

## **Summary of Panel Discussion at “PAJ Oil Spill Response Workshop 2009”**

At the Workshop, case histories of oil spill incidents occurred in East Asian sea area represented by Nakhodka and Hebei Spirit were introduced, and preparedness and response systems in Japan and in Korea respectively were presented including technical aspects from relevant organizations.

At the Panel continued after the Workshop, discussions were focused to derive lessons from the response itself and measures taken to prepare for the future, which could contribute to structure a framework of the spill response system to be created for the South East Asia.

### Important three points in the lessons learnt from Hebei Spirit spill by Mr. Suh Woo-Lack

- 1 Systematic response plan is definitely required including command system, resources and cooperation
- 2 Realistic and continuous training & exercise including open sea exercises are necessary leaving from formalistic ones
- 3 Way of managing large numbers of volunteer at the spill site should be developed

### Important three points in the lessons learnt from Nakhodka by Mr. K. Sasaki

- A Accurate information gathering, followed by prompt analysis and decision of response strategy, policy and proceed to operation with notification
- B Prepare response manuals applicable to varying situations including spilled oil weathering and/or places of stranding
- C Place a responsible person with clear and independent authority

### Comments from both presenters to each others' points

#### From **Mr. Suh** to Nakhodka's points

Unified command control system is essential. Japan and Korea are very similar with too many interfering and intervention from other government agencies, and choice between technical method and political one is always big dilemma. Technical choice should be prioritized and the authority in charge should have power to control the response operation.

Practical training & exercise in normal times save a lot of money, efforts and sweat in emergency situation. Please be more practical and operational, lack of the training will be the biggest enemy in real job proceeding.

#### From **Mr. Sasaki** to Hebei Spirit's points

Interchange between KOEM and MDPC will be one of the choice concerning the training & exercise.

Considering the number of volunteers at the time of Hebei Spirit was 1.2 million, some kind of study training will be necessary for potential volunteers. In Japan, "UMI MORI", the NGO, runs the Study Training for volunteers and around 1,100 people have completed the program.

In case that politicians' interference with private tendencies emerged, we responded by advising them that all the facts will be opened to the public.

**Mr. Richard Johnson** of ITOPF mentioned in summary that it is possible the lessons of Nakhodka and/or Hebei Spirit would be shared regionally or globally referring to the aftermath of the Torrey Canyon incident in 1967, where Civil Liability Convention, Fund Convention, International Maritime Organization, Bonn Agreement and Helsinki Commission were emerged and concerning the Supplementary Fund, issues were arisen after Nakhodka and realized after Erika, moreover, Oil Pollution Act of 1990 in the United State after Exxon Valdez.

**Mr. Alexander Nicolau** mentioned in summary that referring to the size of Euro-Asian Continent and spread of the sea area of the region, not only Japan and Korea but also India is to be welcomed as the member of GI SEA countries and the intention of joining GI SEA from industry and government will be most welcome. As for the experience and lessons learnt by both countries should be shared and used.

One thing considered is that deferent from North America, Australia or Europe, there is no forum or conference dedicated to the preparedness and response to oil spills joined by both industry and government of the countries in this region.

This would be the issue to be discussed seriously and to be created with governmental and inter-governmental agreement.

**Mr. David Salt** of OSRL mentioned in summary that supplementing to Mr. Richard Johnson's remarks concerning the commanding authority Mr. Sasaki submitted, SOSREP was created in the UK after experienced many spill incidents and situation is much improved to manage and control the response operation while excluding political aspects.

**Mr. Soda** of Japan Coast Guard mentioned in summary that by explaining the framework of the NOWPAP (North West Pacific Action Plan) with objective of marine environment conservation. It is composed of 4 countries surrounding the Sea of Japan and Yellow Sea, and MERRAC of the Plan is the place to exchange information, and case histories and lessons learnt are co-shared and systems are structured. Case histories are reported time to time from member countries to the Focal Point Meeting and/or NOWPAP Meeting itself.

## [Question and Answer]

1 What about liabilities for volunteer individuals e.g., working on the shoreline cleanup and suffered injury without undergoing training?

(Q by Mr. Chris Richards, audience and manager of SOSRC)

A At the time of cleanup after Prestige incident, a lady fell down from rock into the sea without any life jacket. And it's a big liability, there's no question about it.

In the US for example, anyone who goes to beach have to go Hazmat training. 40 hours training for full range responder and around 4 hours briefing for someone coming into an incident but that permits them only to do something and may be things like managing wildlife or support activities not in frontline. It is really a big issue from a liability point of view because 5 people died during Nakhodka due to cold weather. That's not the place where you go to find yourself. And there is a difficult management question about it. Then another point on that is you don't necessarily want to turn away volunteers because that could cause a big problem as well. What you have to do is to use them where they can be a value and protect them from danger. (A by Richard Johnson)

Learned from Nakhodka, National Contingency Plan of Japan obliged local governments to be responsible for volunteers' safety operation or to be responsible for preparedness to receive and use them.

Compensation for the case of volunteers' accidents, a volunteers' insurance is well disseminated (average rate is several hundred yen per day). (comments by Capt. Ohnuki)

It's almost impossible to restrain volunteers in Japan, and as mentioned before, periodical training has been taken place at national bases managed by "UMI-MORI". (comments by Mr. Sasaki)

2 Dispersant Splay

Dispersant splay by airplane is considered so effective but residents including fishermen close to the shore are reluctant or resisting to splay in Japan, is there any good solution? (Q by Mr. Fukami, audience and a director of MDPC)

A The damage is done when the oil spills. Anything after that is trying to minimize the damage. Dispersant isn't the answer to everything. And if the weather is extremely rough, then the weather itself will do that. We have to do some very tough decision in terms of the strategy to minimize the damage at the place, and a National Policy

materialize by experience has to lead the way to decide in what case and the places the dispersant could be used.

Everyone knows the best way to deal with an oil spill is not to have one. (A by Mr. D. Salt)

3 Equipment maintenance (comment)

Today we have completely forgot about maintenance of equipment. It's definitely important to have good response plan, good equipment, well trained people with well organized training and exercise, and well maintained equipment for successful spill response. If the gear is not efficient at the site, you will waste all the time.

(comments by Mr. Frantz Jensen, audience and vice president of Ro-Clean Desmi)

**Sum up by Capt. Ohnuki, the Chairman**

It is anticipated that technical and strategic learning obtained from the experiences of Nakhodka and Hebei Spirit will be of use to the preparedness for Asia as a whole through regional framework like GI project. The learning also has a value of common to the NOWPAP nations.

To give the life to this learning, appropriate analysis by experts with plenty of experience and continual training & exercise based on this analysis are required to match with the characteristic features of coastal areas of the country or region where this knowledge is needed.

To realize the above, discussions of the Workshop should promptly be compiled and presented to the people requires and hope these kind of workshop be held periodically.

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