



Workshop Report (Draft)

Joint Workshop between EMSA and
DG Environment "Co-ordinated at-sea
and shoreline pollution response"

Lisbon, 30 June 2009

Report of Joint Workshop between EMSA & DG Environment “Co-ordinated at-sea and shoreline pollution response”

Background

With the Community framework ending in 2006, the European Commission issued a Communication¹ stating EMSA would take over those MCMP tasks which fall within the scope of its mandate as defined by the amended EMSA Regulation. This marked the beginning of EMSA's CTG, whose main objective is to provide a Community level platform to improve European preparedness for and response to marine pollution from ships and is achieved through various projects/activities as determined in the CTG Rolling Work Programme.

In 2007 the European Maritime Safety Agency established a Consultative Technical Group (CTG) for Marine Pollution Preparedness and Response, composed of Member State pollution response experts. The CTG was established following the expiry of the Community Framework for co-operation in the field of accidental or deliberate marine pollution (Decision (EC) N° 2850/2000)². DG Environment was in charge of implementation of actions under the Community Framework, assisted by the Management Committee for Marine Pollution (MCMP), a committee of high level government experts.

At the second CTG meeting in December 2008, concern was expressed about separation of at-sea and shoreline issues between EMSA and DG Environment's work, suggesting a joint workshop could be organised which would consider the entire response chain. A draft workshop outline was circulated at the 3rd CTG meeting in September 2008, on which comments were requested from CTG members and incorporated as appropriate into the final workshop programme. Civil protection committee members were also asked for feedback on the outline at their November 2008 meeting. It was subsequently agreed that the workshop would be jointly funded by EMSA and DG Environment.

The Workshop took place on 30 June 2009 at EMSA's new premises according to the agenda in Annex 1 and was attended by CTG participants including Regional Agreements, civil protection experts and a representative from Sea Alarm (see list of participants in Annex 2).



¹ Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, to the European Economic and Social Committee and to the Committee of the Regions - Cooperation in the field of accidental or deliberate marine pollution after 2007 (COM(2006) 863).

² Decision No 2850/2000/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2000 setting up a Community framework for cooperation in the field of accidental or deliberate marine pollution.

Workshop Objectives

In the European context, shoreline cleanup is often under the remit of a different authority (civil protection) to that in charge of pollution response at-sea, plus in some countries there are various agencies involved (at local, regional and national level). There are also differing arrangements for the division of responsibilities between these authorities and other agencies. Considering this along with the different mandates of DG Environment and EMSA (focusing on shoreline and at-sea response respectively), this complexity underlines the need for proper co-ordination to avoid any inappropriate separation of shoreline and at-sea response issues, particularly given that during a major incident at-sea it is inevitable that the shoreline will be affected.

To this end, the workshop addressed the following main objectives:

- To bring together the different authorities involved in pollution response (marine pollution and civil protection).
- To discuss relevant issues, suggest areas of best practice and practical mechanisms/tools for co-ordination between the different parties.
- Focus on responding to pollution incidents, rather than purely civil protection activities such as natural disasters (e.g. floods, forest fires).

Workshop Programme

The workshop was co-chaired by Bernd Bluhm, EMSA Head of Unit for Pollution Preparedness and Response and Peter Billing, DG Environment Policy Officer - Head of Sector – MIC/Emergency Operations.

Bernd Bluhm welcomed the participants to EMSA's new conference centre and paid tribute to the late Ms Loyola de Palacio, the former Commissioner for Energy and Transport and later Vice President of the Commission. Ms Palacio was in charge when the Commission pushed for far-reaching maritime regulations after the sinking of the tanker *Erika*, including the creation of a European Maritime Safety Agency. Mr Bluhm gave a brief introductory presentation (see in Annex 3) to describe EMSA's role and services in European pollution preparedness and response as well as outlining the workshop scope and objectives. Peter Billing also stressed the importance of this first occasion of the marine pollution and civil protection experts meeting together and hoped for productive discussions and co-operation between the different participants.

Session 1 – National/European perspectives on operational links between shoreline and at-sea response authorities

The aim of the first session of the workshop was to consider examples of different national response arrangements, roles and responsibilities of shoreline and at-sea response authorities in preparedness and response to pollution incidents and how co-ordination works in practice. The following presentations were given:

- Two examples where one lead authority has overall responsibility for both at-sea & shoreline response – by Theo Kramer, Netherlands Ministry of Transport Public Works and Water Management and Ole Kristjan Bjerkemo, Norwegian Coastal Administration.
- Two examples where different authorities are responsible for at-sea & shoreline response - Itziar Martin, Spain Directorate General of Merchant Marine and France (Gaëlle Bailly, CEPPOL/Philippe Estiez, French Ministry of the Interior).

It was clearly demonstrated that in both situations there are a large number of organisations/entities involved and co-ordination amongst them is critical during response. Marine pollution incidents affecting coastal areas require close cooperation between marine pollution and civil protection authorities due to their complexity. Even in countries where at-sea and onshore management are under the responsibility of different authorities, there seems to be always some form of body to ensure a minimum of coordination. Generally, at-sea emergency management is undertaken at a more centralised level, while responsibility of on-shore emergency management is handled more locally (e.g. by the Mayor).

Peter Billing gave a presentation on the European DG Env/MIC perspective. His presentation focused on new developments in the Community Civil Protection Mechanism, highlighting areas and possibilities of particular interest for the marine pollution community such as new training courses under the Mechanism training programme, calls for tender / proposals for prevention and preparedness, exercises for modules and teams, or the use of CECIS. He also announced that the MIC intends to do communication tests and exercises in order to test and improve communication lines.

