by H.Simon<sup>13</sup>. Simon has focused on two different sets of mechanisms to organize individual behavior: "external" and "internal". External mechanisms refer to those organizational tools able to address individual behavior toward a certain direction - i.e. rules. Internal mechanisms refer to those devices able to maintain addressed behavior - i.e. procedures. The "internal" mechanisms are more powerful than the external mechanisms because are based on processes of learning and knowledge assimilation. The conceptual difference between "integration" and "coordination" is based on these mechanisms. While "integration" organizes individual behavior on the basis of both external and internal mechanisms, "coordination" organizes individual behavior just on the basis of external mechanisms. So, in terms of organized behavior, integration is a more complete concept than coordination; it basically includes coordination and goes beyond it. In fact, the process of integration involves both "factual" and "value" elements of individual behavior, those elements that Simon portrays as premises to organized action. According to Simon, to

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<sup>11</sup> R.Mayntz, 1983 *The Conditions of Effective Public Policy: A New Challenge For Policy Analysis*, in "Policy and Politics", Vol.11, n.2, pp. 123-143; Hult,K.& Walcott,C. 1989 *Organizational Design as Public Policy*, in "Policy Studies Journal", Vol.17, n.3

<sup>12</sup> Drabek,T. "Managing the Emergency Response" in *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue, Vol.45, January 1985

<sup>13</sup> Simon, H. "Administrative Behavior" Macmilliam, NY, 1947

produce integrated behavior it is necessary to provide individuals with specific factual (i.e. information) and value (i.e. goals) propositions able to address and maintain their behaviors. In the case of emergency issue, integration refers to/and works on those elements of fact and value able to structure interorganizational action for emergency response. In this way "integration" produces the basis for interorganizational "coordination". Coordination gives expression to that interorganizational action whose premises have been defined through a process of integration.

The first step toward an integrated emergency policy has been the creation of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in 1979. Prior to the creation of FEMA, five different organizational units belonging to different federal departments were involved in emergency management: the Defense Civil Preparedness Agency in the Department of Defense, the Federal Disaster Assistance and the Federal Disaster Insurance Administration both in the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Federal Preparedness Agency in the General Services Administration, and the U.S. Fire Administration and National Fire Academy for Fire Prevention Control in the Department of Commerce. The separation of emergency management functions across these agencies often resulted in problems of interagency and intergovernmental coordination. The Presidential Reorganization Plan # 3 and the following executive orders<sup>14</sup> created FEMA and transferred all the prior units and functions of emergency management to FEMA. Even though the creation of FEMA did not solve all of the problems of coordination at the federal level, it was a response to a long standing awareness that the federal disaster effort was fragmented and uncoordinated. A single lead federal agency was perceived as necessary<sup>15</sup>.

The second federal step toward an integrated disaster policy was the "Comprehensive Emergency Management" (CEM) strategy that FEMA adopted and developed. As a concept, CEM calls for an integrated approach to the management of emergency programs and activities. It provides an inclusive and rational framework to fit together the many elements of emergency management. It identifies four different phases that comprise emergency management and shows the interconnections among them. The four phases are preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation. Preparedness is undertaken before an emergency occurs, to build emergency management capacity. It focuses on the development of emergency operations plans. Response takes place immediately before, during, and directly after an emergency. The purpose of response is to minimize personal injury and property damage through emergency functions such as evacuation, search and rescue and so

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<sup>14</sup> The N.12127 of March, 31, 1979 and N.12148 of July, 20, 1979.

<sup>15</sup> May,P. "FEMA's Role in Emergency Management: Recent Experience"; Mushkatel,A. & Weschler,L."Emergency Management and the Intergovernmental System"; both in Public Administration Review, Special Issue, Vol.45, January 1985

on. Recovery begins immediately following an emergency with efforts to restore minimum services to the stricken area and continues with longer-term efforts to return the community to normal. Mitigation can take place either before or after an emergency. In each case, the aim is to reduce risk through anticipatory actions. Mitigation activities include plans for hazard areas, land use, building codes, education about risks<sup>16</sup>. CEM strategy represents an integrated view of emergency management functions, a rational clarification of what emergency management is. Emergency management can be defined as the process of developing and implementing policies that are concerned with mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. CEM basically portrays emergency management as a continuous/never ending process in which identified and defined phases alternate one another in relation to the time of emergency - peace time, ongoing emergency time, post emergency time.

In operational terms the CEM framework has been translated into the "Integrated Emergency Management System" (IEMS) federal strategy which goal is to develop and maintain an emergency management capability nationwide by integrating activities along functional lines at all levels of government and, to the fullest extent possible, across all hazards. IEMS has been defined as a management strategy developed by FEMA to implement CEM. The concept underlying IEMS is the importance of focusing on "functions" common in all disasters. These functions become the basis of integration - "functional integration" - among the different kinds of sectoral agency and across jurisdictional boundaries. Functional integration designs *partnerships* or *networks* among different actors on specific functions, so to rationalize tasks multiplicity and interorganizational relations in emergency response. The fifteen emergency functions that FEMA has identified becomes a conceptual frame to analyze which kind of actions have to take place when an emergency strikes and to reflect on who may perform those actions and interacting with who<sup>17</sup>. In this way functional integration becomes a way to reduce the interorganizational complexity of emergency issue previously described. Moreover, focusing on functions common to all disasters, the IEMS strategy has been supporting a Multi-Hazard approach to emergency management that reduces the emergency complexity which comes from the specificity of different kind of hazards. The CEM/IEMS strategy suggests the development of local Multi-Hazard-Functional-Plans that focus on general emergency function without reference to a

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<sup>16</sup> Drabek, T. 1991, op.cit., p.134.

<sup>17</sup> According to the FEMA Civil Preparedness Guide 1-8, the emergency functions that have to be performed in emergency are: Direction and Control, Communications, Warning, Emergency Public Information, Education and Training, Evacuation, Shelter (Reception and Care), Medical Health, Law enforcement, Public Works, Fire and Rescue, Transportation, Human Services (Welfare), Reporting Procedures, Continuity of Government, Damage Assessment, Radiological Defense. The list is not supposed to be inclusive. The functions identified will depend on local requirements and needs.

particular hazard. These plans are based on hazard analysis and capability assessment and try to develop local capabilities to deal with emergency.

The CEM/IEMS strategy, focusing on emergency preparedness and response capability for all hazards, promotes and supports "localism". Most of the federal programs set up to develop an Integrated Emergency Management System recognize the local government as key actor in this process because emergency strikes at the local level and local jurisdictions are first on the scene of an emergency. Localism does not imply fragmentation, it is not opposed to integration, and it does not overlook the federal and state level. Localism means that, approaching the emergency issue, the focus of the intergovernmental relations is the development of capabilities at the local level with the support of the federal and state government. The local level is framed as the core of the nationwide emergency system.

### **2.1.2 - FEMA's Implementation Strategy: The Comprehensive Cooperative Agreement (CCA)**

FEMA supports state and local government emergency management by providing national programs and guidance, as well as technical and financial assistance. In the tradition of the federal structure of intergovernmental relations and with respect to the autonomy of political subdivision, FEMA promotes its CEM/IEMS strategy at the state and local level on the basis of agreements and grants-in-aid programs.

The Comprehensive Cooperative Agreement (CCA) is the primary mechanism for delivering FEMA-supported resources to build emergency management multi-hazard capabilities at the local level. California is an agreement between FEMA and a State whereby FEMA provides funds and technical assistance; in return, the State accomplishes mutually negotiated and agreed-upon work objectives.

The basic CCA emergency preparedness program is the "Emergency Management Assistance" (EMA) program. The EMA program provides federal contributions to states and local jurisdictions in order to "increase the operational capability for emergency management at state and local levels of government, including development and maintenance of trained, experienced staff of full-time emergency management personnel"<sup>18</sup>. Although funding levels have actually decreased in recent years in terms of real dollars, the EMA program remains an important tool for the state emergency management director and the principal source of external funds for local jurisdictions<sup>19</sup>. EMA provides grants to state and local governments to cover as much as 50% of salaries, travel expenses, and other administrative costs essential to day-to-day emergency management operation.

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<sup>18</sup> FEMA, "Civil Preparedness Guide 1-3"

<sup>19</sup> Drabek, T. 1991, op.cit.

