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157th Legislative Session 2025–2026.
Parliamentary Document 53 – Issue 53.

Bill

on amendments to the Civil Protection Act, No. [82/2008](#) (Civil Protection Research Committee).

Film: Bryndís Haraldsdóttir, Vilhjálmur Árnason.

Article 1

Chapter IX of the Act, entitled **Civil Protection Investigation Committee**, reads as follows:

a. (Article 28)

Duties of the Civil Protection Investigation Committee.

The Civil Protection Investigation Committee operates independently and independently of the government and other investigative bodies, the prosecution and the courts.

After the end of the state of emergency, the Civil Protection Investigation Committee shall investigate the response plans that were used and the responses of the response parties, including the coordinated emergency response center, the coordination and control center, the police, the fire department, the coast guard and the civil protection committees.

b. (Article 29)

Report of the Civil Protection Investigation Committee.

When the investigation pursuant to the second paragraph of Article 28 is completed, the Civil Protection Investigation Committee shall prepare a report to the Minister, the National Commissioner of Police and the General and Educational Affairs Committee of the Althingi on the committee's findings, proposals and other matters that the committee deems relevant.

The report shall be published publicly in accordance with the provisions of Article 31 and the provisions of the Information Act.

Reports of the Civil Protection Investigation Committee shall not be used as evidence in criminal cases.

c. (Article 30)

Composition of the Civil Protection Investigation Committee.

The Althingi elects three members and three alternates by proportional representation for a term of five years to serve on the Civil Protection Investigation Committee. The committee elects its own chairman. The committee shall be staffed by a person who shall meet the requirements for holding the office of district judge.

The members of the Civil Protection Investigation Committee and its employees are bound by a duty of confidentiality pursuant to Chapter X of the Administrative Procedure Act.

d. (Article 31)

Powers of the Civil Protection Investigation Committee.

The Civil Protection Investigation Committee shall have unhindered access to the data of civil protection response personnel, and they are obliged to provide the committee with any information it requests.

The Investigation Committee is not permitted to provide access to confidential data that the committee obtains in connection with the investigation of individual cases. Confidential data includes, among other things, opinions that have been obtained in connection with the investigation of a case, and reports from witnesses and other parties.

In other respects than those specified in the provisions of this chapter, the work of the committee shall be governed by the Act on the Investigation of Traffic Accidents, as applicable.

Article 2

This law comes into force immediately.

Analysis.

The bill was last submitted to the 156th Legislative Session ([28th issue](#)) but was not passed.

This bill proposes that the Civil Protection Investigation Committee be reintroduced into the Civil Protection Act. The Civil Protection Investigation Committee was established by the Civil Protection Act, No. 82/2008, but was abolished by Act No. [39/2022](#) . The Civil Protection Investigation Committee had been activated once before, following a severe storm in December 2019.

The objective of the Civil Protection Act is to prepare, organize and implement measures aimed at preventing and limiting the public from suffering physical or health damage or damage to the environment or property, caused by natural or man-made disasters, epidemics or military operations or for other reasons, and to provide relief in distress and assistance for damage that may occur or has occurred. In recent years, the role, scope and responsibility of civil protection in Icelandic society have become increasingly important in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the earthquakes on the Reykjavik Peninsula. In light of the period of uncertainty that now seems to have begun on the peninsula and that scientists predict may even last for decades or centuries, it is clear that civil protection will continue to be of significant importance to the nation in the near future, as a prolonged civil protection situation calls for strong civil protection.

The role of the Civil Protection Investigation Committee, during the period of validity of the previous law, was to review and evaluate the implementation of civil protection operations so that lessons could be learned from experience and thereby contribute to improvements. The intention of this arrangement was to prevent the executive branch from investigating its own actions or those of parties working within its area of responsibility. In order to ensure that the objective of a satisfactory investigation took place, the Civil Protection Investigation Committee was replaced by Act No. [39/2022](#) stipulates the obligation of the Civil Protection Department of the National Police Commissioner to hold a review

meeting after the civil protection level has been lifted with representatives of the response parties who had participated in the actions, to write minutes of those review meetings and the responsibility of the National Police Commissioner to follow up on improvements proposed at such meetings.

The sponsors of the bill consider it a mistake for the Civil Protection Department of the National Police Commissioner to investigate its own actions, as the purpose of the previous law was to prevent. Therefore, the sponsors of the bill propose that the Civil Protection Investigation Committee be revived. The committee shall make proposals to the response parties and the government on improvements within the system. The committee shall operate independently and investigate the response of the response parties after the state of emergency has ended and submit a report on the committee's findings to the Minister, the National Police Commissioner and the Althingi.
