



IMPROVEMENT OF ACTIVITIES IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AMONG MEMBERS OF FIRE AND RESCUE UNITS

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ABSTRACT

The precondition for efficient emergency management represent clear and in advance defined procedures which are aimed to proactive action and timely elimination of possible sources of threat or danger, i.e. identification of possible danger, sources and forms of threats, possible effects and consequences, the perception of power and resources, and based on that, implementation of a preventive measure for prevention or reducing the possibility of occurrence of negative events, as well as to reducing already occurred consequences. Different authorities and organizations for example police, firefighters, ambulance, civil protection, etc.) can be identified as subjects of response to emergencies, which are in a state of constant alert due to the nature of the work and are ready to react first and activate other services and local community as a whole. Fire and rescue units have a primary role in emergency situations management. In that context, it is very important to find an answer to the question, which are the topics and activities which human resource management will be dealing with in the 21st century, thus creating an organization which will completely reply to dynamic and changeable surrounding that brings a lot of danger and threat to people, material goods and environment. Therefore, in this study, we will direct our research attention to human resources management activities in fire and rescue units.

Key words:

emergency situations, human resource management, fire-rescue units

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ABSTRACT

Preduslov za efikasno upravljanje vanrednim situacijama predstavljaju jasne i unapred definisane procedure koje su usmerene ka proaktivnom delovanju i blagovremenom otklanjanju mogućih izvora ugrožavanja ili opasnosti, odnosno identifikaciju moguće opasnosti, izvora i oblike ugrožavanja, moguće efekte i posledice, sagledvanje snage i sredstva i na osnovu toga sprovođenje preventivne mere radi sprečavanja ili smanjenja verovatnoće nastanka negativnih događaja kao i radi umanjenja već nastalih posledica. Kao subjekti odgovora na vanredne situacije, mogu se prepoznati različiti organi i organizacije (npr. policija, vatrogasci, hitna pomoć, civilna zaštita idr) koje su zbog prirode posla u stanju stalne pripravnosti i koje su spremne da prve reaguju i aktiviraju druge službe i lokalnu zajednicu u celini. Vatrogasno spasilačke jedinice imaju primarnu ulogu u upravljanju vanrednim situacijama. U tom kontekstu veoma je važno naći odgovor na pitanje, koje su to teme i aktivnosti kojima će se baviti menadžment ljudskih resursa u 21. veku stvarajući pri tom organizaciju koja će u potpunosti odgovoriti dinamičnom i promenljivom okruženju koje sa sobom nosi niz opasnosti i pretnji po ljude, materijalna dobra i životnu sredinu. Stoga ćemo u ovom radu usmeriti istraživačku pažnju na aktivnosti u upravljanju ljudskim resursima u vatrogasno-spasilačkim jedinicama.

Key words:

vanredne situacije, upravljanje ljudskim resursima, vatrogasno-spasilačke jedinice

1 INTRODUCTION

Emergency situations represent very important area from the aspect of achieving the function of state security. Emergency management is a very complex process. Seriousness and complexity of the consequences of emergency situations requires an equal approach in the management and organization of prevention, response-rescue and elimination of the resulting consequences. Emergency situations, regardless of whether they are created by action of nature or man, each day take a great deal of tribute in human lives and in various ways destroys and degrades the environment and cause great material losses and damages. They are significant due to the fact that they are very frequent and leave great consequences. Existing organizational framework for performing emergency jobs of protection and rescue in emergency situations in Republic of Serbia, which includes the system of organs, bodies and units, together with a in advanced and organized system of protection and rescue measures, is regulated by the Law on Emergency Situations, adopted by Republic of Serbia in 2009. year. The law adjusts system of organization and functioning with the assessment of vulnerability and real needs of protection and rescue of population and material goods in emergency situations. In this way, Republic of Serbia ensures the construction of a unique protection and rescue system in accordance with this law and other regulations, as well as programs, plans and other documents related to protection and rescue and civil protection.

