



EVACUATION EXERCISE GÖTTWEIG MONASTERY - REPORT

18 November 2017, Austria

A big **evacuation exercise** took place at the Benedictine Monastery of Göttweig, in the vicinity of Krems, Austria, on November 18th 2017. More than 200 firefighters, 50 Red Cross personnel, and a Cultural Property Protection squad of the Military Command of Lower Austria participated in the exercise.

The evacuation procedures trained in this exercise had to take place because of a **fictitious collapse of building structures in the monastery due to modern building measures undertaken. Workers were trapped in collapsed cellars and school children had to be rescued out of the monastery's museum.** After all the people had been rescued (the severely injured were flown out of the site to the nearest hospitals), **the cultural goods of the monastery that were in possible danger, namely the most important pieces displayed in the museum, had to be evacuated.** For this the Cultural Property Protection officers of the Austrian Armed Forces were requested. Together with the deployed fire brigades, they were able to recover paintings, statues, and small artefacts on display in the museum and in the bishop's guest rooms.

During the preparation of the evacuation exercise valuable material and information could be collected on how to best coordinate training with different emergency responders, in this case the Austrian Armed Forces Cultural Property Protection personnel and the firefighters.