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Polish firemen ready for action in Sweden

Polish firefighters arrived in Sveg, Sweden, where they will help put out forest fires caused by a heat wave, unprecedented in Scandinavia. A group of 139 firefighters with 44 rescue and firefighting vehicles is ready for action.



On Saturday (21 July) rescuers with firefighting equipment travelled by ferry from Świnoujście to Trelleborg. On Sunday (22 July), the State Fire Service convoy reached the place of action, that is Sveg in the central part of the country.

Driving through Swedish towns, firemen were warmly welcomed by local people who – standing on the streets and viaducts often decorated with Polish flags - greeted the convoy passing by. The representatives of the Swedish government also show their gratitude for the Polish services' help with fighting fires that spread across local forests. – Such a welcome is very moving and gives motivation to work even harder, we were very pleased – said Poland's Chief Commandant of the State Fire Service, General Brigadier Leszek Suski.

He underlined that Polish firemen will not face a normal forest fire. – There are several kinds of fire. These are fires of the whole forest stand and also of the forest floor. There might be also fires of peat bogs, which are the hardest – enumerated the Chief Commandant of the State Fire Service.

Swedish rescuers are supported by firemen from the Zachodniopomorskie and Wielkopolskie voivodeships (65 firefighters and 20 vehicles from each region). In addition, some rescuers from the Mazowsze region and from the State Fire Service Headquarters are taking part in the action (9 rescuers and 4 vehicles).

- This is great power. We are in Sveg, in central Sweden. There we have our camp and two designated areas – one is 18 kilometers away and the second 40 kilometers away from the camp. There we will fight fire – said Chief Commandant Leszek Suski.

The action of the Polish services is planned for up to 14 days, during which firefighters will be self-efficient from a logistical (own tents and food) and medical (there is also first-aid staff in the group) point of view.

The expedition to Sweden is a response to an official demand by the Swedish authorities, which requested, through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, rescue support in their fight against fires.

The EU Civil Protection Mechanism is a system of international rescue aid, controlled and organised by the European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian

Aid Operations. The system is to support countries affected by a disaster requiring an international rescue intervention.

The system includes specialised rescue groups from the Mechanism member states (28 EU states and Iceland, Norway, Montenegro, Macedonia and Turkey).

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