Considering that fire and rescue units have a vital role in the protection and rescue system, and based on the analysis of relevant literary and legal norms, it is necessary to identify the key challenges of human resource management in the fire department and point out some of the directions for their further resolving. However, the lack of research on human resources management in the fire department is evident, despite the fact that the firefighter-rescuer represents the most risky and demanding profession around the world. There is a huge gap between challenges that fire services are facing with and current level of their performance. Starting from the importance of the human resource management function for the performance of each organization, numerous human resource management issues in the fire department opens.

2 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The contemporary science literature on management points to the conclusion that Human Resources Management (HRM) is one of the most vital functions of a complex process of directing groups of people in performing certain tasks and achieving pre-set objectives - management. Management itself is most often described as a complex activity used for performing certain functions in order to provide, deploy and utilize human and material resources in the most efficient manner in order to accomplish the set tasks. The term "human resource management" originated in the eighties of the 20th century with a focus on people as a resource to whom attention should be paid in strategic terms. Human Resources Management is one of the subsystems of an organization's functioning that involves the selection and implementation of goals and policies through the planning, organization, management and control of human resources activities in order to achieve the goals of the organization.”(Mihailović D.,).

“Many theoretical studies carried out on the basis of research have found that human resources can be the source of competitive advantage of the organization (Porter, 1985). Wright and associates (2002) argued that knowledge, skills, abilities, behavior and training of employees are the source of competitive advantage, and expressly or explicitly have a critical role in determining long-term goals and organizational development processes. " Human Resource Management (Dessler) refers to "politics and activities in the execution of managerial tasks in the field of human resources, especially in terms of obtaining, training, assessment and compensation, in conditions of a safe and just environment for employees of enterprises”.(Dessler G., 2002)

„ Human resources and human resource management have strategic importance because they have a potential value and have a central position in creating the capabilities of organizations responsible for their competitive advantage in a market game (Ulrich, Lake, 1999, Tuan, Takahashi,2009).

Human capital is generally defined through individual and collective knowledge, skills and abilities that employees in the organization have (Becker, 1994).

Its key potential is intellectual, which comprise skills, knowledge, skills and motivation of employees. That, in practical terms, means: in order to do something, we need (skills ...), we know (knowledge, experience ...), we have (skills, fitness ...) and we want (motivation). There are growing opinions that effective human resource management is the key to success of entire organization (Lawler,E., Mohrman,S., 2003).

At the same time, the human resources function is under increasing pressure to show that it adds value to job performance through successful development and implementation of human resource (HR) practices through impact management, training and development, rewards, and so on. (John,S., Bjorkman,I.,2015).

The organization uses human potential as a means of achieving set goals, but as well people, also use the organization to realize their own interests (earnings, experience, affirmation, etc.). In order for their work to be effective and give the desired results, people must be satisfied. This was especially emphasized by Abraham Maslov and Douglas McGregor (whose contribution to the understanding of human needs was of extreme importance for management theory and practice), who claimed that only satisfied workers were productive workers. Human resources management, as a modern management concept, simultaneously deals with the holistic and strategic as well as individual and social aspects of people in the organization (Petković and Jovanović, 2001).

Unlike other resources that are generally easy to describe, easily managed, have stable characteristics and (relatively) predictable, human resources are characterized by being complex for management, maintenance, require significant attention to achieve effectiveness, slowly creating, and quickly disappear, are highly specific (at the same time, there is a surplus and lack of human resources in most organizations). Human resources contribute to different ways of organizational success and they must be aligned with the organization's strategy (Pržulj, 2002).

Under the influence of constant social change, as well as a number of security challenges and threats in the work and environment, the crisis response and emergency situations are becoming increasingly complex tasks when it comes to the protection of people, property, natural and material assets. Fire services or firefighting units have a vital role in the state protection and rescue system. This service is available 24 hours in order to protect people, industrial facilities, natural and material assets in the event of fire, flood, earthquake and other emergencies. A large number of tragic events, such as Hurricane Katrina, Nuclear Disaster in Fukushima, large fires, catastrophic earthquakes and floods, have heightened public and organizational awareness of the importance and responsibilities of fire services and other rescue units. As the responsibility of fire fighting rescue units increases, the significance of, and hence, the position of the human resource management function in this field of human activity increases. In fact, all HRD activities and activities from the analysis of work, planning, recruitment and selection, training and development of employees and others can be viewed in direct relation with the work of the service, successful response to crisis and emergency situations and management of security and safety in general, which is in essence and the intention of the author of this paper.