The participants in the EMA program are expected to develop and maintain an emergency plan that incorporates all the hazards faced by that jurisdiction; to exercise the plan; and to submit reports to the state emergency management office that administrates the EMA program. Still, the main goal of the EMA program is to ensure that an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is developed in each jurisdiction. The EOP is seen as the basis for a coordinated, effective response to a disaster. Actually it is an implementation tool of the IEMS strategy through its Multi-Hazard-Functional format. This format emphasizes both functional and hazard integration and is suggested to every EMA participant, which is provided with either FEMA or state guidelines. The Multi-Hazard-Functional format has three components<sup>20</sup>:

- the basic plan, that provides the overall information about hazards and emergency system;
- the functional annexes, each of them entitled to a specific emergency function, describing responsibilities, resources, and procedures for that function;
- the hazard-specific appendixes in support of each functional annex, that address unique characteristics of specific hazard.

As we have seen, planning is not the only aspect of preparedness. Another important one that EMA program emphasizes is "exercising". FEMA recognizes the value of exercising and suggest three types of exercises within the CCA emergency preparedness programs: tabletop exercise, functional exercise and full-scale exercise<sup>21</sup>. The EMA program requires every participant jurisdiction to complete an exercise each year. The exercise may be a "functional" or "full-scale"; however, at least, one "full-scale" type must be accomplished every four years.

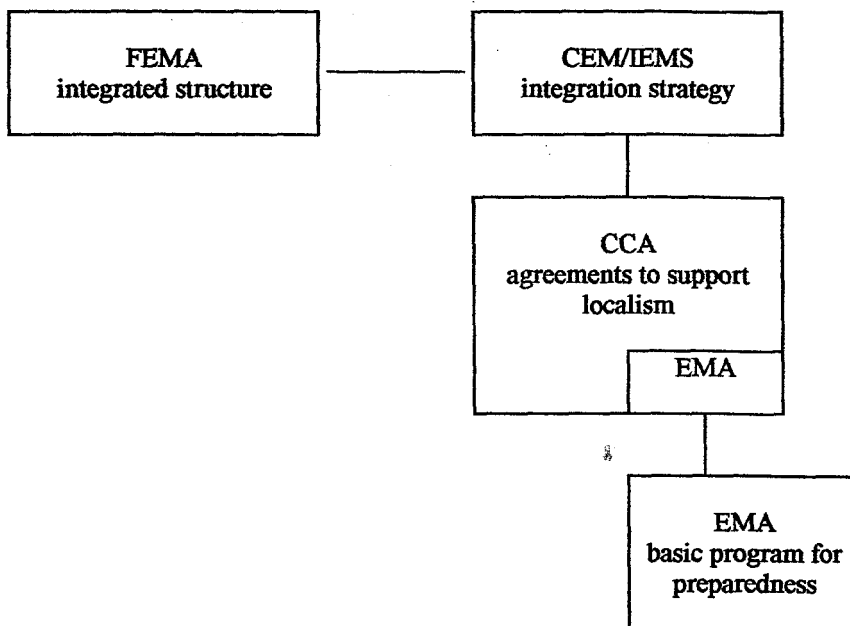
Summarizing the whole picture of the federal policy design it is possible to point out that the U.S. federal government has approached the "emergency issue" setting an organizational structure (FEMA), developing a strategy (CEM/IEMS) and promoting implementation through grants-in-aid programs (CCA). Both the structural reorganization at the federal level - the creation of FEMA - and the CEM/IEMS strategy developed by FEMA emphasize integration. As a matter of fact, the CEM/IEMS strategy is an evolution of the program of integration envisioned in the creation of FEMA. This strategy promotes

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<sup>20</sup> The Civil Preparedness Guide 1-8 "Guide for Development of State and Local Emergency Operations Plans", FEMA, october 1985.

<sup>21</sup> The tabletop exercise is a simple exercise requiring minimal preparation. Officials and key staff with emergency management responsibilities are gathered together informally, usually in a conference room, to discuss various simulated emergency situations. The exercise is designed to draw constructive discussion on existing EOP without time constraints. The purpose is for participants to evaluate plans and procedures and to resolve questions of coordination.

both a functional and a multi-hazard integration that try to reduce the complexity of the emergency issue, that complexity that comes from structural and jurisdictional fragmentation, sectoral diversity, task multiplicity, interorganizational action, and hazard differentiation. The CCA represents an implementation tool of the CEM/IEIMS strategy. This tool emphasizes both "localism" as previously defined - development of local emergency capabilities with federal support - and "agreement" as basis of intergovernmental emergency relations. Within this picture EMA program refers to the basic aspects of emergency preparedness - planning and exercising - and provides formats and guidance for their implementation at the local level. So, the U.S. federal design emphasizes "integration" as approach to emergency complexity, "agreement" as a mechanism of governance of that complexity, and "localism" as core of a nationwide emergency system. This policy design might be expressed by the following figure.



## 2.2 - California Emergency Preparedness Policy Design

The State of California signed with FEMA the Comprehensive Cooperative Agreement (CCA) and it is an EMA participant. This means that the State of California adopts the IEIMS principles. Moreover, all of the main features of the federal policy design that have been analyzed - integration, agreement, localism - are present in California emergency preparedness policy. Actually this policy is essentially an integrated policy based on mutual agreements that emphasizes the local level. It basically tries to develop local

emergency management capabilities and to integrate those capabilities in a statewide emergency system. It possible to figure out the design of California emergency preparedness policy analyzing the State Emergency Services organization, the State Mutual Aid System, and the State Emergency Plan.

### **2.2.1 - California Emergency Services Organization**

CA emergency services organization is based on the Emergency Services Act<sup>22</sup>. Its basic structure is the State Office of Emergency Services (OES). The OES is part of the Governor's Office. The Governor appoints a director and assigns him all or part of his powers and duties in regard to emergency management<sup>23</sup>. The California State OES plays a double role in terms of emergency management: on the one hand it organizes and prepares itself to respond to "State of Emergency" (statewide emergency), on the other hand it promotes emergency management activities at the local level providing guidelines and technical assistance.

The State OES has decentralized units on the territory. The territorial subdivision of the State OES is based on "mutual aid regions" set up by the Emergency Services Act. The State OES is subdivided into six "mutual aid regions" each of them consisting of two or more counties. Consequently the State OES has six regional offices, one for every mutual aid regional area. The Regional OESs are State offices that depend on the State OES. They provide technical assistance to the local jurisdictions to develop local emergency capabilities. Basically they work with those jurisdictions which are EMA program participants<sup>24</sup>.

The California State OES has other two decentralized regional units that are implementation tools for a specific earthquake preparedness program: the Bay Area Regional Earthquake Preparedness Project (BAREPP) and the Southern California Earthquake Preparedness Project (SCEPP). Both of these projects have been initiated and supported by the FEMA and the State of California. The first of the two projects initiated by FEMA and the State of California was SCEPP (early 1980's). Its role was to develop

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<sup>22</sup> The Emergency Services Act is the State basic law regarding emergency response and it is part of the Government Code - it begins with the section 8550. It basically sets that, to ensure preparations within the state to be adequate to deal with all emergencies, the Governor and chief executives of all political subdivisions are given emergency powers, the state OES is established, state agencies are assigned emergency functions, mutual aid is provided for, and organizations are authorized as necessary to carry out provisions of the law.

<sup>23</sup> The director of the State OES receives powers that let him responsible for the Emergency Planning and for the overall coordination of every Emergency Response. Yet, he can never receive from the Governor "the power to make, amend, and rescind orders and regulations" (8587).

<sup>24</sup> Actually one of the most specific task the Regional OESs have to perform is the administration of the EMA program. They receive the federal funds and allocate them among those jurisdictions that meet the requirements of the EMA program.

innovative approaches to local earthquake preparedness. In 1983 was set up the BAES (Bay Area Earthquake Study) that made the groundwork for the development of BAREPP. Funding for BAES was provided by FEMA to the California Seismic Safety Commission<sup>25</sup>. The creation of BAREPP by the Commission was in 1984. By 1984 SCEPP had developed a variety of instructional planning guidelines for local government and business preparedness, based on the concept of "Comprehensive Earthquake Preparedness". With SCEPP's materials available, BAREPP began an implementation program to disseminate guidelines and support local preparedness programs<sup>26</sup>. BAREPP and SCEPP have not been viewed merely as public information and educational programs. Their staff work with jurisdictions to develop political support for preparedness; organize work programs; provide planning and technical support to preparedness programs<sup>27</sup>.

