

Preparedness for maritime chemical accidents in Finland and the Baltic Sea area - current status and some R&D development

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Abstract

In the Baltic Sea region, several bilateral agreements and international conventions exist to strengthen the cross-the-border cooperation in the case of an oil spill. Annual exercises are held by the respective countries' response authorities on combatting oil spills at sea. Within this decade particular attention has been focused more and more on the possibility of maritime chemical accidents. Even though the amount of transported chemicals is much less than that of oil and oil products, the risks related to possible chemical accidents are more difficult to identify than risks caused by oil accidents. The issue is the high variety and complexity of the environmental risk profiles and potentials of the chemicals and chemical compounds. Risks posed by maritime chemical spills depend on accident scenario, environmental conditions, and the intrinsic properties of the spilled chemical.

This paper presents how preparedness has been enhanced in Finland and the Baltic Sea through knowledge based on some of the latest R&D projects and through recent table-top and full-scale exercises. Further knowledge and risk assessment gaps and needs are discussed in the paper.

Keywords: *chemical accidents, preparedness, exercises, R&D projects*