3 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN FIRE RESCUE UNITS

By analyzing the available literature, it is concluded that there is a small number of research that exclusively deals with the problems of HR management of professional fire rescue units. It is necessary to point out that the fire rescue's job is complex, specific, responsible and difficult and essentially very stressful, so firefighters - more than most other professionals - must have a range of psychophysical and motor skills and capabilities. Beebe, Carter, Kastros, Kramer, Messmer and Bogardus, Smith, Sweeny and others indicate that the functions and responsibilities of human resources management in firefighting rescue units are largely attributed to individuals to whom these are not primary duties. The HRM function in these organizations are carried out in accordance with needs or due to a crisis event and the staff in charge of these tasks mainly hasn't undergone specialized training related to complex human resource management issues. According to Beebe's findings, the chief, head of the fire brigade, the commander, the deputy chief, the commander of the fire brigade and other members in higher positions are in charge of implementing the personnel policy.

In Republic of Serbia, professional fire brigades are fire and rescue units of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, fire brigades of the Ministry of Defense and the Serbian Armed Forces, fire brigade units of local self-government and fire brigade units of legal entities classified as the first category of fire threat (Fire Protection Act, Sl. No.). The Ministry of the Interior monitors the operation of firefighting units, apart from fire brigades of the Ministry of Defense and the Army of Serbia. The professional fire service in Republic of Serbia is composed of fire brigade-rescue units deployed in units (brigade, battalion, company, squad, reinforced division, department) at 165 locations within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and 64 industrial fire brigades (Strategy for fire protection for the period 2012-2017). Volunteer fire brigades are deployed in different locations throughout the territory of Republic of Serbia and, within their competencies, conduct education of the population on needs of fire protection. Human resources in fire and rescue units are under the umbrella of the Human Resources and Common Affairs Division of the Ministry of the Interior of Republic of Serbia, the Administration for Firefighting and Rescue Units. By establishing the Sector, all functions that fall within the domain of human resources management are integrated. As one of the most important, the need for improvement of transparency, fairness and protection of the rights of employees was emphasized in order to fulfill one of the most important role of human resources - support to effective and efficient work and development of employees in the Ministry. In addition to the aforementioned activities, the Human Resources Development Strategy of the Ministry of Interior 2011-2016 has been adopted in order to achieve a clearly defined goal, to enable the human resources management function to continuously provide and enable people with adequate knowledge, skills, abilities and experience come to appropriate jobs.

In Human Resource Sector, there are several functional areas that deal with: strategy, policy, metrics and information system of human resources, development of organization and people, labor law and status issues, recruitment and selection,

vocational education and training, health and safety at work , benefits and earnings of employees. It is still the task of the entire Ministry of Internal Affairs to develop the envisaged functions in a way that will adequately respond to needs of all employees in the Ministry and which will consequently contribute to better quality of services provided by the Ministry to the citizens of the Republic of Serbia.

4 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES IN THE CASE OF FIRE RESCUE UNITS

More recently, organizations and institutions have recognized the concept of human resources as the main means of achieving success, quality, profitability, efficiency, effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of implementing set plans. For this reason, human resources departments have a wide range of activities, and these activities are as follows: employment and provision of adequate human resources, training and development, compensation, benefits, services to employees, relationships with employees and the community, staff records,(Rajmond, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, and Wright, 2006).

According to (Carter HR, Rausch, E, 2006), "the goals of managing employees in fire services are, above all, to provide adequate personnel for prevention and response in emergency situations, as well as creating and maintaining a work environment in which all employees receive fair and equal rewards for their efforts, in which all vacancies are filled in with highly qualified candidates, and human resource management practices and practices provide a satisfactory working environment for all members of the ".