At the really local level the State OES has tried to develop "operational areas". An "operational area" is an intermediate level of the state of emergency services organization, consisting of a county and all the political subdivisions within the county area. Basically the concept of "operational area" tries to overcome the local fragmentation of different local jurisdictions within a same county and to push these jurisdictions to work together to get more integrated in terms of emergency management. Actually the operational area is the first response unit in the architecture of the California statewide emergency system. The operational area is an interesting component of the California emergency preparedness policy. It is an integrated operational local unit, which integration is based on agreement among the jurisdictions that compose it.

### **2.2.2 - California Mutual Aid System**

The California mutual aid system refers to an important aspect of emergency preparedness, that is identification of resources. It is based on some assumptions like no community has all of the resources needed to cope with every emergency it may face; the State and local officials must plan ahead to ensure effective use of available resources; each jurisdiction must first rely upon its own resource and when these are reasonably committed, mutual aid may be requested. The mutual aid system basically emphasized the local level, but, aware of local limitations in terms of resources, it organizes an aid system based on agreement. Mutual aid is provided first at the local level. If city requires assistance, it

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<sup>25</sup> The California Seismic Safety Commission is an independent commission created in 1974 out of earlier legislative and executive branch advisory groups. The Commission Act was amended in 1980 to make clear the commission's mandate for addressing earthquake hazard mitigation.

<sup>26</sup> May, P. & Williams, W "Disaster Policy Implementation. Managing Programs under Shared Governance", Plenum Press, N.Y., 1986

<sup>27</sup> Both BAREPP and SCEPP are nowadays housed at the State OES with a joint administration. This is the first step toward an integration between the two project that will take place soon.

requests support from neighboring cities or through the operational area (county). If the operational area is not able to assist, the request is passed to the Regional Office of Emergency Services. If the regional office cannot meet all requests from its operational areas, the requests are passed to the State OES.

The mutual aid system is based on the California Disaster and Civil Defense Master Mutual Aid Agreement. It is an agreement made between the State of California, its various departments and agencies, and the various political subdivisions, municipal corporations, and other public agencies of the State of California to assist each other by providing resources during an emergency. Mutual aid occurs when two or more parties agree to furnish resources and facilities and to render services to each other to prevent and combat any type of disaster or emergency.

The California mutual aid system is composed of several existing formal mutual aid systems, including law enforcement, fire and rescue, medical and public works. Each system may operate independently or simultaneously with the others, depending on the nature and scope of the emergency<sup>28</sup>.

### **2.2.3 - California State Emergency Plan**

The State Emergency Plan has been approved by the Governor in 1990 at the end of a planning process that had lasted for five years. The California State Plan serves two purposes: on the one hand it is the State Emergency Operations Plan and it sets in detail how the state offices would respond to an emergency; on the other hand it is a guidance intended to provide a common planning basis for all California city and County governments. Actually the plan sets the basic emergency responsibilities for every level of government in California. The State Emergency Plan is considered to be in progress. The Planning Division of the State OES is still working on it. The "Statewide Emergency Plan Committee" composed by the staff of the State OES Planning Division and representatives of all the 48 agencies involved in emergency preparedness organizes quarterly meetings to discuss about the role and contribution of each agency to the different emergency functions and to exercise and review the plan. This ongoing process of planning emphasizes that a written plan is just a part of a wider emergency planning that is a never ending process.

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<sup>28</sup> The fire and rescue and law enforcement systems have been in existence for a number of years and are used on a day-to-day basis. Some, such as the medical/health and public works systems, are still being developed.

The California State Emergency Plan has a Multi-Hazard-Functional format based on IEMS principles. The structure of the plan designs a really complex interorganizational system. Almost all the fourteen emergency functions identified by the State OES need an integrated action from different actors to be performed. Every function designs a different "network" on a specific aspect of emergency response that crosses jurisdictions of different actors. Actually the plan is "functionally" and not "departmentally" based. It clusters agencies by function on the basis of their expertise. For every function a "lead" agency is identified. The lead agency is the agency with the best technical expertise and special resources for that function. It becomes the point of contact, the coordinating agency within the network developed around that specific emergency function. The State plan has extensively developed the appendixes to the functional annexes. For every function the plan provides seven action checklists, one for each hazard identified<sup>29</sup>.

The California State Emergency Plan as operative document is really complex. Yet, its basic function is not emergency response setting. It is a product of a planning process that has tried to involve those agencies able to perform important functions when an emergency strikes. From this point of view the plan is expression of a learning process, a map to figure out and enter the interorganizational complexity of the emergency response. Since the plan designs concrete networks among specific actors on defined functions, it is basically a rationalization of that complexity.

### **2.3 - An Implementation Perspective: The San Francisco Bay Area**

The emergency preparedness policy design set up by FEMA and developed by the state of California shapes and addresses the emergency policy-making at the local level. The paper will focus on a specific area in California - the San Francisco Bay Area - to analyze emergency preparedness implementation within local jurisdictions. The analysis will refer to a concept that comes from the policy analysis literature: the concept of "issue network". "Issue network" is that network that develops around a specific issue composed by "shared-knowledge group having to do with some aspect (or, as defined by the network, some problem) of public policy". This network collects all or part of the policy makers that actually implement the policy and it portrays policy-making as "an intramural activity among expert issue-watchers, their networks, and their networks of networks"<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup> Every action checklist describe - and assigns responsibility about - those actions that are necessary to activate that function in the case of that specific kind of emergency. The State Plan includes seven hazards: Major Earthquake, Hazardous Material Incident, Imminent/Actual Flooding, Imminent/Actual Dam Failure, War Emergencies, Major Fire, Nuclear Power Plant Incident.

<sup>30</sup> Hecllo,H. "Issue Network and the Executive Establishment", in A.King (ed), *The New American Political System*, Washington, American Enterprise Institute, pp.87-124, 1978.

Emergency preparedness implementation is largely influenced by the network developed around the emergency issue. Actually interagency relations are crucial for successful emergency management. They shape an interorganizational system as much integrated as much they have been developed and nurtured<sup>31</sup>. In the San Francisco Bay Area, as we will see, the Regional OES and BAREPP play an important role in terms of development of such a network. "Networking" and "liason" roles are crucial integration tools to strengthen issue networks.

### **2.3.1 - Emergency Preparedness Issue Network**

Emergency preparedness in the San Francisco Bay Area is influenced by the presence and activity of two emergency state agencies: the Regional OES (Region II) and BAREPP. Both of them play, formally and informally, important and crucial roles in terms of emergency preparedness policy.

The Regional OES plays a liason role between State OES and local jurisdiction by definition. It is a state agency, present on the territory, that keeps contact with local jurisdictions on a day-to-day base. The Regional OES is charged of the EMA program administration, and it works with all the jurisdictions which are EMA participants within the region. Basically the Regional OES gives technical support to local jurisdictions which are interested to start and develop a process of emergency planning. The Regional OES suggests and promotes the Multi-Hazard-Functional format for emergency plans the jurisdictions are required to develop by the EMA program. Informally the Regional OES does "networking" that means it creates and nurtures interorganizational relations through a process of information circulation. Actually the Regional OES is part of the "issue network" that has developed round the issue of emergency preparedness in the Bay Area. Since it is daily in contact with most of the agencies involved, it contributes to expand and strengthen that network. Basically the Regional OES gives emergency preparedness information to who is part of or want to enter that issue network. This agency is one of the most important point of contact within the complex interorganizational emergency issue network in the Bay Area. The Regional OES is used to having quarterly meetings where all the county (operational area) emergency directors are invited. These meeting push people to get to know each other and are information widespreading on what has been done in terms of emergency preparedness within the region.

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<sup>31</sup> Drabek, 1987 "The professional emergency management", University of Colorado.

BAREPP is a state agency that has been eintailed to a substate area and it is located on that area. It is a state and not a local agency because it has been intended to operate across jurisdictional boundaries. BAREPP was created with a clear identity, an implementation tool for a specific earthquake preparedness program. Yet, sooner the borders of BAREPP's identity got confused<sup>32</sup>. BAREPP's resources have pushed BAREPP to play a liason and networking role within the local emergency preparedness issue network. Actually BAREPP is a state emergency agency with qualified technical skills located at the local level. So, it has started being asked for free consultancy, assistance and information by all the local jurisdictions in the Bay Area that would work on whatever kind - not just earthquake - emergency preparedness. Right now BAREPP is a professional team much closer to the local than to the state level. It provides local jurisdictions with technical resources, materials, guidelines, publictions, information. Its ability to be a "liason" among different levels of government let relationships within the emergency preparedness issue network be smoother. The "liason role" BAREPP has been playing tries to integrate as much as possible different levels of government and agencies. In doing so BAREPP has become an important point of contact, an information source able to support emergency services in the Bay Area. Actually BAREPP gives information, builds trust, and strengthens relationships within the local emergency preparedness issue network<sup>33</sup>.

