

Napoli – Early observations workshop

Chair: Simon Wilkins

Key messages from recording of summing up

- Main message was of communication –
 - lots of positives to do with communication. Locals felt they were getting the information they required from agencies
 - some of communication between agencies could have been better
 - V important to feedback of lessons learnt to other coastal areas so as not to repeat mistakes or areas resolved in Napoli

Key Messages

- Communication
 - positive communications out
 - Communication of risk could have been better
 - feedback of lessons learnt
- Management of operation by police/major agencies needs improving
 - didn't need many, only about 10 ppl to close down area
 - close village
- Resources – clean up
 - police & possibly marine
- Local knowledge use very important
 - knowledge of police of maritime law necessary
- Response time – faster
- Decision making process
 - e.g. beaching of ship, environmental group, who sits on it?
 - Review.
 - MMO possible input into this
- National contingency plan needs looking at
- Needs separate annexes on – oil, gases etc

Questions

Question 1:

What are the observations on the Napoli response?

- RSPB think response was well handled and possibly helped by the Weather
- Were working our scale/numbers of seabirds affected
- Possible lack of understanding roles of RSPB/RSPCA as thought in charge of bird collection/clean up
- Not represented on environmental board therefore lack of consultation at planning stage – very good during confusion over who's responsible for birds
- NT had to introduce themselves as landowners again lack of consultation

Chair: has just mapped landowners along coast of Devon therefore should be more rapid contact with affected landowners

- Initial messages seemed to be come and collect wreckage ended up with anarchy and wider distribution of pollution

Chair: possibly due to lack of understanding between coast guard and police

- Lack of control by police
- Possible miscommunication of incident and clean-up plans by media e.g. come and get BMW bike for free

Chair: mainly people out of region coming and removing items from the beach at Branscombe

- Was media department in charge of press releases
- Need single media cell, clear message and single point of contact
- Due to MCA taking over process of clean up, many mitigation measures lacking
- Salvage control unit for 'at sea' issues
- Marine response cell at sea
- Shoreline rescue centre (SRC) – land based
- Possible misunderstanding of what these different cells remit were
- Ship owner had contractor to deal with shore clean up- took pressure off local authorities but this meant lack of communication
- State of emergency declared
- Could we possibly do as USA does, military closes off area
- Lack of on site police presence initially, although needed more as although road closed are many footpaths that weren't closed and possibly dangerous
- Margaret Rogers – sci fi notes on mitigation measures

Chair: footpaths closed, but closures not enforced. Need joint police/coastguard policy

- Could close village totally and then reopen if able
- No harm done
- Exmouth TC have regular meetings with marines, if no actual control allowed, presence poss enough
- Late response to initial warning 2 days earlier that ship needed beaching
- Police chief should have been informed straight away
- Poss drill for contingency plans
- Hindsight wonderful, but already had similar instance with Cadina
- Contractors very good with personal protection but needed to pause to right protocol
- Should be generic plan that can be tweaked if necessary
- Swift police response could have minimised costs

- Police presence on Beer head at night – birds nesting on cliffs as undisturbed
- Why didn't council react as swiftly as ship owner/contractors
- MCA man understated hazardous nature of substances
- Nature of cargo/list wasn't revealed
- Lyme Bay always been point of refuge as sheltered although heritage/protected coastline possible implications for conservation. What if MPA?
- Beaching Napoli in Lyme Bay brave decision, sacrificing small area for greater good
- Will happen again, millions of tonnes of oil carried past everyday
- Closing of Axe estuary very good as v quick
- Lack of tank washing due to immediate warning that area was being watched
- Napoli blamed for porpoise/whale deaths on N.Coast

Question 2:

What did different stakeholders think of the response at the time?

- Excellent
- Initially a bit of confusion
- Daily MCA updates from CC
- Branscombe notice board relaying directly to community from CC
- Many other locals only media pickings
- Definitely need form of communications of ongoing progress

Question 3:

Why weren't volunteers used following the incident?

Chair: Not used until end of operation due to health and safety , lots of medical equipment, animal waste. Dorset used some volunteers in early stages but here none due to health & safety

- Entirely appropriate
- Branscombe contained, use of professional contractors essential initially
- Good to involve locals at some point as sense of ownership of beach (esp Branscombe)
- Many volunteers from all over UK came forward
- County council have database compiled of willing volunteers for other incidents
- RSPB mobilised volunteers after first week but possibly didn't think about Health & safety
- NT though use of East Devon DC very good. Coordination of volunteers
- Keeping co-ordination of vols within local DC
- EROCIPS writing protocol for use of vols

Question 4:

What could be the role of the proposed Marine Management Organisation in future incidents?

- EA did lots of work with contractors
- Every site licensed for waste transfer

Chair: how could MMO fit into incident?

- Will it have statutory powers?

Chair: No

- What about funding? If like Estuary partnerships which are looking for funding and having to pull out
- Ships emergency plan?

Chair: certain ports are supposed to have emergency plan for spillages etc

- Dependent on risk, grey areas, as not statutory
- Devon & Dorset have these as high risk areas
- Would another organisation involved in decision making muddy waters?
- Possible lack of local knowledge of not just geography but resources
- Maybe should have consultant role from outside to feedback to