



Newsletter from **NOWPAP MERRAC**

Northwest Pacific Action Plan
Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response
Regional Activity Centre

BUILDING A STRONG PARTNERSHIP

Greetings from the Director of MERRAC, Chang-Gu Kang



MERRAC, as a new regional activity center established in March 2000, is still at the evolutionary stage. Nevertheless, we have achieved some important results through our activities during the last two-and-a-half years.

One of our most important accomplishments was to open the door of a new era for regional cooperative activities on marine pollution preparedness and response among the northeast Asian countries.

I am especially pleased to say that we reached the last phase in finalizing the NOWPAP Regional Oil Spill Contingency Plan and its Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). We have been developing these since 1994 as one of the most important designated tasks for MERRAC. I believe that the Plan and MOU - soon to be adopted - will be a keystone in building a strong partnership among NOWPAP Members in the field of marine pollution preparedness and response.

To develop the drafts, the NOWPAP Members took part in productive discussions through a series of meetings. Among these were the 4th NOWPAP/4 Forum Meeting (Qingdao, May 2001), an Experts

Meeting (Tokyo, November 2001), and the 5th NOWPAP MERRAC Focal Points Meeting (Daejeon, May 2002).

Through such efforts, we were at last able to forward the texts of the draft MOU and draft Plan to the next NOWPAP Intergovernmental Meeting for its approval.

I sincerely thank the NOWPAP Members, UNEP and IMO for their many contributions to developing the texts of the draft Plan and draft MOU.

After finalizing the texts of the draft Plan, we also organized the NOWPAP Regional OPRC Training Course (IMO level 2) on 28 October - 1 November 2002. This gave Members an opportunity to study how best to co-operate and to respond jointly at a regional level, by using the Plan when a major oil spill occurs in our region.

As we have done until now, MERRAC will continue to do our best to achieve our agreed goals in the future. Even though implementation of our activities may be relatively slow when compared to other regions of the world, and has certainly lagged behind our original expectations, we will persist, step-by-step, in overcoming any difficulties and problems that confront us. As the proverb says, 'a journey of 1,000 miles begins with a single step'.

Thank you.

FOCAL POINTS CHART A COURSE

5th NOWPAP MERRAC Focal Points Meeting

The 5th NOWPAP MERRAC Focal Points Meeting was held in 20-24 May 2002 in MERRAC. Its purpose was to implement the project of the NOWPAP/4: Development of Effective Measures for Regional Co-operation in Marine Pollution Preparedness and Response, and especially to exchange relevant information and develop a NOWPAP Regional Oil Spill Contingency Plan and its related Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Such meetings have been held periodically from 1997, with participation from the following States in the Northwest Pacific region: Japan, People's Republic of China, Republic of Korea and Russian Federation.

MERRAC, with support from UNEP and IMO, acted as secretariat for the meeting. This meeting was the first since its title was changed to "the MERRAC Focal Points Meeting" and the decision was made by



the 4th Forum Meeting held in May 2001 to hold it every May at MERRAC.

The main decisions of the meeting were as follows:

(i) The meeting decided to conclude its work on the text of draft 'NOWPAP Regional Oil Spill Contingency Plan' and the draft 'Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Regional Co-operation Regarding Preparedness and Response to Oil Spills in Marine Environment of the Northwest Pacific Region. It agreed to forward the text to the next

Intergovernmental Meeting of NOWPAP, after closely reviewing the texts of the draft MOU and the draft Plan agreed by the legal and technical experts of the NOWPAP Member at the Expert Advisory Group Meeting on NOWPAP Regional Oil Spill Contingency Plan and MOU (Tokyo, 5-9 November 2001).

(ii) The meeting agreed to hold the regional training course (IMO Level 2 Training Course) in Korea around October 2002, as the expert meeting to be held in 2002 among the proposed activities of MERRAC in 2002/2003 biennium.

(iii) The meeting revised the proposed workplan and budget for the 2002/2003 biennium, based upon the decision of the 7th Intergovernmental Meeting of NOWPAP.