### **2.3.2 - Local Jurisdictions Within the San Francisco Bay Area**

The empirical research has focused on three local jurisdictions: City and County of San Francisco, City of Oakland and County of Alameda. The purpose of the research has been to focus on the issue network that actually makes emergency preparedness in the analyzed area to figure out, on the one hand, which kind<sup>h</sup> of emergency preparedness takes place at the local level and, on the other hand, to see how much the issue network is integrated and on the basis of what. Methodologically the research has analyzed those process of planning, exercising and resources management that actually makes emergency preparedness. At the same time it has tried to analyze interagency relations within the issue network. Since, as Heclo says, it is difficult to sign the border of an issue network because "participants move in and out of the network constantly, (...) it is almost impossible to say where a network leaves off and its environment begins"<sup>34</sup>, the research has focused just on those actors really

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<sup>32</sup> From the interview with Paula Schulz, Deputy Director of BAREPP

<sup>33</sup> The networking role that BAREPP plays is symbolized, and partially formalized, in the board that support BAREPP's activity. Members of the board are representatives of Local Governments, Local Emergency Services, American Red Cross, Community Outreach, Schools, Seismic Safety Commission, Private Sector, Earth Sciences, Structural Safety Sector, Planning Sector, Labor Sector. BAREPP's board meets every month.

<sup>34</sup> Heclo, H. op.cit., p.103

crucial within the emergency preparedness network because "first responders" in the case of an emergency.

### **Alameda County Emergency Preparedness**

The county of Alameda is not an "operational area" yet. Local jurisdictions within the county have been working on this project, but still they have not reached that level of integration. There are both leadership and technical problems. The leadership problem refers on the one hand to the weakness of the county Office of Emergency Services (OES) that, according to the project of operational area, is supposed to be area coordinator and, on the other hand, to the strength of some of the city OESs within the county - particularly that of Oakland. Actually the County of Alameda OES has just two people who work full time on emergency management while the city of Oakland OES has six full time people. Also the administrative location of this two offices emphasize the difference between them: the Alameda County OES is housed at the Sheriff's Office - so within one specific department - while the city of Oakland OES is housed at the City Manager's Office - so it is hierachically above all the departments it has to coordinate. The technical problem refers to communication. In Alameda county there is not any system to connect jurisdictions other than telephone. Emergency managers can not communicate with each other except by telephone. If an emergency strikes and they lose telephones they can not communicate. Yet, all the Alameda municipalities, the county and the state OES have been working on these problems. First of all the State OES has decided that the leadership of the operational area not necessarily has to belong to the county but it has to be agreed by all the municipalities within the county and the county itself. Second it has been promoting a satellite project that should solve problem in communication. Finally a really important integration tool that has been developed within the county of Alameda: the Alameda county Emergency Management Association (EMAss).

EMAss was created five years ago with the support of the State OES. It is the first time that all the jurisdictions within a county meet on a regular basis - EMAss meets once a month - to discuss issues about emergency preparedness and response. EMAss is composed first of all by the coordinators of the 15 OESs present in the county - including the county OES - than by representatives of other agencies involved in emergency management, like American Red Cross, public utilities, school districts, county offices. Also a coordinator of the Regional OES is member of EMAss as well as BAREPP supports it with technical skills. EMAss is an important point of contact within the emergency preparedness issue network. Actually EMAss gives to local emergency managers the opportunity to know each other, echange information, dialog on common problem. It basically works on integration through consensual agreement.

The county of Alameda OES has been reviewing its Multi-Hazard Functional Plan in the last two years. It has been working on a functional responsibilities matrix that assigns either "primary role" or "liason role" or "support role" to the 29 county departments on the 22 emergency functions identified. This matrix represents a rationalization of emergency functions and responsibilities that clarifies which are the most important agencies to involve in the planning process. Actually on the basis of this matrix the county OES has identified eight lead agencies that play primary roles in performing emergency functions<sup>35</sup>. These agencies are part of a Multi-Hazard Functional Disaster Planning Team that meets every month to work on Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to include in the county emergency plan and on exercises. The lead role is played by the county OES coordinator but the team works on a mutual agreement and cooperation basis. The purpose of the Alameda county OES is to include in the Team also representatives from other agencies, which involvement would qualify the planning process even though they do not play primary roles in emergency functions<sup>36</sup>.

#### **City of Oakland Emergency Preparedness**

The OES of the city of Oakland is housed at the City manager's office. The city manager is the director of the OES but there is a day-to-day coordinator that is actually the emergency manager. For planning purposes recently the OES has established an Emergency Management Board that is composed by the city manager, the mayor, the OES manager, the representatives of the City Departments Heads - those which have functional responsibility in emergency response - and representatives of the City Council. This Board is a recent reorganization of the previous Disaster Council. The main and crucial difference is that while the Disaster Council was supposed to meet only as needed, the Board is going to meet on a regular basis - quarterly or, at least, twice a year. Yet, up to now the Board has met just once. Under the board, five committes have been established to work on different aspects of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery, fiscal/funding. All the basic phases of the emergency management are managed with a committee basis. The committees have not been completely set up, yet. Members of the committees will be comprised of City of Oakland technical staff whose duties involve the subject matter and representatives of agencies that can provide their expertise and resources to assist the committees in performing their functions. Right now the Emergency Management Board is more a plan than an existing structure. Yet, it is expression of how the city of Oakland has been approaching the emergency planning process.

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<sup>35</sup> Office of County Administrator, Fire Districts, General Services, Health Care, Personnel, Public Works, Sheriff's Office, Social Services

<sup>36</sup> From the interview with T. Giltin, OES coordinator

The City of Oakland OES has developed a Multi-Hazard-Functional Plan. Yet, it considers this plan a compliance document to meet EMA's requirements. The Oakland OES believes this plan to be useless during an emergency because too complex and, for this reason, it has been working on operational manuals. These manuals are activity checklists based on the Multi-Hazard-Functional Plan but addressed to specific and single agencies. Interviews with first responder departments<sup>37</sup> have given more information to figure out the emergency preparedness policy-making in the city of Oakland. The city OES has been defined as an important structure to coordinate the different agencies involved in emergency management. Yet, it has been stressed a distinction between policy and operational aspects of emergency management. Oakland OES basically does policy coordination but the operational coordination seems to lack. Actually the Emergency Management Board includes the really top officials of city government and refers to policy aspect. The Board Committees could be a liason between emergency policy and operational aspects but they have not been set up completely yet. At the same time the Multi-Hazard-Functional Plan - operational document - has been overlooked for operational manuals that are not ready yet. Since this situation, every department has been developing its own Standard Operation Procedures, and it does not meet other departements very often. Exercising has not been consistent in the last two years in the city of Oakland. It used to, but not any more. This is because the Loma Prieta Earthquake that struck the Bay Area in October 1989. The Oakland OES is still busy with the recovery for that earthquake.

#### **City and County of San Francisco Emergency Preparedness**

The City and County of San Francisco has an Office of Emergency Services just formally but not actually. It used to have a developed and staffed office - under Mayor Dianne Feinstein's Administration - but under Mayor Art Agnos's Administration the office has been progressively cut down<sup>38</sup>. Right now just one unskilled person is working in the OES trying to meet the basic requirement to maintain the EMA funds. San Francisco has a pretty detailed Multi-Hazard-Functional Plan that was developed under the previous administration. Besides the plan, the emergency preparedness planning in San Francisco is suspended. It has been waiting for a new director of the OES. Right now there are not any policy or operational coordination from the city government. In some way San Francisco OES is not part of the local emergency preparedness issue network any more. None liason or networking role has been performed, none emergency committe or board has been set up. Yet, an operational network has been developed in San Francisco. The first responder departments<sup>39</sup> - mainly the Public Works and the Fire Departments - have been trying to

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<sup>37</sup> Fire Department, Police Department, Public Works and Medical Services.

