

Large-Scale Disasters in Germany and Israel*

By Clemens Lückemann**

I. Introduction

Major, complex disasters are sad events for thousands of people. The Love Parade tragedy in Duisburg on 24 July 2010 and the subsequent proceedings especially come to mind. As a result of that event, a commission was appointed entitled *Possibilities and Limits of Complex Criminal Proceedings – Use of an Expert Commission to Improve the Investigation of Complex Accidental Events*.¹ The commission was conceived of as forward-looking: serious complex casualty events are rare; but they will happen again and again; see the mass panic at the Lag-ba-Omer festival at Har Meron, Israel on 29 April 2021 resulting in at least 45 deaths and 150 injuries. It was the civil disaster with the most deaths in the history of the State of Israel. One could almost see it as a terrible replay of the Love Parade disaster.

For the commission, it was not a matter of criticising the Love Parade investigation procedure, but of drawing lessons from that procedure, and also from other investigations involving complex incidents, i. e. from our own experiential knowledge and from the results of almost 60 interviews with experts, in order to develop recommendations for the investigation and handling of future complex casualty incidents.

* Revised lecture given to the German-Israeli Lawyers Association (DIJV/IDJV) on 5.5. 2022 in Bonn.

** Clemens Lückemann was President of the Bamberg Higher Regional Court from 2013 to 2020.

¹ The final report of the Expert Commission on improving the investigation of complex casualty incidents was presented by the Ministry of Justice of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia in March 2022 and is available in German at: https://www.justiz.nrw/JM/fach-veroeffentlichungen/abschlussbericht_expertenkommission.pdf (accessed at 10. 3. 2023).