The meeting review the progress made for each of the initial tasks agreed at the 4th meeting and identified the need for continuous work. It decided to rearrange the intersessional works as the routine works of MERRAC and specific projects coordinated by MERRAC. The former is the Regional Contingency Plan, Focal Points Meeting, Experts Meeting, Information System, Reports on Oil Pollution Incidents, Training & Exercise, while the latter is the Oil Spill Prediction Model associated with Sensitivity Mapping (Korea and Japan), Oil Dispersant (Russia), and Shoreline Clean-Up and Bioremediation (China). The meeting allocated their respective budgets for the implementation of each regional project, following a discussion of priorities.

The working atmosphere during the meeting was productive, professional and friendly. A spirit of co-operation and collaboration between the countries prevailed. Participants expressed their satisfaction with the achievements of the meeting, and saw it as an important step towards establishing a mechanism for preparedness, response and co-operation in the NOWPAP region.

OIL SPILLS: LEARNING TO RESPOND

NOWPAP Regional OPRC Training Course (IMO Level 2 course)

The NOWPAP Regional OPRC Training Course (IMO Level 2 Course) was held in Incheon, Korea from 28 October to 1 November 2002, with the kind support from the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the Korea National Maritime Police Agency (KNMPA) and the Korea Marine Pollution Response Corporation (KMPPRC). It represented one of the proposed activities of MERRAC for the 2002/2003 Biennium decided at the 5th NOWPAP MERRAC Focal Points Meeting.

The course was aimed at providing national staff selected from NOWPAP Members with the knowledge and skills required by Supervisors or On-Scene Commanders designated by governments and other authorities, especially taking into account the moment that the NOWPAP Regional Oil Spill Contingency Plan would be finalized in near future. A total of seventeen (17) trainees attended, including 8 from Korea and 3 from



Japan, China and Russia respectively. Most of the trainees came from their respective national authorities responsible for accidental marine pollution preparedness and response.

The training course was prepared in accordance with the programme of the IMO OPRC Level 2 Training Course, with the technical support from the Intergovernmental

Maritime Organization (IMO). Mr. John @TMstergaard of IMO, Dr. Tosh Moller of the International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation (ITOPF), Mr. Richard Tatner of the Oil Spill Response Limited (OSRL), and Mr. Joe Nichols of the International Oil Pollution Compensation (IOPC) Funds served as lecturers.

Through professional presentations and table-top exercises over the five-day period, the lecturers provided information on issues related to national and regional oil spill preparedness, response and co-operation, including but not limited to contingency planning, response

management and organization, response policy, oil spill behavior, fate and effects, assessment of oil spills, shoreline clean-up, transfer, storage and disposal of oil, evidence gathering and documentation, media relations, claims and compensation and termination of a response

operation.

The participants, representing their respective governmental authorities and agencies of the NOWPAP Members, expressed their satisfaction with the content, level and outcome of the course.

CONTINGENCY PLAN ON THE TABLE

Expert Advisory Group Meeting on NOWPAP Regional Oil Spill Contingency Plan and Memorandum of Understanding

The Experts Meeting was held in Japan in 5-9 November 2001, with the kind hospitality of the Government of Japan. Its purpose was to discuss the text of the draft NOWPAP Regional Oil Spill Contingency Plan and the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This meeting brought together two experts from each of the NOWPAP member States (one technical and another legal), along with relevant experts from non-governmental organizations.

The meeting considered the draft MOU and draft Plan which had been revised by Mr. Chris Harris, IMO consultant, which took into account the comments made at the 4th NOWPAP Forum Meeting (Qingdao, May 2001) and subsequent comments made by the NOWPAP members during the intersessional



period following the 4th Forum Meeting.

After a lengthy and thorough discussion, the meeting produced a draft Plan and draft MOU aimed at ensuring regional cooperation on marine pollution preparedness and response in

this region. The text was submitted to the 5th NOWPAP MERRAC Focal Points Meeting (20-24 May 2002) for its further discussion.

MERRAC TEAMS UP WITH REMPEC

Dr. Chang-Gu Kang, Director of MERRAC, paid a formal visit to the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) on 28 October - 3 November 2001. The visit was aimed at facilitating cooperation between the two Centres and the exchange of information regarding marine pollution preparedness and response.

REMPEC is the regional activity center that functions same with MERRAC in the Mediterranean region.

Notably, REMPEC was extended in 1987 to include "hazardous substances other than oil", and its objectives and functions were further modified in 2001 in order to reflect the new role of the Centre envisaged by the adoption of the new Protocol concerning Cooperation in

Preventing Pollution from Ships and in Cases of Emergency, Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea.

