

An Overview of the Federal Agency for Technical Relief

Date of Foundation

Founded on August 22, 1950 by Otto Lumitzsch on behalf of the Federal Minister of the Interior.

Volunteers

Approx. 80.000 THW members, including approx. 40.000 active volunteers, approx. 15.000 youths and approx. 8.700 girls and women.

Employees

Approx. 800 employees.

Structure

The THW comprises:

- 668 local branches
- 66 THW offices
- 8 regional offices
 - Baden-Wuerttemberg (BW)
 - Bavaria (BY)
 - Berlin, Brandenburg, Saxony-Anhalt (BE/BB/ST)
 - Bremen, Lower Saxony (HB/NI)
 - Hamburg, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Schleswig-Holstein (HH/MV/SH)
 - Hesse, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saarland (HE/RP/SL)
 - North Rhine-Westphalia (NW)
 - Saxony, Thuringia (SN/TH)
- THW National Training Centre, with sites in Hoya and Neuhausen
- THW Headquarters in Bonn, including the Logistics Centre in Heiligenhaus and the Centre for Foreign Logistics in Mainz

Budget

The German Federal Parliament (Bundestag) made available to the THW a budget of approx. EUR 178 million in the 2012 Federal Budget.

Responsibilities of the THW

Technical Hazard Prevention

- Location, rescue, salvage

- Debris clearance and blasting
- Fighting floods
- Lighting of operational areas

Command/Control and Logistic Support

- Establishment and operation of command centres
- Command support (material and personnel) for public utility providers
- Establishment of temporary telecommunications systems
- Establishment and operation of logistics nodes
- Catering for operatives
- Material maintenance, repair and servicing

Technical Assistance in the Infrastructure Field

- Electricity supply
- Drinking water supply
- Sewerage
- Bridge construction

Technical Assistance for Environmental Protection

- Oil damage abatement
- Water analysis Emergency Provisions for the General Population
- Power and drinking water supply
- Establishment and technical operation of emergency accommodation

Additional Technical Assistance (as needed on-site)

Technical Humanitarian Assistance Abroad

- Emergency relief aid (SEEBA, SEEWA)
- Location, rescue, salvage
- Drinking water supply
- Pumps, water delivery
- Erection of refugee/displaced person camps with infrastructure
- Reconstruction
- Logistic Support

Operational Units

The THW has 1.000 Technical Units and 1.440 Rescue Groups, incorporated into 730 Technical Platoons. Nationwide, THW has more than 8.400 vehicles at its disposal. In addition, there are special units for operations abroad: the Rapid Deployment Unit Urban Search and Rescue Abroad (SEEBA) and the Rapid Deployment Unit Water and Sanitation Abroad (SEEWA) to rescue trapped people and to provide water purification after earthquakes, the Rapid Logistic Support Unit Air Lift, the High Capacity Pumping Module to fight floods, the Emergency Temporary Shelter Module to provide tents for up to 1.000 people, the Standing Engineering Capacity to support peacekeeping missions of the United Nations and the Technical Assistance Support Team to support experts of the European Union.

Technical support

In 2011, THW focused its work on:

- Pump work and fights against flooding caused by snow melt in early spring
- Rescue, clearing and pump operations after different thunderstorms – above all, in the rainy summer
- Support of the salvage operations after shipping accidents nearby the Loreley rock
- Support of the United Nations in South Sudan and in coping with the worst drought for 60 years on the Horn of Africa
- Almost daily: technical emergency aid after accidents

Upon request of different public utility providers (e. g. police, fire brigade, municipality, disaster management authorities, District President, Land, the Federal Government or the EU), THW-volunteers operated for almost 570.000 hours in 2011.

June 2012

Contact and Information:

Bundesanstalt Technisches Hilfswerk Tel.: +49 0228/940 - 1777
 Provinzialstraße 93 presse@thw.de
 D-53127 Bonn www.thw.de