The basic activities of human resources management can be considered as: (Martinović and Tanasković, 2014):

1. Workplace analysis - should include a position in the organizational scheme with indication of immediate manager, work activities, workplace environment, materials and work results, performance, job context, knowledge and personal requirements for the workplace, as well as links between the tasks of individual jobs. If each workplace is well analyzed and formed in accordance with requirements of the post and its working content, the chances of employing the candidate that will achieve good working results are bigger;

An analysis of the current situation of human resources in firefighting units indicates that the number of firefighters-rescuers is below European standards (which foresees that one firefighter comes to one thousand inhabitants), insufficient filling of firefighting units with quality, professional and psychophysical qualified human resources for carrying out protection tasks ; it is evident that the job descriptions are inconsistent with the requirements of the business; employees work with inadequate equipment or vehicles that do not cover the adequate territory of the Republic of Serbia. Firefighters rarely attend training in the field of human resources, and

recruitment and selection of candidates, as well as keeping of good workers, are mainly coordinated by commanders who have very little time for such activities.

2. Human Resource Planning is a continuous process of developing strategies that will allow harmonization of the number of employees with the needs of the organization. This process helps the organization to hire resources that will achieve the goals of organization by executing their precisely defined tasks, using the necessary knowledge and skills. At the same time, the organization must be aware of developments in the environment to which changes need to be answered quickly and efficiently. Human resource planning involves a set of activities aimed at creating opportunities for employees to achieve their own potentials. The process of human resources planning can be viewed through several segments:

- a. defining the mission, vision, strategy, politics and goals of the organization,
- b. linking human resources activities with the vision, mission, strategy, politics and goals of the organization,
- c. recruitment plan, selection and development of human resources, and
- d. continuous monitoring of performance and direction towards development

Human resource planning is a process in which the anticipated changes in intent and extreme environments anticipate human resources needs. It is a process in which organizational goals are contained in the mission, vision and strategy.

3. Recruitment and selection. Recruiting human resources is a process of attracting qualified candidates in such a number that will enable the organization to choose the best job for filling vacancies;

It must also take into account the needs of a potential candidate in the process of recruiting, so that the process cannot be completed only on attracting, but also in the long-term retention of quality candidates in the organization. Human resource selection is a process that selects between candidates for a particular job and makes a decision on recruiting or rejecting candidates;

Selection is a set of procedures that involves pre-predicted methods and techniques in order to create the option to select candidates that best suit the job requirements. Methods of selection are usually conventional (application to the competition, biography, graduation certificates, certificates, etc.) and unconventional. In contemporary conditions qualifications, skills and abilities are crucial for carrying out certain tasks, so there are standards for the whole selection process, which are: criteria for selection and candidate references.

The rescue fireman's job is a very specific profession, and it is necessary that members of these services must have the necessary knowledge and skills in order to readily respond to all possible challenges they face. It is necessary that in very risky and stressful conditions they solve problems in a quick and efficient way, to make the right decisions and take initiative in key moments of risky events. Firefighters must also have communication skills both between team members themselves and other teams involved in protection and rescue. It is also necessary to establish good

communication and cooperation with the local community in order to ensure a safe environment for all.

Recruitment and selection of firefighters takes place with aim of selecting and employing people who will best respond to job requirements. There are clearly defined criteria and conditions for the receipt of firefighters as well as professional, objective and professional recruitment and selection of candidates for firefighter-rescue operations. Personnel responsible for human resources in the fire department should understand the key competencies of the candidates and the necessary fulfillment of special conditions in terms of health, psychological, basic-motor status and other capabilities important for carrying out protection and rescue work. The recruitment process involves: mandatory psychological, physical and health testing of candidates (state of the locomotor apparatus, assessment of the functioning of the sight and hearing, lack of chronic diseases and anomalies, psychological status check etc.); checking the file - personal and family history (absence of security issues for admission to employment); testing on drugs and alcohol; personal characteristics such as self-confidence, resilience and adaptability; the ability to communicate and integrate effectively, to establish moral integrity; ability to perform work tasks in accordance with highly stressful situations, adaptability, etc..

It is necessary, among other things, to perform recruitment and selection in order to select and employ people who will always and properly represent their unit and profession.