<sup>38</sup> Dianne Feinstein Administration 1979-1987; Art Agnos Administration 1988-1991

<sup>39</sup> Fire Department, Police Department, Public Works and Medical Services.

establish relationships among them despite the lack of OES coordinating role. These relationships are based on their day-to-day activity - all of them, as first responders, happen to get together to face small daily emergency - but try to go beyond it. All the first responder departments have an emergency management coordinator who plays a boundary role, that means is supposed to develop interdepartmental relationships to develop emergency planning involvement and organize coordinated multi-agency drills (exercises). Even though this "autonomous" issue network has not been developed completely, spontaneous commitment about it has been recorded among all the departments analyzed<sup>40</sup>.

### 2.3.3 - Some Conclusions

All of the three jurisdictions studied within the San Francisco Bay Area are EMA participants and meet the requirements of that program: they have a Multi-Hazard-Functional Plan, in some way they review it and exercise it. All of them have a local OES to coordinate emergency management activities. All of them have contacts both with the Regional OES and with BAREPP. All of them are part of the Mutual Aid System. Yet, the emergency preparedness in each of these jurisdictions has been different. Different emphases, different weaknesses, different strengths.

All over the policy implementation analysis, the three main characteristics of the federal/state emergency policy design have been confirmed in their presence and importance. All of the different local committees, boards, associations, working teams that have been seen as active actors in emergency preparedness policy, have been working on "integration" on the basis of "mutual agreements". These structures are points of contact within the emergency preparedness network that try to integrate different capabilities - sectors, agencies - different aspects, and different tasks of emergency management. The basic criterion of integration has been confirmed to be functional - emergency functions - while the basic tool is "team work" based on "agreement" and cooperation.

An important insight has been shown by the implementation analysis: the distinction between policy and operational levels - or aspects or dimensions - of emergency management. This insight emphasizes the architecture of localism that has been previously analyzed: the state level supports the development of emergency preparedness policy at the local level because it is the local level that has to face the problem of operational response to emergency. FEMA, the CEM/IEMS strategy, the California State OES, its decentralized units - Regional OES and BAREPP -, support first of all the policy aspects of emergency

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<sup>40</sup> From the interview with the Disaster Coordinator at the Department of Public Health - Emergency Medical Services Agency

preparedness. They provide programs, information, assistance, guidelines, to set an emergency preparedness policy at the local level, that means definition of emergency functions and identification of resources - which agencies are involved, the mutual aid system -. All the operational and technical aspects of emergency preparedness can be faced just when a policy has been developed and there is a day-to-day commitment. Operational coordination requires high commitment from the agencies involved, and it can be achieved just through joint team-work and plan exercising.

Findings about the jurisdictions analyzed can be summarized as following. Alameda County has been working on operational integration. Both the EMAss and the Multi-Hazard Functional Disaster Planning Team have been trying to face operational problems and integrate operational capabilities. The process of planning is pretty developed but exercises does not take place really often. Emergency preparedness within the city of Oakland has been focusing more on the policy aspects than on the operational ones. An operational network has not been developed and the first responder departments have denounced this as a lack. The City and County of San Francisco presents an opposit situation. The policy dimension of the emergency management is stuck, while the first responder departments have started developing an operational network, despite the lack of OES coordination.

### **3 - Emergency Preparedness Policy-making in Italy**

The Italian emergency policy is really young. Until ten years ago the "emergency issue" was not even discussed within the policy agenda. The Italian emergency system would focus just on response without organizing any permanent structure or function for emergency management. Basically a "crisis-reactive" emergency management model was in place<sup>41</sup>. The awareness of emergency management as a day-to-day activity that can be planned and organized in peace time has been developing in Italy just for a few years and it still needs more development. Actually, it has not been even conceptualized what is "emergency management". All the activities that refer to emergency management are still defined as "civil protection", a concept that emphasizes response and recovery and is not suitable for including mitigation and preparedness. A recent act (L.225/92) for the first time has tried to give a definition of emergency management. But, still, that conceptual definition does not include emergency preparedness as a specific aspect of emergency management. As this paper is going to show, emergency preparedness in Italy is perceived as an operational aspect of emergency response and not a policy issue. Even though the legislation, here and there, supports emergency planning, emergency preparedness has not been framed properly within the emergency policy design. For this reason, before getting into the specificity of

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<sup>41</sup> Petak, W. op.cit

emergency preparedness, it is necessary to analyze the general frame of the Italian "civil protection" policy.

The Italian emergency policy has not been supported by any specific program or strategy. It has been designed by different acts that have been following one another without providing an integrated view of the whole policy. However, those acts are the basis of the Italian emergency policy design. That design presents some characteristics almost opposite to those of the U.S./California emergency policy. As we will see, it tries to face the complexity of the emergency issue in terms of "coordination"; the basic mechanism of governance of that complexity is "legal authority"; and the policy is basically centralized - it does not support the local level.

The paper will focus first on the legislation that has set up the Italian emergency system to figure out the emergency policy design and, specifically, those basic aspects of emergency preparedness like planning, exercising, and identification of resources. Then the paper will take an implementation perspective focusing on emergency preparedness in two local areas within the Italian region of Lombardia.

### **3.1 - Emergency Policy Design**

The Italian emergency policy design basically reflects a never solved ambivalence among two different conception of civil protection. The first conception comes from an old view of emergency as "chaos" that needs "command" and "control"<sup>42</sup>, it focuses on response and emphasizes the basic vertical axis/top-down line of government - Ministry of the Interior-prefect-mayor. The second, more<sup>2</sup> recent, conception frames emergency as a problem that can be faced on a day-to-day basis; it focuses on hazard identification and mitigation, and emphasizes the territorial axis of government - the territorial administrative jurisdictions: commune, province, region. The evolution from the first to the second conception of civil protection has been part of a widespread reframing process of the "emergency issue" that has produced a modern view of emergency management<sup>43</sup>. Yet, in the case of Italy this two conceptions are still co-existing and the ambiguity that comes from their conflictual overlapping has never been resolved. On the one hand these two conceptions, and moreover the structures that embody them, have never been integrated; on the other hand the second conception has never developed enough to be able to substitute the previous one. The confusing legislation, different emergency acts that have followed one another, mirrors this unsolved ambivalence. A first act (l.996/1970) would emphasize the

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<sup>42</sup> Dynes, R. 1990, op.cit.

<sup>43</sup> Drabek T. 1991 op.cit.

territorial axis of government and express the beginning of a new conception of civil protection. A second act (DPR 66/1981) would stress the vertical axis of government going back to the previous conception of civil protection. A third and recent act (1.225/1992) emphasizes the territorial axis and it might promote a modern conception of civil protection.

### **3.1.1 - Emergency Services Organization**

The Italian emergency system has been in place for almost ten years. It has developed partially on the basis of the acts 1.996/70 and DPR 66/81 and partially on the basis of governmental decrees and ministerial circulars. The new act (1.225/1992) was supposed to rationalize the existing system; yet, it does not. Actually the new act does not solve the ambiguity that affects the Italian emergency system and in some way increases it. At the same time it does not present itself as complete. Other pieces of legislation are needed to define relationships among the different components of the system. The paper will first analyze the existing emergency system that has developed before the new act; then it will analyze what might change and what might not following the new act.

The existing emergency system is basically centralized. Actually, just at the central level specific structures for emergency management have been set up. The only decentralized emergency management units are the prefectures that are provincial branches of the Ministry of the Interior. Two structures for emergency management are present at the central level: the Directorate for Civil Protection at the Ministry of the Interior and the Department of Civil Protection at the Cabinet. These two structures embody the two conceptions of civil protection defined previously.

The Directorate for Civil Protection has always been part of the organization of Ministry of the Interior. It used to be just the state fire department. With the act 1.996/1970 it became the Directorate for Civil Protection and Antifire Services. The Directorate is an operative structure that emphasizes control and response in emergency management<sup>44</sup>. The act D.P.R. 66/1981, recognizing the prefect as local coordinator in emergency, stressed the role of this structure - prefects are decentralized, and dependent components of the Ministry of the Interior - and the vertical axis of government in emergency management. Actually prefectures have got charged of emergency management at the local (provincial) level.

At the same time - early 1980's - the second conception of civil protection started developing<sup>45</sup>. It was perceived as necessary a permanent structure that would focus on the

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<sup>44</sup> Actually both the Fire Department and the Police Department are housed at the Ministry of the Interior.

