

## Chapter 17: Sweden – National Organisation

### 17.1 Legislation and areas of responsibility

17.1.1 The Civil Protection Act (2003) defines the different branches of society's rescue services and the responsibilities of each branch.

17.1.2 The Swedish Coast Guard has the responsibility for the maritime environmental protection, which includes the response to oil and other harmful substances in the territorial waters, the EEZ and in the larger lakes Vänern, Vättern and Mälaren.

17.1.3 The fire brigade of the respective municipality is responsible for response to oil and other harmful substances on beaches, in harbours and in inland waters. The municipalities are supervised and supported by the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency.

17.1.4 The Civil Protection Act also states that for every response operation there shall be a Response Commander. This person is given extraordinary rights to take whatever measures may be necessary in order to save lives, property or the environment.

### 17.2 Response at sea - Swedish Coast Guard

#### *Requirements and strategy*

17.2.1 The requirements from the Government to the Coast Guard are that:

- measures to prevent the spreading of oil in an accident should be started within four hours of receiving notification of the accident;
- recovery operations should be started within eight hours;
- the Coast Guard should be capable of dealing with oil spills of up to 10 000 tons using national resources;
- response to chemical accident should be started within four hours;
- the Coast Guard should have sufficient capacity for international cooperation.

17.2.2 The response strategy and priorities are:

- as a first step, to stop the outflow of oil from the vessel;
- as a second step, to stop the spreading of oil on the water surface;
- as a third step, to recover the oil at sea before it has reached the coastal zone, the archipelago and the beaches.

#### *Organisation*

17.2.3 The Swedish Coast Guard is organised into a headquarters and two regional commands: North-East and South-West. There is also a separate flight command.

17.2.4 The headquarters is responsible for long-term planning, overall capacity and international co-operation (IMO, EU, HELCOM, the Bonn Agreement, the Copenhagen Agreement and EPPR/Arctic Council). The headquarters always has an officer on duty, for strategic decisions and for international co-operation.

17.2.5 The Swedish Coast Guard has a 24-hour command centre with officers on duty and a Response Commander on duty. The command centre is located in Stockholm and Gothenburg. The Coast Guard has sea-going vessels permanently at sea, of which two in each region should be specialised response vessels.

17.2.6 In an operation, the Response Commander has overall responsibility for commanding the entire response operation. The command at sea will be taken by an On-Scene Commander (OSC) and if chemicals other than oil are involved there will be an On Scene Commander/Emergency Responders (OSC/ER) appointed.

#### *Resources*

17.2.7 The Coast Guard has about 70 emergency responders specially trained and equipped for scuba diving, response to chemicals and fire-fighting on board.

17.2.8 The Coast Guard also has a special agreement with municipal fire brigades along the coast according to which each of the fire brigades has agreed to assist the Coast Guard in an accident at sea with a MIRG (Maritime Incident Response Group) team of six firemen. These firemen are specially trained for actions on board ships and for deployment from helicopter together with light equipment. The Coast Guard should provide immediate assistance to the helicopter in the form of heavy equipment such as hoses, foam, cooling capability and everything needed for a protracted operation.

17.2.9 The Coast Guard operates three surveillance aircraft. For environmental surveillance and support in an oil spill situation, the aircraft are equipped with SLAR, IR/UV, FLIR and camera equipment. They are also equipped with sampling buoys, which can be dropped onto an oil spill in order to obtain a sample of the oil. The three aircraft have a total flying time of approximately 3000 hours per year.

17.2.10 The main body of the resources for environmental response consists of twelve environmental response vessels, all equipped with built-in or cassette advancing systems (LORI/LAMOR). These vessels are also equipped with ordinary skimmers, pumps and containment booms, and have a storage capacity of 100-1050 m<sup>3</sup>. The storage capacity can be extended with the help of rubber containers and barges.

17.2.11 The Swedish Coast Guard operates three multipurpose vessels with high capacity emergency towing, fire fighting and recovery capabilities. At least one, and more usually two, of these vessels are always at sea.

17.2.12 For shallow water operations in the archipelago, there are twelve units equipped with brush-skimmers. These are designed for transportation by lorry or by aircraft/helicopter.

17.2.13 For rapid containment of oil, the Coast Guard has seventeen sea-trailers, each carrying 500 metres of booms strategically allocated along the coastline. These sea-trailers are designed for lorry transportation to an appropriate port near the accident. The trailer can be launched into the water directly from the lorry and can be towed to the site at a speed of up to 30 knots.

17.2.14 The Coast Guard has approximately 16 000 metres of "RoBoom high sea booms", "Expandi 4300 coastal booms" and NOFI 600S. The Coast Guard also has a number of skimmers, containers and transfer pumps. For backup and assistance in an operation the Coast Guard has over thirty cutters and around sixty smaller workboats.

17.2.15 For oil recovery operations, most of the response vessels have special air filters and an overpressure system which is used when operating in hazardous atmospheres, thus allowing the crew to

work inside the ship without carrying gas masks etc. One vessel is equipped with filters to protect the interior of the ship against different hazardous gases in case of an incident involving chemicals.

### **17.3 Response on shore – Municipalities and Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency**

The local fire brigades of the municipalities are required to have a certain capacity for beach cleaning and harbour spills. In the case of larger spills, the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency has allocated two larger equipment stores at strategic locations. These stores support the local fire brigades with different types of beach protection and cleaning devices, such as light booms, tarpaulins, pumps, protective clothing, brushes and buckets.