



The Hague, 30 May 2007

To whom it may concern,

In the unfortunate situation that a marine incident results in the outflow of a certain volume of oil, crude or heavy fuel oil, response authorities are to decide what measures are best to be taken.

Three main options are considered in generic terms: monitoring; applying dispersants; mechanical recovery.

Certainly a decision depends on several parameters *e.g.* the type of oil and the volume discharged; the location in relation to vulnerable areas; ecological threat; sea conditions.

In the response to oil slicks following accidents involving the “Sea Empress” (1996); “Gulf-war”(1991); “Prestige” (2003), the Netherlands response organization has proven that their equipment contributed largely to the response capacity.

However, it is recognized that depending on conditions and available capacity other systems could contribute taking into consideration their specifications.

The Dutch development of the so-called “rigid sweeping-arm”, a solid steel structure comprising two floating pontoons and a bridge part in between, showed to be highly capable to recover large volumes of oil.

Window of application reaches up to 2,9 meters wave height and even in ocean swell of eight meters the system worked well.

Above wind force 7 bft it is recommended to consider the “do nothing” option.

A powerful high capacity pump brings the oil/water mixture into the tanks of the recovery vessel.

In the sweeping arm systems used by the Netherlands government, Rijkswaterstaat, a MARFLEX MSP 150 pump is installed. According to the supplier the capacity of the pump is 350 m³/hr in water.

Oil recovery operations proved that the pump is capable to maintain this level to specific viscosity.

The PRESTIGE oil slick, for instance, when the ARCA and RIJNDELTA encountered thick oil layers (up to 1 meter) and high viscosity (Cst 150.000 and higher) the pump capacity was reduced, however, even after considerable weathering and increase of the viscosity the pump capacity never came below 80 m³/hr.

Although the pumps have an injector inlet to inject gasoil or hot water, this function was never used.

Based on this type of rigid sweeping arm system, the Prestige-model, new technical improvements have been discussed resulting in a revolutionary design, the Victory Oil Sweeper, (VOS) having movable arms.

The cooperation between Kampers Oil Spill Equipment B.V.(Koseq) and Rijkswaterstaat last already for 3 decades. During that time Rijkswaterstaat has co-developed, tested and purchased a large number of the proven Koseq rigid sweeping arm systems. We have used these rigid sweeping arm systems very successfully on a variety of our vessels. In particular on our multi-purpose oil recovery vessel “ARCA” during national and international oil recovery operations .

The Dutch response organisation recommends to learn about the rigid sweeping arm systems that in combination with storage capacity will highly contribute to the preparedness of any response organisation.

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