<sup>45</sup> After the earthquake that struck Southern Italy in 1980 and the emergency of Vermicino in 1981.

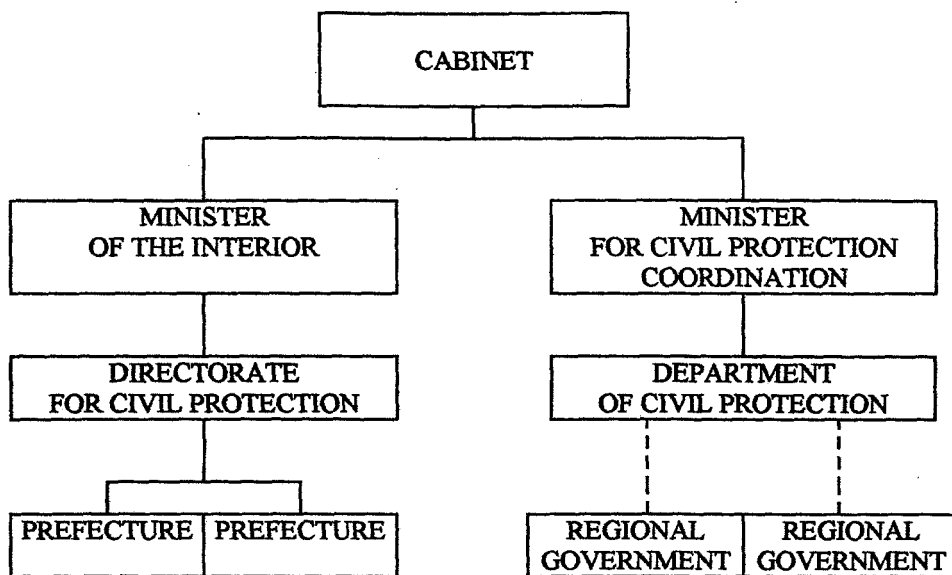
daily aspect of emergency management. A governmental decree (DCPM 4/9/84) set up the Department of Civil Protection at the Cabinet level. The absence of a legislative regulation of the new structure did not help the definition of its role within the emergency system and, particularly, in relation to the Directorate at the Ministry of the Interior. The Department was created as a permanent lead coordinating agency. Yet, it did not take place either an integration between the Department and the Directorate or a clarification of their roles and relationships. The Department was given a new Minister as director - the Minister for civil protection "coordination"<sup>46</sup>. The Minister was charged to promote coordination among all the agencies that could be involved in emergency management, but he was not given any tool - either organizational or authoritative - to promote such coordination. He was given an operative interagency committee - EMERCOM - to coordinate response to state emergency. But none interagency permanent structure for day-to-day activities was set up. At the same time it was not defined if the new Department was an operative structure to manage emergency response or a structure in staff at the Cabinet to develop mitigation and preparedness policies. Actually, even though the Department was given several operation centers<sup>47</sup>, the basic operative structures - Fire department, law enforcement agencies, prefectures - remained under the control of the Ministry of the Interior; as well as, even though the Department was given a scientific commission - Commissione Grandi Rischi - to work on statewide hazard identification and emergency forecasting, it was not given any tool - either legislative or authoritative or financial - to develop preparedness and mitigation policy. Moreover, the Department was not given any link with the local jurisdictions. None decentralized unit was set up and none relationship built with the prefectures, that still are the local structures for emergency management. During its development the Department has happened to develop some relationships with regional jurisdictions. Yet, it has never played a leading or promoting role<sup>48</sup>. Actually the Department does not play any networking or liason role within the emergency management system and it reveals itself to be a pretty autonomous entity.

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<sup>46</sup> He is a minister without ministry that receives delegated authority from the President of the Cabinet for specific functions.

<sup>47</sup> An operation center to coordinate the airplane operations in fire emergency (C.O.A.U.); a center about sea pollution emergency (PROCIVILMARE); a developed central facility as Emergency Operations center (CE.SI); an information center that has been working on information system to support emergency preparedness (C.A.S.I).

<sup>48</sup> It basically provides financial support to those Regional Governments that ask for it to develop local mitigation policy. But it does not provide them with any guidelines.



The ambivalence between the Department of civil protection and the Directorate for civil protection has been approached by the legislation in terms of "coordination". "Coordination" has been considered the way to liaison these two emergency structures that have never been integrated either in policy or in organizational terms. Actually, it has not been explicitated the policy frame within this coordination should take place or the tools of this coordination.

The new act (1.225/92) apparently emphasizes the territorial axis of government. Actually it stresses hazard identification and mitigation as crucial phases of emergency management and seems to adopt a perspective of decentralization<sup>49</sup>. The act involves the Regional Government in hazard identification and mitigation activities; it establishes committees at the provincial governments and charged them for emergency planning; it gives wider responsibility to the mayor in emergency management. Yet, the act is not precise about the way the regional government could be involved in emergency mitigation and hazard identification<sup>50</sup>; it doesn't say if either prefectures have to keep on doing their emergency planning or the provincial planning replaces the one made by the prefects; it does

<sup>49</sup> The act refers directly to programs the Regional Government should developed (art.12) and indirectly to a coordination role it should play among the local jurisdictions (ref.to L.142/1990) about hazard identification and emergency mitigation.

<sup>50</sup> The act is really generic when it refers to the regional program and it does not clarify in which way the other local jurisdictions, programs could be consistent with the Regional one. Basically the act does not precise the kind of interaction among all the local jurisdictions in emergency management.

not require the municipal government to set an emergency office and it does not define the role of the mayor in relation to the prefect. Even though the act seems to emphasize the territorial axis of government and the new conception of civil protection as permanent day-to-day function based on hazard identification, emergency planning and mitigation, it does not develop this design completely. In fact, there is a contradiction the new act is based on. On the one hand, the new act is supposed to set a "statewide service of civil protection" that means to design an integrated emergency system among all the components that are involved in emergency management. On the other hand, it does not set any strategy or give any indication about how organize the interrelationships among those components. It basically lacks of systemic rationalization. For example the new act mentions a new centralized structure - National Committee of Civil Protection - that will be the main centralized policy making structure within the statewide emergency system. It will be charged for both mitigation and preparedness. But, at the same time, the new act overlooks the Directorate for civil protection at the Ministry of Interior and it does not say how this structure will fit into the statewide system.

### **3.1.2 - Emergency Preparedness Policy**

As it has been said before, an emergency preparedness policy has not been conceptualized in Italy. The interorganizational complexity of emergency response is basically faced in terms of "coordination", but no policy to define/support/organize this coordination has been developed, yet. Emergency preparedness has been in place in Italy, but any specific strategy or investment has been planned about it. Emergency preparedness started developing in 1984. The prefectures, had been recognized coordinating agencies for emergency management by the act DPR 66/81 and they had to get in some way prepared for emergency response. The prefectures were asked to perform emergency preparedness; yet, no reorganization or training took place. Since prefectures did not have the staff to fulfill the new function, a ministerial decree was issued for the allocation of retiring army officials to the prefectures to help them in organizing emergency preparedness. The paper will focus on those basic aspect of emergency preparedness already defined: emergency planning, resources identification and exercising.

Emergency planning takes place at the local (provincial) level - it does not exist a national plan - and it is responsibility of the prefect. The prefect is provided with guidelines by the Directorate for civil protection<sup>51</sup>. The provincial plan has to refer to the main hazard

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<sup>51</sup> An Emergency Service housed at the Department of civil protection is supposed to promote coordination among the emergency plans developed by prefectures. Also the Regional Government is charged of the same kind of coordination. Yet, the empirical research has shown that this coordination does not take place. Actually it is not clear what this coordination has to refer to.

and to focus on resources. The plan is required to list all the resources - actors, facilities, tools - present on the provincial area that might be useful during an emergency. Also the municipalities are required to write an emergency plan that has to be consistent with the one organized by the prefect. The municipal plans have to focus on resources available for emergency response as well. Emergency planning, on the basis of the act 66/1981, has to include two coordinating structures for emergency response: CCS and COM<sup>52</sup>. CCS and COM are emergency response coordinating structures, defined in all details by the legislation. They do not exist and are not organized until an emergency strikes. The prefect, once an emergency has occurred, has to decide their compositions - who is actually going to compose them. The CCS is a collective structure, set up at the prefecture, composed by representatives of response agencies, that supports the prefect's coordination; in the same way the COM is a collective structure, set up at the emergency site, composed by the local representatives of response agencies, that supports the coordination of a civil servant expressly named - either from the prefecture or from the Ministry of the Interior - to rule the COM.

