

Chapter 10: Denmark – National Organisation

10.1 INTRODUCTION

10.1.1 Background

The majority of the maritime traffic entering and leaving the Baltic Sea passes through Danish waters. The two major routes are the Great Belt and the Sound. Some 65,000 vessels pass through these two lanes each year. Because of the intensity of the traffic and the rather narrow lanes, there is a serious risk of pollution resulting from collisions. Furthermore, in recent years there has been an increase in the number of tankers carrying oil out from the Baltic Sea. This may add further to the risk of pollution in Danish waters.

Each year the Admiral Danish Fleet receives reports of 350-400 suspected oil spills in Danish waters. These may originate from natural causes (algae bloom), operational spills from ships or platforms and/or accidents.

10.1.2 General description of national organisation

As of 1 January 2000, responsibility for the state maritime environmental surveillance and enforcement, and the state maritime pollution control at sea was transferred from the Ministry of Environment and Energy to the Danish Armed Forces. With the amendment of the Marine Environment Protection Act of 1 July 2000 the Armed Forces were given the possibility of issuing administrative fines for illegal oil discharges from ships. The Armed Forces' execution of the task is thus based on national legislation and international conventions and agreements.

The aim of the Armed Forces' effort against pollution of the sea is to prevent or minimise the impact of marine pollution on flora and fauna.

The total environmental task consists of the following operational sub-tasks:

- Establishment and maintenance of preparedness;
- Environmental surveillance;
- Enforcement; and
- Pollution control.

The general aim of the task is to guarantee a deterrent effect as part of prevention proper through surveillance, enforcement and securing evidence, primarily in the territorial waters and secondarily in Denmark's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). In order to obtain a maximum deterrent effect, the handling of task is concentrated on surveillance and gathering of evidence. By taking and gathering oil samples and implementing comparable oil sample analyses, the aim is to procure positive evidence in order to commence legal proceedings.

If oil pollution has taken place, the aim is to minimise the impact of the damage, primarily on coasts and beaches, through timely notification of state authorities and effective coordination in the employment of all resources.

10.2 National organisation and responsibilities

10.2.1 National/regional/municipal organisation and tasks

Admiral Danish Fleet (ADF) receives all reports on matters concerning the marine environment and is responsible for the direction and coordination of the total employment of the state resources at sea, including assistance from involved external authorities. ADF decides on the extent of the effort in connection with established pollution, and organises the allocated national resources.

If necessary, the accomplishment of the task is coordinated with the municipal/county preparedness units. These units are continuously briefed on the current situation, in order to allow local authorities and county authorities to arrange the necessary resources, or alternatively to request further support through national emergency preparedness and ultimately to request emergency assistance.

To direct and control the accomplishment of the marine environmental task, the 24-hour service set up at the ADF operational centre is used. To handle the national marine environmental task, a Marine Environment Branch has been set up at ADF to provide expert assistance to the ADF operational centre within normal working hours in the evaluation of the preparedness effort in connection with pollution incidents. Outside normal working hours, the expert assistance is handled by an on-call officer in the Marine Environment Branch.

Other principal tasks of the ADF Marine Environment Branch are: Counselling in all matters concerning marine environmental operations; ADF staff work concerning participation in the maritime surveillance of the marine environment; enforcement and maritime pollution control at sea; staff work concerning gathering of evidence in connection with possible criminal cases on oil pollution from ships; staff work concerning general matters on marine environment and sea law; staff work concerning international agreements: participation in national and international exercise activity in relation to the performance of the marine environmental duty; participation in meeting activity, participation in international and national working groups concerning the execution of the marine environmental duty; compiling reports, statistics, etc; updating of ADF internal/external decision code, including preparation of contingency plans in relation to the performance of the marine environmental duty; updating of, in connection with Naval Materiel Command and Tactical Air Command Denmark, the Danish Internet homepage established pursuant to Council of the European Union decision on EU framework regulations for marine pollution cooperation.

10.2.2 Strategy for combating at sea

The general counter pollution policy is mechanical recovery at sea. No stock of dispersants is kept, and if it should be decided to buy and use dispersants, a specific permission will have to be granted by the Danish EPA.

10.2.3 Strategy for combating on-shore and restoration

If the oil cannot be prevented from reaching the shore, efforts should be made to protect sensitive areas. The responsibility for this task lies within the municipal organisation. If oil reaches the shore – or is originating from a harbour – efforts should be made to contain the oil, thus preventing it from reaching other areas.

10.2.4 Resources for dealing with oil and chemical pollution

The state maritime pollution control capability comprises two environmental divisions on stand-by, based in Naval Base Frederikshavn and Naval Base Korsøer respectively. The respective divisions have continuously one unit on 1-hour stand-by, and one unit on 16 hours' notice. The Armed Forces' maritime supplementary environmental preparedness comprises the maritime operational units and 5 pollution control modules on ships of the DIANA class.

Naval Materiel Command is responsible for the proper technical condition of the pollution control equipment and handles in addition supply and logistic support.

10.2.4.1 Exercises

The planning and accomplishment of annual national marine environmental exercises at sea rest with ADF. Exercises in the coastal area, including exercises involving employment on coasts and in harbours, are planned and accomplished in coordination with the Emergency Management Agency. The exercises are accomplished with participation from relevant external authorities using several special equipment resources, including the Armed Forces' aircraft. The exercises are accomplished in several geographical areas.

ADF is also in charge of planning, accomplishment and control of international exercises held within the Danish area of responsibility.

10.2.4.2 Vessels

The above (under 10.2.5) mentioned two environmental divisions each consists of 1 vessel of SUPPLY-type (capacity of 300 M³), 1 vessel of SEA-TRUCK- type (capacity of 60 M³ and a minor assisting vessel. In addition to these vessels – and the 5 DIANA class vessels - a number of the Naval Home Guard vessels may be equipped with pollution control modules.

10.2.4.3 Surveillance

The marine environment surveillance comprises the following sub-areas:

- The maritime surveillance, which comprises surveillance from the sea,
- the airborne surveillance, which comprises surveillance from the air, and
- the satellite based surveillance.

There is no national maritime environmental surveillance proper from ships. The maritime environmental surveillance is merely accomplished in connection with the general navigation and surveillance of Danish waters by the ships of the Armed Forces and other state ships, and in connection with the general enforcement of sovereignty.

As part of the establishing of the detailed maritime situation picture and supplementary to the general surveillance of waters, data from EU reporting centre, Vessel Traffic Service Centre (VTS) Great Belt and SHIPPOS are employed to the extent they are applicable in an environment connection.

The airborne surveillance comprises 500 hours' annual flying performed by specially equipped aircraft from the Air Force's inspection flying structure. The airborne surveillance is carried out over Danish territorial waters, including Danish international straits, and over the Danish EEZ.

ADF has the operational responsibility for arranging the airborne surveillance. ADF plans in direct coordination with Tactical Air Command Denmark (TACDEN) the enjoined inspection flight hours. ADF may contact TACDEN about the employment of F-16 (fighter readiness and recce readiness) and S-61 (rescue helicopters), and further appoint the Navy's LYNX helicopters for employment. As a supplement to the airborne surveillance of the marine environment, the Armed Forces have entered into a contract with Kongsberg Satellite Service about the receipt of approximately 100 images annually.

The Danish Defence Acquisition and Logistics Organization is responsible for the materiel, supply and maintenance support for the performance of the airborne surveillance, including oil sample equipment for use from helicopters.