

Press release – Safe Communities Recognized as a Civil Protection Volunteer Organisation

Safe Communities Portugal has become one of a handful of organisations in Portugal to be recognized as a Voluntary Civil Protection in accordance with the provisions of in the Civil Protection Basic Law.

The recognition covers the areas information and facilitating training of the population on the prevention of collective risks and the minimization of the consequences arising from the occurrence of serious accident or catastrophe to raise awareness of self-protection matters. In addition to provide cooperation in relief and assistance to people, integrated in the global response effort in the event of a serious accident or catastrophe;

This follows the partnership, formed between the ANEPC and SCP in the form of a collaboration protocol at the end of 2015, and the designation of the association as a public utilidade in the area of civil protection and crime prevention by the Council of Ministers in 2018.

David Thomas President of SCP stated that the latest award as an ODVC, reflects the considerable work we have undertaken with various government entities particular in the area of rural fire prevention and self – around 15 projects over the last 18 months aimed at the foreign community and tourists. This represents the trust I feel that government has in our work and importance that government attaches to safety of all communities both residence and visitors.

Secretary of State for Tourism, Ana Mendes Godinho, welcomed the news stating “ I am very pleased that Safe Communities Portugal has been awarded the status of “Civil Protection Volunteer Organisation” (one of only nine in Portugal), as it reflects their hard work, availability and commitment, and is well deserved. This will further enable SCP to keep their good work to the benefit of the public, tourists and foreigners living in Portugal.”

She added “Safe Communities has been working very closely the Tourism stakeholders and the Portuguese Government over the last three years. This close collaboration has focused on the importance of ensuring the safety of tourists who visit Portugal and those who live here. It is important that we do everything we can to ensure visitors know what preventive and self-protection steps to take in case of emergency. Safe Communities Portugal has been a key player in helping to improve awareness and communication concerning safety, assuring all the important information is translated into English”.

National Director Emergency Planning ANEPC Jose Oliveira stated that “SCP has been developing a constant activity in the area of awareness and risk communication, aimed at the foreign language community residing and visiting Portugal.

SCP has been instrumental in making relevant information available on its website as well as in translating self-protection leaflets related to rural fires into several languages. It has also boosted the participation of the foreign community resident in Portugal to participate in workshops and awareness raising actions, as was the case of the Monchique workshop in 2018, with the collaboration of two international experts in the field of resilience of rural communities.

ANEPC recognizes the importance of SCP in the constant communication and decoding of Portuguese to different languages, through its channels, with emphasis on social networks, notices to the population, as well as the legislation in the area of natural and technological risks, complementing. This Authority's risk communication activity is very effective for the foreign community resident or visiting Portugal, a country for which tourism has a strong weight in its economy”.

David Thomas concluded that to obtain this recognition meant that we had to undertake a training program, illustrate our track record of past activities our business plan for the future as well as meeting the various administrative and legal requirements.

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