Information about resources identification included in the provincial plans has to be transmitted to the Ministry of the Interior. Actually, an intelligence system, called "Mercury System", has been set up by the Directorate of Civil Protection. The Mercury System is an information system for the automation of local emergency plans and it is both a retrieval data base and an operational instrument. Through the local emergency plans - provincial and municipal - the system has been collecting data on resources present on territory and on characteristics of the territory - both administrative and geographical. The system enables inquiry of resources, inquiry of the resource holder, and inquiry of structures - hospital, shelter areas and so on. At the same time it has a graphic section that let possible the display of the territory with the road network and the railroad network. The system has a centralized structure. It is managed by the Directorate for civil protection at the Ministry of the Interior. The prefectures - peripheral units - are work stations required to update the data through personal computers. They can access to the data base but the basic functions of the system are centralized.

Emergency exercising has been regulated and supported through ministerial circulars issued both by the Minister for the coordination of civil protection and the Minister of the Interior. Yet, until 1981 emergency exercising used to be essentially military; the army would organize exercises without any other agency involvement. Then, the successful experience of some local areas emphasized the importance of this aspect of emergency

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<sup>52</sup> Centro Coordinamento Soccorsi (CCM); Centro Operativo Misto (COM).

preparedness in terms of response testing<sup>53</sup>. The Ministry of Interior has set up a four years program of exercises for all the prefectures. Every year, some of the 49 Italian prefectures are asked to do an exercise; basically each prefecture happens to exercise once every four years on the basis of a rotation criterion. The ministerial program does not distinguish different kinds of exercises and the schedule do not pay attention to either the degree of risk or the kind of hazard the different prefectures have to face. The ministerial schedule sets which prefectures have to exercise every year, but it does not decide about the scenario. The prefectures have to do it. They are asked to send an exercise proposal both to the Department of civil protection and to the Directorate for civil protection. The proposal has to be approved by the Department of civil protection. Yet, the prefectures receive funds for the exercises from the Directorate for civil protection.

### **3.2 - An Implementation Perspective: The Region of Lombardia**

As we have seen, legislation gives to Regional Government a confusing role in terms of emergency management. Regional Government is part of that territorial axis of government that has been in some way included within the general emergency policy design, but without specific definition of responsibility and interrelations with other components of the emergency system. Despite the ambiguities of its role, the Region of Lombardia has been working on emergency management. It has had an office of emergency services since 1981. The regional office of emergency services has been mainly working on preparedness in terms of operative center setting and information technology investment. Right now the Region Lombardia is able to coordinate emergency operations but it has not been given any authority to do it. At the same time, the Region Lombardia has not developed any stable informal/operational relationship with other actors/agencies of the emergency system. In particular, it has no relationships with the prefectures. It does exist a regional interagency emergency committee - Regional Committee of Civil Protection - that meets about twice a year, but it does not include prefects as members<sup>54</sup>. Basically the Region Lombardia could play a coordinating role within the emergency preparedness network if this network had been developed, either formally or informally. Since this network has not been developed, emergency preparedness lays on the administrative/formal network that expresses the "vertical" axis of central government - Ministry of the Interior, prefect, mayor. Actually emergency preparedness does not have any specific/ad hoc network.

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<sup>53</sup> That is the case of the Region Friuli-Venezia Giulia, to which experience refers the ministerial circular n.6/DPC/86 that promote emergency exercising.

<sup>54</sup> This committee was set up by the act 996/70 that, as it has been seen, would emphasize the territorial axis of government. Actually members of the committee are basically representatives of the regional government, the provincial government and the municipal government.

The empirical research has focused on emergency preparedness in two provinces within the territory of the Region Lombardia: province of Bergamo and province of Sondrio.

### **Province of Bergamo and Province of Sondrio**

Emergency preparedness presents similar characteristics in province of Bergamo and province of Sondrio. In both of the provinces the prefect is recognized as the authority for emergency coordination and the prefecture as the leading agency for emergency preparedness and response. Actually the prefectures are the only agencies that have been working on emergency preparedness within the two provinces<sup>55</sup>. In both of the prefectures the emergency planning has been carried out by retired army officials under the supervision of a civil servant. The process of planning has not included the agencies that are involved in emergency response. These agencies have been given a copy of the provincial plan and informed about it; but none interagency planning committee has been set up. The provincial plan of Bergamo and the provincial plan of Sondrio are pretty similar in their structure. They provide general information about the territory they refer to and the hazards that are present in that territory. Then, the provincial plans list both the actors/agencies that might be involved and the resources that might be useful in emergency response at the local level. Yet, the plans does not design any "functional" interaction among the agencies or "functional" allocation of resources. The actors/agencies are mentioned just in terms of their competences as defined by law. Legislation is the main frame of the plans that actually describe the formal system of authority as set up by legislation. Particularly, the plans stress the "vertical" axis of government emphasizing the centrality of the prefect at the local level and the Ministry of Interior at the central level. It is interesting to observe that the Department of Civil Protection at the Cabinet is completely overlooked by the plans. Both of the plans mention COM and CCS structures without setting up their effective organization. These interagency committees do not exist until an emergency strikes. Anyway, even when set up, these committee have just to support the "vertical" coordination that takes place on the basis of legal authority embodied by the prefect in the case of CCS, and by a civil servant in the case of COM.

All the information the provincial plans provide - the plans basically refer to resources identification - is transmitted to the Ministry of the Interior through the Mercury System. Yet, just in one of the two prefectures - prefecture of Sondrio - the system is in place. The empirical research has shown the Mercury System to be an emergency management tool for the central level but not for the local level. Actually, on the one hand the local level knows already its own resources and does not need to access to the system to get information about

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<sup>55</sup> In the case of Bergamo, the provincial government has been promoting autonomously activities to support voluntary organization for emergency rescue and shelter.

them; on the other hand, since the way the Mercury System has been organized, the whole system intelligence is accessible just by the central level - Ministry of the Interior. Nevertheless the interviews have underlined that to keep the system updated is really demanding - actually the prefecture of Bergamo does not do it- and an "out of date" data base system is likely to be useless. Basically, several perplexities on the Mercury System have been raised.

Exercising takes place within the provinces of Bergamo and Sondrio just on the basis of the ministerial schedule: every four years the prefectures have to organize an exercise. Up to now just one exercising has taken place within the two provinces. The interviews have portrayed these exercises more as a show than as an operational tool for emergency management. Actually the exercises have turned out to be pre-planned performances of a general mobilization of resources, without being addressed to specific emergency management problems. Though these exercises have, at least, fulfilled the goal to let the agencies involved get to know each other.

### **3.3 - Italian Emergency Policy-making: Some Conclusions**

The Italian emergency policy design is basically split into two different axes of government supporting two different conceptions of civil protection that have never been integrated. On the one hand there is the new conception of civil protection based on preparedness and mitigation as day-to-day territorial activities which face in advance the problem of the emergency occurring; on the other hand, there is the old conception of civil protection based on response to emergency perceived as an exceptionally disastrous event that, once it has occurred, requires central control and command. The first conception has never developed enough to replace the old one and the ambiguity that comes from their overlapping has increased more and more. Actually the Department of Civil Protection, that should embody the first conception, has never developed an emergency preparedness policy as well as a territorial network to support it. At the same time the Ministry of the Interior, that embodies the old conception of civil protection based on command and control, has actually developed emergency preparedness despite the lack of specific legislative support. For emergency preparedness it has been used the formal administrative network that expresses the vertical/top-down axis of government - the line that goes from the Ministry of Interior to the prefect, and from the prefect to the mayor - emphasizing centralization, authority and hierarchy. The basic problem that lays behind this never solved ambivalence is the lack of a conceptual definition of "emergency management". Actually "emergency preparedness" as a policy issue to face the interorganizational complexity of emergency response - as it is portrayed by the modern view of emergency management - has never

been developed in Italy. Emergency preparedness has been seen as an operational activity to support top-down emergency response without requiring any policy strategy.