Dr. Kang met the entire staff REMPEC to exchange their experience and knowledge related to oil spill preparedness and response. Clearly, REMPEC can provide a good example to MERRAC well into the future.

HIGH DENSITY OILS

IMO Third Research and Development Forum

By the kind invitation of IMO, Drs. Chang-Gu Kang and Seong-Gil Kang of MERRAC participated in the IMO Third Research and Development Forum, entitled "High-density Oil Spill Response".

The objective of the Forum, held on 11-13 March 2002 in Brest, France, was to take an in-

depth look at "state-of-the-art" response at sea to pollution by high-density oils, regarding its detection and drift modelling, behaviour and weathering, at-sea response particularly containment and recovery, and transport, storage and disposal of waste.

MERRAC presented a scientific paper to the

meeting on the Korean oil spill prediction model to be applied to the NOWPAP region.

Two staff members also attended the Erika Technical Conference held at the same place on 13-15 March 2002, during which they visited the Centre of Documentation, Research and Experimentation on Accidental Pollution (CEDRE), the French Institute for the Research and Exploitation of the Sea (IFREMER), the response vessel 'Arca', and other institutes and facilities.

MERRAC : A MODEL FOR RACs

7th NOWPAP Intergovernmental Meeting

Dr. Chang-Gu Kang, Director of MERRAC, attended at the 7th NOWPAP Intergovernmental Meeting held in Vladivostok, Russian Federation, 19-23 March 2002, where he reported on MERRAC activities in 2001, particularly the development of the Regional

Contingency Plan and the related Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Meeting participants expressed the view that MERRAC could become a good model for other RACs.

The meeting approved the workplan and

budget of NOWPAP for 2002-2003, including US\$195,000 for the MERRAC activities. It also discussed arrangements for the NOWPAP Regional Coordinating Unit to be established in two offices, one in Toyama, Japan and one in Busan, Republic of Korea.

REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

IMO/UNEP Forum on Regional Arrangements for Co-operation in Combating Marine Pollution Incidents

MERRAC participated in the 'IMO/UNEP Forum on Regional Arrangements for Co-operation in Combating Marine Pollution Incidents', which was held by IMO and UNEP in IMO Headquarters (London) on 30 September-2 October 2002.

Forty-two papers from 19 organizations representing all the structures invited (International and Regional Organizations,

Secretariats of Conventions, Centres, Programmes and NGO's representing the Industry) were presented during the three-day meeting. These covered a complete range of topics related to the enhancement of the regional co-operation for combating marine pollution incidents, and included four papers from MERRAC presented by Dr. Chang-Gu Kang and Dr. Seong-Gil Kang.

Each session produced conclusions and recommendations to be considered and implemented by the Regional Seas secretariats and programmes and their partners.

In all, 45 delegates from 25 organizations or Regional Conventions attended the IMO/UNEP Forum, considered by the participants as very useful to facilitate the co-operation between all the parties involved at the regional level.

TEAMWORK

First DINRAC Focal Points Meeting

Dr. Chang-Gu Kang, Director of MERRAC, attended at the First National Focal Points Meeting for NOWPAP DINRAC held in Shanghai, People's Republic of China on 25-28 November 2002, at the request of UNEP. He presented a report on the general overview and current activities of MERRAC.

Like MERRAC, DINRAC is one of the four regional activity centers for implementing the NOWPAP projects, especially in the field of data and information networking for the NOWPAP sea area.

WELCOME TO OUR WEBSITE

MERRAC website- <http://merrac.nowpap.org>

MERRAC has been developed and operated its website since September 2001 to store and disseminate information on its activities related to marine pollution preparedness, response and cooperation.

The site contains reports of relevant meetings, posted for easy download, as well as

databases on oil pollution response equipment and experts, records of major oil spill accidents, and other current information from the NOWPAP region. The home page features news and events relating to marine pollution preparedness and response.

MERRAC is committed to the regular

updating and expansion of its website in order to keep it dynamic and fresh.

Visit us!



