

Consequences of a power outage on critical infrastructures



A severe power outage hits Germany. EBP analyzed the consequences of such an event on transport, financial services, information and communication technologies, and prisons.

Modern societies strongly rely on functioning power supply. But what would happen if there is suddenly no electricity available? What damages occur? How do people react? And how to tackle such an event?

The Office of Technology Assessment at the German Bundestag tasked EBP to analyze the consequences of a power supply disruption over a period of about six weeks and affecting several German Länder. For this purpose, we examined the consequences on the following critical infrastructures: transport, financial services, information and communication technologies, and prisons.

Our analysis answered the following questions:

- What consequences have the power outage over different periods of time?
- How do the consequences affect additional critical infrastructures?
- What organizational capacities and financial or human resources are available to deal with such an event?
- What are the main challenges?
- What questions cannot be answered and require further research? What political options for action exist?

All activities were coordinated with the Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance and the Federal Office for Information Security. Jointly with the Risk Dialogue Foundation,

Client

German Bundestag

Facts

Period 2009 - 2010

Project Country Switzerland

Contact persons

Dr. Tillmann Schulze
tillmann.schulze@ebp.ch

Christof Egli
christof.egli@ebp.ch

we also assessed the socio-psychological impact of such an event on the population. More information is available on the website of the Office of Technology Assessment at the German Bundestag.