



Formentera's Office of the Environment, wishing to invest in professional training for staff of the island's safety and emergency services, has recently wrapped up a course in Civil Defence here on Formentera. Twelve students participated in the training sessions.

The 32-hour course – which began 26 February – was imparted by the Es cola Balear d'Administracions Públiques (EBAP) and based on both theory and practical applications of civil defence strategies. With this course, the Agrupació de Protecció Civil de Formentera, the island's civil defence force, increases by 12 its previous total of 42 volunteer staff that have completed this particular line of training.

The course syllabus focused in part on first-aid and defibrillator-use, control of forest fires, drafting of emergency plans (Plans d'Emergència) and local risk cataloguing, and in part on applied legislation and applied psychology.

The last course in civil defence to be held on Formentera was in 2009. Since that time, no such course has been offered. The Council promotes this kind of volunteer training by offering use of its facilities, material and vehicles – such as the island's firefighting truck – for the course.

Since the Formentera Council's inception, the Office of the Environment has worked to provide this sector with important material resources, as well as updating existing facilities and ensuring that the island's local safety services are provided with the tools required to act in emergency situations. Today, Formentera's civil defence services count a car, a motorcycle and a mountable medical tent among the material provided to them by the Council.

The civil defence volunteer corps was founded in the year 2000 and has since acted in numerous emergency situations. Although it is not a first-response service, it is a group that gives extremely necessary support to the other professional emergency services (firefighters; Institut Balear de la Natura; local police on occasions of large public concentrations, etc.)

Last year's approval of the Formentera Territorial Directive for Emergencies came in part thanks to the assistance provided by the Formentera Agrupació's civil defence forces, which put their resources and knowledge of the territory at the disposition of the directive's drafting body to facilitate the process.

The Formentera Council will continue to invest in the professional development of the civil defence volunteer corps, a fundamental part of the island's emergency services.