



Buildings for emergency services have evolved into an independent and fascinating architectural typology in the past two decades. Since the opening of the spectacular fire station for the Vitra factory by Zaha Hadid, police stations, fire departments and rescue services increasingly consist of architecturally amazing buildings. These are always an attractive challenge – when functional demands and high security measures are brought in sync with stylish modern design, the results reflect the highest levels of architectural skills.

All three building types share the fact that they act as starting points for quick motorized dispatches. The featured buildings sometimes combine several institutions that are creatively situated under a single roof. The selected examples present the wonderful diversity of contemporary “emergency architecture”. The range extends from the rural two-bay fire station via the metropolitan police headquarters to the helicopter rescue center.

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# Fire, Crime & Accident

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Fire Departments, Police Stations, Rescue Services



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PROJECT FACTS

**Address:** Av. de les Mancomunitats Comarcals 11, 08760 Martorell, Spain. **Structural engineers:** Gerardo Rodríguez. **Client:** Dep. Interior de la Generalitat de Catalunya through GISA. **Completion:** 2007. **Gross floor area:** 3,087 m<sup>2</sup>. **Main materials:** concrete, metal, glass. **Special features:** control room, cells, secured weapons room. **Setting:** urban.



# Mossos d'Esquadra Police Headquarters

Martorell

The building is perceived as a volume made up of a ground-floor base with two upper floors. The block housing the technical services is designed as an annex. Where the building overlooks Avinguda Mancomunitats, the upper section projects beyond the ground floor, forming an eave that shelters the entrance and creating a transition. The upper volume has a hard, massive finish on three sides, whereas the west façade comprises a more generous, glazed plane with the addition of adjustable slats to offer protection. Both the urban implementation and the characteristics of the site suggest a compact building that exploits the plot's lengthwise geometry.

- ↑ | **North façade**, facing street
- ↗ | **West façade**, more generously glazed than other building sides
- | **South façade**, has a less-open appearance







↑ | Brightly lit west façade, in the evening  
↓ | First floor plan  
↓↓ | Ground floor plan



↑ | Longitudinal sections  
↓ | Volume projects out over sidewalk







PROJECT FACTS

**Address:** Via Sèrgia 95, 08302 Mataró, Spain. **Structural engineers:** Gerardo Rodríguez. **Client:** Dep. Interior de la Generalitat de Catalunya through GISA. **Completion:** 2007. **Gross floor area:** 1,940 m<sup>2</sup>. **Main materials:** steel, concrete, glass. **Special features:** control room, sleeping quarters. **Number of emergency vehicle bays/garages:** 6. **Setting:** urban.



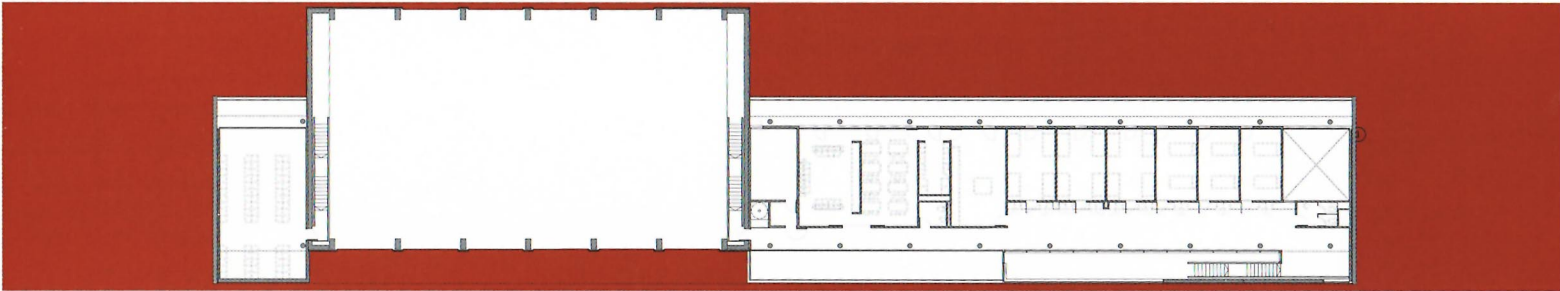
↑ | East façade, with large forecourt in front of building  
↓ | First floor plan

↗ | West façade, with vehicle bays and living quarters above  
→ | West façade, contrasting building sections