Territorial decentralization vs. centralization is a policy dilemma that sounds to have been solved, in the case of Italy, in terms of centralization. Actually the basic structure of the Italian emergency policy is centralized. Just at the central level there are specific structures that have been working on the emergency issue - Department of Civil Protection and Directorate for Civil Protection. At the local level, besides regional offices with a confusing role, it has not been set up any specific structure. The prefectures - branches of the central Ministry of the Interior - have been charged of emergency management. The implementation research has shown that in the province of Bergamo and in that of Sondrio emergency preparedness is carried out just by the prefectures. It has also pointed out that these prefectures do not involve other agencies in the process of planning and that they are not in contact either with the Regional and the Provincial government at the local level or with the Department of Civil Protection at the central level. These prefectures work just within the vertical axis/formal administrative network of government. Besides the Ministry of the Interior, they are just in contact with the mayors of the municipalities within the provincial area to collect that information about emergency resources they have to transmit to the Ministry of the Interior. Basically the prefectures play the role of interface between the Ministry of the Interior and the local territory to get that information which is the basis for top-down emergency management. This design is well portrayed by the architecture of the Mercury System, which can be defined as a resource management tool for top-down emergency response.

The interorganizational complexity of emergency response has been faced by the Italian emergency policy in terms of "coordination". Actually "coordination" is emphasized throughout emergency legislation. All the components of the emergency system - all those actors/agency that might be involved in emergency response - have to coordinate their action with the others. Yet, legislation has never defined either the policy frame within interorganizational coordination should take place - coordination of who, to do what, when and why - or the tools of this kind of coordination. "Coordination" sounds like a panacea to solve all the problems of ambivalence, ambiguity, lack of definition about emergency management in Italy.

The basic mechanism for the governance of interorganizational relationships that both the policy design and the implementation research has emphasized is legal authority. None interagency committee, at any level, has been set up. The only actors that have been recognized as able to manage the interorganizational complexity of emergency response on

the basis of their legal authority, are the prefect at the local level and the Director of the Directorate for Civil Protection and the Minister for Civil Protection Coordination at the central level. Legal authority has been shown as the only coordination tool.

#### **4 - Emergency Preparedness Policy-making: A Comparative View**

What the U.S./California experience has mainly shown is the policy-makers' awareness of the importance and complexity of interorganizational relations in emergency response. This awareness has shaped emergency preparedness policy, that has been framed as a way to reduce - by planning and exercising - that complexity. The U.S./California focus on "integration" actually expresses an attempt to structure interorganizational action and, in this way, facilitate that interorganizational coordination an emergency response calls for. The CEM/IEMS emergency preparedness strategy has tried to developed a functional and multi-hazard integration able to cross sectoral and jurisdictional borders. The activity of networking and liason roles played by state and local agencies go in the same direction. The goal is to build and nurture a local and specific emergency preparedness network able to provide an immediate and coordinated response when an emergency occurs. Basically the U.S./California emergency policy-making emphasizes interagency relations throughout, and provides them a policy frame - functional integration based on mutual agreement - to address them toward interorganizational coordination.

The Italian experience has shown a less developed awareness about the interorganizational complexity of emergency response. Actually a modern conception of emergency management has not developed completely yet, and it is still missing a systematic rationalization of both the emergency issue<sup>1</sup> and the emergency system. The multiagency action that emergency response requires has been faced by the Italian policy in terms of "coordination". But this coordination has not been given any basis besides legal authority. None common frame for the actors/agencies involved has been developed. The emergency plans are lists of emergency resources and agency competences without any functional allocation or interorganizational action planning. Interagency relations are not emphasized as crucial. None specific emergency preparedness network has been developed, especially at the local level where no stable interorganizational relationships take place among the different components of the emergency system. Emergency preparedness lays on the administrative/formal network that expresses the "vertical" axis of central government - Ministry of the Interior, prefect, mayor.

Basically the research has shown different characteristics of emergency preparedness policy-making in California and Italy that can be summarized by the following figures.

**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS POLICY-MAKING: A COMPARATIVE VIEW**

| <b>Policy Characteristics:</b>                                | <b>CALIFORNIA</b> | <b>ITALY</b>    |
|---|-------------------|-----------------|
| Approach to the issue ...                                     | Integration       | Coordination    |
| Mechanism of governance<br>interorganizational complexity ... | Agreement         | Legal authority |
| Underlying logic ...  | Localism          | Centralization  |

| <b>Emergency Preparedness:</b> | <b>CALIFORNIA</b>                      | <b>ITALY</b>                |
|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Perceived as ...               | Policy issue                           | Operational activity        |
| Based on ...                   | Functions                              | Resources                   |
| To ...                         | Face interorganizational<br>complexity | Help top-down<br>management |

| <b>Implementation Network:</b>     | <b>CALIFORNIA/USA</b>        | <b>ITALY</b>                                   |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Emergency preparedness network ... | As specific issue network    | Lays on the vertical<br>administrative network |
| Based on ...                       | Networking and liaison roles | Formal relationships                           |

It is possible to look for reasons of such different characteristics of emergency policy-making in California and Italy. These differences come from, on the one hand, the different degree of development of an emergency management culture and, on the other hand, the different institutional architecture of the administrative system within the two countries.

As it has been seen, Italy has not developed a modern culture of emergency management, yet. The old conception of civil protection is not over yet, and the new conception is still developing. Emergency preparedness has not been framed as a crucial aspect of emergency management but as operational activity to support central emergency response. Italy has a delayed approach to the emergency issue and basically a younger emergency policy in relation to California. The act that should provide a first rationalization of both the emergency issue and the emergency system has just been approved (L.225/1992). California, instead, during the 1980's has developed and implemented a modern view of emergency preparedness that has been expressed by the creation of FEMA and the development of the CEM/IEMS strategy.

More complex is to frame emergency policy-making within the institutional and administrative architecture of the two different systems - California and Italy - to figure out the origins of the differences identified. Some insights are following.

The U.S. federal system is a fragmented and decentralized system. Every jurisdiction - state, county, municipality - is an autonomous entity differently organized. This institutional architecture shapes U.S. policy-making. In the case of the emergency policy-making, the assumption of systemic fragmentation has promoted an approach to the issue in terms of "integration". A fragmented system needs integration to provide a synergetic action. At the same time fragmentation and decentralization support "agreement" as mechanism of governance of interorganizational relations - "integration" within a fragmented and decentralized system is likely to be based on mutual agreements. Finally, a decentralized system emphasizes localism by definition.

If we take a broader view, it is possible to observe that "integration", "agreement" and "localism" are principles of the nowadays conception of U.S. federalism. Actually the new U.S. federalism that started developing in the 60's<sup>56</sup> promote intergovernmental policy-making based on "shared governance", that means a practice of interagency partnerships based on functional integration and agreement among the different agencies involved in a policy program implementation. Actually, policy-making within the complexity of the U.S. federal system is based on practice of networking and agreement among those actors that can give a contribution to carry out a policy program at different level of government. This insight portrays the characteristics of U.S./California emergency policy-making identified by

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<sup>56</sup> This "new federalism" has been seen as an evolution from a former view of "state's rights" federalism and expression of a more cooperative and more active involvement of the federal government in local policy-making. See Grodzins M. "The American System", Rand McNally Chicago, 1966; May P. e Williams W. "Disaster Policy Implementation. Managing Programs under Shared Governance" Plenum Press, New York, 1986; Regan M. "The New Federalism" Oxford University Press, New York, 1972.

this paper as expression of the institutional architecture and administrative culture of the U.S. federal system.

The Italian administrative system, instead, is centralized and based on assumptions of standardization and homogeneity. Fire departments, law enforcement agencies, prefectures are organized in the same way all over the country and they all depend on the central level of government. Centralization and standardization are expression of the bureaucratic structure and bureaucratic culture that still characterize the Italian administrative system<sup>57</sup>. The bureaucratic tradition emphasizes "legal authority" and "formal coordination" as mechanisms of interdepartmental relations governance. These mechanisms stress the vertical dimension of interagency relations and overlook the horizontal one. It does not exist a tradition of either "liaison" and "networking" roles or "team-work". Effective interagency coordination becomes a problem of tough solution within such an administrative system. In this way, these insights let us frame and explain the characteristics of Italian emergency policy-making identified by the paper within the institutional architecture of the Italian administrative system.

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<sup>57</sup> Freddi G. "Vincoli storico-strutturali sulla prestazione delle burocrazie legali-razionali" in *Rivista Italiana di Scienza Politica*, 2, 1982, pp.183-211.