4. Training or work out means the acquisition of knowledge and skills with the necessary training, in order to meet the requirements in the workplace that a person should possess.

The need for training arises in the following cases:

1. when receiving a new employee,
2. when change the mode and conditions of operation, and
3. in the case of relocation or promotion.

Training or work out of employees implies changes in specific knowledge, capabilities, skills, behaviors and employee attitudes in order to prepare for better performance of the current job. The training program within organization can be organized on the level of an individual, a certain service or department, or at the level of the organization as a whole. Planned approach in defining training goals and programs at an annual level allows the organization to channel resources in the areas where the knowledge and skills of employees will be most contributed, and thus the morale, the organization's willingness to create new business challenges and ultimately improve its market performance. The organization adapts to real conditions of the business environment, the organization better adapts to external and internal threats and challenges. Trainings or working outs consist of theoretical training, but also practical exercises that are closely related to solving real business problems.

Rescuers are educated and trained at various levels and through various forms of formal or non-formal education, depending on the country where they live and work: formal secondary education, high vocational or sometimes high university

education for professional firefighters, or training academies in local firefighting services (Nikolić, V.; Živković, N., 2010). To be a firefighter requires a unique set of knowledge, psycho-physical abilities, skills and traits - body power, endurance, motor skills, excellence in solving technical problems, strength and ability to perform the job in a fast and safe way in physical, psychological and emotional challenging situations. Specialized training in the workplace usually involves the following training: Knowledge of regulations and organization of fire protection; Firefighting techniques - preventive fire protection, fire extinguishing, use of personal protective equipment, basis of ignition and burning tactics; Rescue techniques; Practical exercises with equipment and devices; Handling hazardous substances; First aid, etc.. For firefighters, there is a specific team mode. According to (Messmer, M., and Bogardus, A., 2006), the team is a group of people characterized by belonging, feeling of communion, co-operation and the pursuit of a common goal. Firefighters rely on each other in every situation, and integrity and trust in team members are essential. In order for the team to function optimally, each team member must believe in their colleagues, understand their role in the team, and the roles of each team member. The challenge in managing human resources is to organize and motivate employees to attend courses that can contribute to a better and more efficient work of fire services. In the Republic of Serbia, the Ministry of Internal Affairs plays a primary role in raising capacity and potential of members of firefighting and rescue units as subjects of national security. The type, program, scope and conditions of special training in the field of fire protection are regulated by the Rulebook on special training and passing the professional examination in the field of fire protection ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 92/2010, 11/2011). Certainly, special attention is paid to the issues of pedagogical-andragogy preparedness of personnel who carry out training in this field by the Rulebook on special training and passing of the professional exam in the field of fire protection. Training at the National Training Center of the Ministry of Interior and regional centers aims at raising the level of knowledge and skills of members of the fire fighting rescue units in emergency situations.

5. Motivation and rewarding are two mutually conditioned processes. There is a direct link between employee satisfaction and motivation, on the one hand, and their behavior at work and the results achieved, on the other. Rewards and awards are the best way to support and point out the good and efficient behavior of employees, help them to be content with themselves and be proud of the results they are achieving, and to motivate them to continue to behave. „Awarding is one of the main ways to attract employees and motivate them to achieve better results "(Ivancevic, MJ, (2007).) One of the main goals of reward system is the motivation of employees, with significant variations in perceived values that individuals associate with specific prizes. The reward system consists of two types of rewards: material and non-material. Material rewards and incentives are related to salaries, benefits and other forms that can be materially expressed as an equivalent for work accomplishments. Material rewards are represented through earnings system. Intangible awards are: respect, challenging work, status, chances for development, etc., which represent psychological rewards for which employees believe to receive them at work. Modern human resources management is absolutely familiar with the fact that the success of an

organization depends to a large extent on ability and motivation of his employees. However, one of the most important issues and probably the greatest dilemma of modern human resources management is how to encourage employees to do the way they are asked for? The problem of motivation is very complex, and therefore the theories dealing with this topic are so different that they are not, or are only partially compatible, mutually exclusive. There are no unique motivation theories.