Session 2 – Environmental considerations in pollution response

The second session was addressed to environmental considerations in pollution response, including a presentation on integrated wildlife response from Hugo Nijkamp, Sea Alarm. The presentation covered both at-sea and onshore wildlife response techniques and stressed the importance of wildlife response planning, at the national level, in conjunction with neighbouring countries and also at the local/municipal level for how to deal with large numbers of oiled birds coming ashore during an incident.

Two presentations followed on national systems for incorporating environmental considerations into the response decision-making process. Firstly Kevin Colcumb from the MCA presented the UK Environment Group's role and activities, as a "one-stop shop" for environmental advice to SOSREP, MRC and SRC. Secondly a representative of the Havariekommando (Jens Rauterberg) described the German national setup and how a multi-agency Environment group provides advice to CCME.

Such systematic involvement of environmental expertise to provide quick advice on policy options, which is also applied in some other countries such as Norway, has proven to be efficient and is therefore highly recommended in the management of marine pollution cases, as this not only improves the quality of decision-making, but also facilitates handling of the media and concerned public.

Session 3 – Working Group Exercise

During this session, participants were divided into 4 working groups with a regional setup (based on the composition of 4 of the Regional Agreements) and convened in 4 separate rooms together with an EMSA/DG Environment facilitator. The session was divided into 2 parts:

Part 1 - each Member State (preferably jointly by civil protection/marine pollution representative) and Regional Agreement representative filled in the 'Template on national approach for at-sea/shoreline marine pollution response'. Templates were collected by the facilitators and will be used to form the basis of an overview of the different arrangements for national and regional co-ordination in relation to technical aspects of shoreline cleanup and at-sea response.

All workshop participants (in conjunction with CTG contact points and civil protection Committee members if necessary) are asked to verify and

complete their country/Regional Agreement's template in Annex 4 (zip file). One template per country and one template per Regional Agreement should be provided.

Part 2 – each group examined their own scenario of a pollution incident (each group's scenario was essentially the same but in a different location), to discuss and answer questions on the response to the incident, as well as to make recommendations and identify any gaps or areas to be addressed to ensure a more co-ordinated response at the following levels:

- National (at-sea & shoreline authorities, civil protection & marine pollution).
- Regional (between countries).
- EU (assistance from MIC and EMSA).

Each group nominated a spokesperson who reported back the results of the discussion to the entire group (see presentations in Annex 5a-d). The working group exercise was generally appreciated as an excellent opportunity to identify, take stock of and compare procedures in the various countries/regions.

The following main conclusions were identified:

- More time should be foreseen for the exercise. Not all groups could finish their work.
- Several Member States emphasised the importance of verifying information provided in the National templates as not all information was available or known at the time of filling in.
- In all cases MRCC's are the first ones to start managing the emergency process, but they quickly involve the Civil Protection Authorities in the process and inform neighbouring countries, Regional Agreements and the MIC if wide-spread damage is expected.
- MIC would be expected to contact Member States for offers of assistance (marine pollution resources, experts).

The outcomes of the working group discussions were as follows:

- Clear lines of communication required.
- Operational exercises (also at subregional level) are very valuable to be prepared for the emergency and should be done in all regions.
- EU to share information and experience from other regions.
- CECIS should be used, preferably as internet version to allow inclusion of non EU-countries and to address challenges posed by access to TESTA.
- Consider to establish a task force for oil and HNS spill modelling.
- Sharing contingency plans nationally between marine pollution and civil protection authorities would be beneficial.
- Importance of using common language (if not already in place) at regional level.
- "Official observers" during incidents/exercises should preferably be guided by host country.
- Activities under MCMP should be continued at EU level.
- Training & exercises and information sharing within Regional Agreements are beneficial and should be encouraged.

Workshop Conclusions

- The workshop format, bringing together civil protection and marine pollution actors, has been widely appreciated by participants as a valuable opportunity to learn from each other.
- The value of learning different national approaches was noted and this is strengthened by information sharing.
- There was a strong consensus from the participants to repeat this exercise on a regular basis. DG Environment and EMSA in principle are positive on continuing this type of workshop in the future, alternating the hosting organisation between the two institutions such that the next workshop would take place in Brussels.

Possible Follow-Up Activities

- All workshop participants (in conjunction with CTG contact points and civil protection Committee members if necessary) are asked to verify and complete their country/Regional Agreement's template in Annex 4. One template per country and one template per Regional Agreement should be provided.
- Practicalities for this will be communicated via email.
- After verification and upon collating the final results of the national templates, EMSA and DG Environment will consider how best to disseminate and display this information to CTG participants/civil protection contact points.
- The potential to repeat this type of workshop, possibly exploring some themes in more detail under the general heading of co-ordinating at-sea and shoreline response can be considered further at a CTG meeting, civil protection committee meeting and/or DG Environment marine pollution policy meeting. Continuing the workshop is dependent on the national/regional Templates being fully completed by MS/Regional Agreements.
- Once all templates have been completed fully, EMSA will consider to publish the results

Attachments

(1) Workshop Agenda

(4) Working Group feedback - Draft Templates (per country/Regional Agreement)

(2) List of participants

(5) Working Group Presentations (Annex 5a-d)

(3) Presentations x 9

This workshop report plus annexes³ is published at <http://www.emsa.europa.eu/end645d011.html> and also on the restricted CTG/Inter-Secretariat area of the EMSA website.

³ The complete set of templates (Annex 4) will only be published following verification.