# Fire Station

Mataró

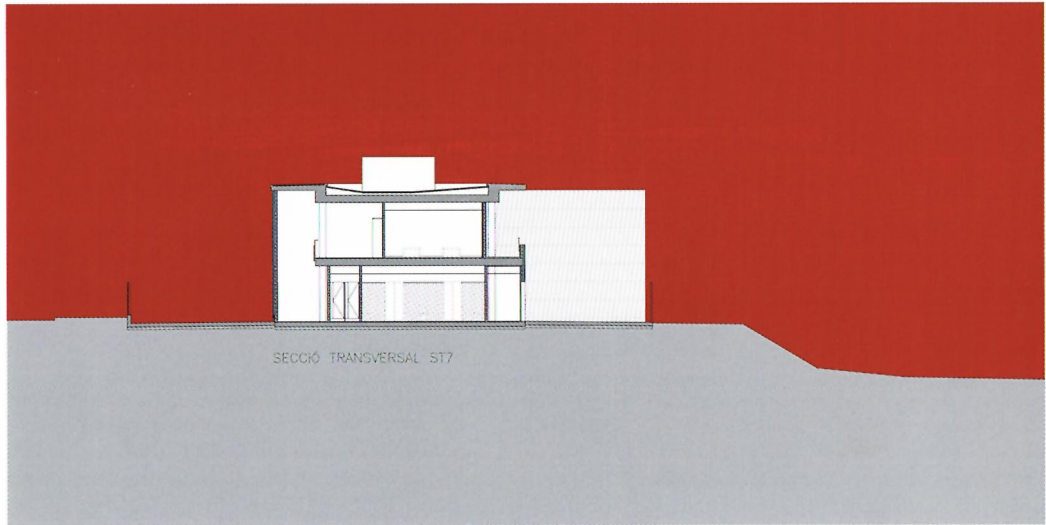
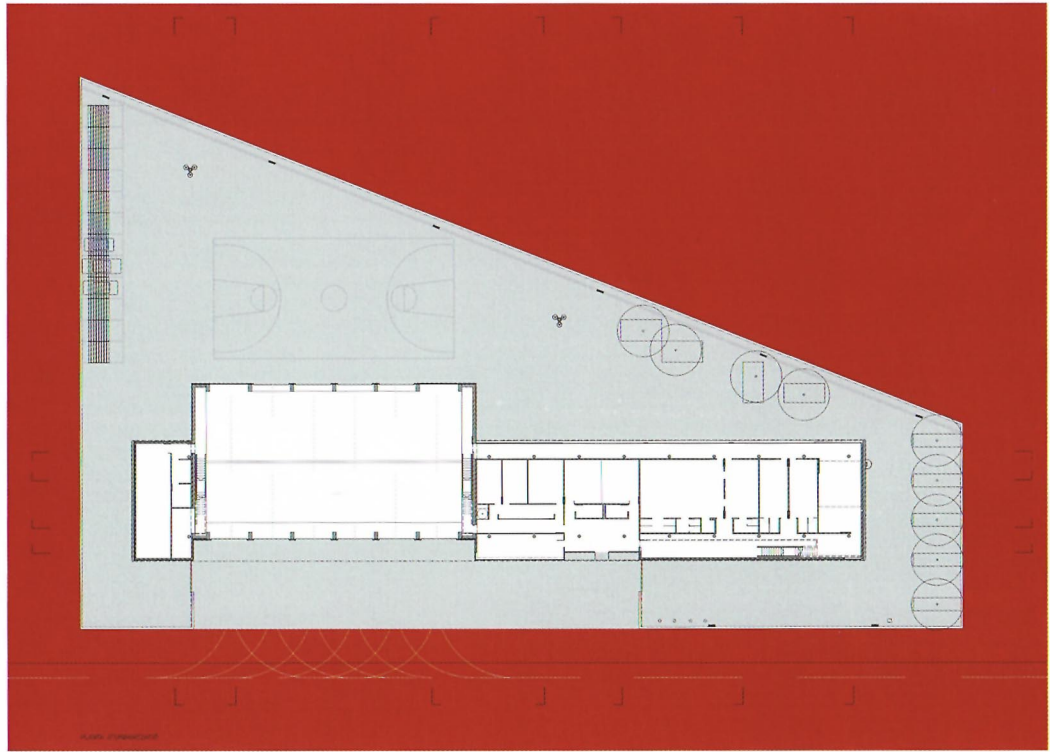
The specific requirements of this fire station and the volume of the surrounding buildings imposed major constraints on the design of the building. Firstly, the garages had to be located so as to enable a quick exit for the five engines in emergencies and easy entry when they return. Secondly, a large open space was needed at the center of the plot for exercises and drills, with space for a sports court. Therefore, the most appropriate solution was a two-story building, aligned with the street, roofed under a handsome concrete portico and divided functionally into two parts: garages and living areas.







↑ | East façade, emergency vehicle garages  
↙ | Ground floor and site plan



← | Section  
↓ | North façade