Motivation is a complex phenomenon that cannot be uniquely determined. In relation to the work and organization of the world of work, it can be defined as "the complex forces that initiate and retain the person at work in the organization, that is, that motivation begins and maintains activity in the planned direction". In motivating employees, human resources management definitely has a difficult task. By hiring a new employee, the human resources management business is just starting out, and that's exactly its harder part, and it is to motivate the employee to increase productivity of the company by working with it. In this sense, managers are mostly mistaken when they think employees will do their job just because they are paid for it.

The workplace of the firefighter is ranked in the most risky jobs, as evidenced by the number of died firefighters in the fire fighting and rescue operations of endangered persons, animals or goods. If problems of inadequate equipment are added to this, the issues of their equipping with the highest quality protective equipment will be raised. The lack of such equipment reduces the motivation of firefighters to engage in a more serious fight against fire, but only personal safety is imperative (Karabasil, D.; Nikolić, D.; Milanko, B.,2009).

6. Occupational safety and health system implies the interaction of several different factors such as legislation, inspection, insurance, technical knowledge and solutions, occupational medicine and health care, information, education, research work, etc. All safety and health matters, in accordance with the Rules, adopted by the working organization, and other regulations, laws and by-laws must be organized, regulated, supervised and for their implementation and implementation is the responsibility of the employer. All factors that arise in the workplace and in the work environment that can cause or influence on work injury or health damage, or employee illness, represent hazards and harmfulness in terms of regulations on safety and health on work. Risk assessment and application of measures for safe and healthy work before the worker starts working is the basic principle of prevention from injuries at work, occupational diseases and diseases related to work.

We have already mentioned that the workplace of the firefighter is one of the most risky jobs. All the jobs that the fireman performs are classified as extremely heavy and dangerous. By coming to a place where a fire, earthquake or other disaster takes place, the risk of firefighting is transferred to the zone of greatest risk. During work, firefighters are exposed to various danger and hazards: working on height, effort and body strain, harmful effects of radiation (IC and UV radiation), toxic and poisoned chemical substances, work under water surface, mechanical hazards, etc. The stress and traumas that they experience during the evacuation and rescue of vulnerable

persons, especially children and the elderly leave a number of consequences for the health of firefighters. Since safety and health at work are a significant activity of human resources management, this challenge should be given special attention. In this regard, the identification of danger and hazards, i.e. the risk analysis for this complex work, reduction and parameters, maintains the level of risk, which primarily involves monitoring the health status of firefighters at acceptable time intervals, providing appropriate equipment that will contribute to increased safety at work, engagement security personnel who would take care of problems of safety and health at work of firefighters, providing psychological assistance to firefighters after stressful interventions, etc.

5 CONCLUSION

Human Resource Management is a new concept of employee management in the organization, and it involves the reform of the old-age HR service, in a modern service that will be able to respond to the challenges of the 21st century. For members of the fire rescue units, the job of a rescue fireman should represent their existence, challenge and opportunity for personality development and professional achievement, expectations from the organization of respect, recognition for achieved results and equal opportunities for development and promotion. In order to achieve this, a necessary human resource management system is developed based on modern standards, criteria and procedures for admission, selection, training and promotion in professional careers. This developed system will enable competitiveness among fire rescuers based on competencies and work results, and the ultimate result would be a high degree of professionalism, job satisfaction and legal security of employees. It is necessary to further develop all forms of personal responsibility for the work of every rescuer firefighter. Advancement in the service must be based on transparent procedures, using internal competitions as the rules for completing middle and senior management positions, based on results and professional development, with standardized testing. Further development of the system of vocational training and improvement in the part related to specialist training, training for managers and continuous professional development is needed. It is necessary to develop new strategic and action plans, development and research projects, as well as concrete operational activities. Particular attention should be paid to improving the working conditions, material and social position of employees.

Human resources management is ahead of a period in which a new way of doing business will require them to abandon the old, routine ways of management, and to seek new ways to achieve the goals of the organization, in a new business environment, full of change. Therefore, the Human Resources Management will have to become "more human", that is, it will have to show more understanding to meet the needs of employees as the most valuable resource in each organization.

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