JAPAN'S CONTRIBUTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN THE NORTHWEST PACIFIC REGION

by Naoki Okabe, Director, Ocean Division, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, Japan (ex-MERRAC Focal Point of Japan)



Japan is completely surrounded by the sea. From ancient times, sea-borne people and culture have traveled to our shores, and we have used the generous sea for fishing,

transportation and trade. There is no question that the sea has contributed greatly to the maintenance and development of our individual lives and livelihoods.

Given these circumstances, Japan is keenly cognizant of the negative impact of marine pollution, and has thus been accumulating knowledge of marine environmental protection through the improvement of systems of pollution prevention and removal.

As the Nakhodka oil spill of 1997 clearly shows, once a marine pollution incident occurs in the NOWPAP region, coastal areas in neighboring countries are prone to severe damage due to meteorological and oceanographic factors.

We hosted the "Ministerial Conference on Transport and Environment" in Tokyo January 15 -16, 2002. The Ministerial Statement on Prevention of Marine Pollution adopted by this conference stressed the idea that the world continues to face the loss of human life and property and pollution of the sea, caused mainly by the operation of sub-standard ships that do not comply with the international treaty instrument such as SOLAS, MARPOL and STCW.

Japan, together with other countries, will take the necessary steps to implement the Action Plan, as follows:

1. Establishment of the IMO audit programme on flag State implementation
2. Promotion of incentive schemes for quality ships
3. Promotion of the availability and use of ship information databases
4. Implementation of the ISM Code
5. Harmonization of port States control activities

6. Technical assistance for flag State implementation and port State control activities in developing countries
7. Development of monitoring systems for sub-standard ships

The Japan Coast Guard (JCG) has established a National Strike Team, which has sophisticated knowledge and skills related to maritime disaster prevention and response measures, to tackle accidents involving the spillage of oil, noxious substances and other materials that could possibly cause serious harm to coastal sea areas.

The Maritime Disaster Prevention Center (MDPC) has been serving as the core organization to perform marine disaster, such as recovery of oil spillage. When a marine disaster strikes - such as an oil spill or a fire on a ship - MDPC executes oil recovery and fire-fighting procedures. It does so through its contractors undertaking to execute disaster prevention activities throughout the country, either under the instruction of the Commandant of the JCG, or on consignment from ship owners.

Oil recovery equipment and materials, including oil recovery boats and oil booms, are deployed throughout the nation by MDPC on behalf of, and for the benefit of, ship owners who are obliged by the relevant laws to retain such equipment and materials.

MDPC provides training courses for crews of oil tankers and personnel working in oil factory power plant, and other energy-related facilities to upgrade their disaster skills, such as control of spilled oil and other noxious liquid substances at sea.

Japan has been engaged in the following activities in co-operation with other NOWPAP member countries for the purpose of environment protection in the Northwest Pacific. Japan believes that the experience and knowledge acquired through these activities could help carry out the various tasks of NOWPAP.

- Joint exercises of SAKHALIN SPILLEX'98 (with Russia and USA) and Japan-KOREA SAR and

MARPOLEX'99

- Technical assistance to train personnel of Russia, China and Korea through M'PAC Projects
- Promotion of international cooperation on oil spill combating by holding technical meetings of Japan and Korea
- Cooperation against oil spill combating of large spill incidents, for example NAKHODKA incidents and OH SUNG No.3 incidents
- Establishment of Cooperation system of Port State Control in the Asia-Pacific region
- Hosting seminars related with the marine protection
- Japan-Russia joint study on marine environment of the Northwest Pacific
- Japan-Korea project for the improvement of water quality
- Hosting Workshop on Coastal Environment Sensitivity Index Mapping for Oil Spills and international cooperation on arrangement of the map in the Asian developing countries
- International collaboration on researches as to clarification of behavior of toxic chemicals in East-Asian Seas
- Consolidation of cooperation between research organization through hosting the Japan-China Joint Workshop on the Cooperative study of marine environment



TOWARDS CLEANER SEAS

by *Zhi Guanglu, Director, Department of Ship Safety and Pollution Prevention, China Maritime Safety Administration, People's Republic of China*



On the behalf of the Maritime Safety Administration of the People's Republic of China (CMSA), I welcome the publication of the NOWPAP MERRAC

Newsletter No. 2 and applaud the outstanding achievement for the protection of the northwest Pacific environment under the support of UNEP and IMO. I think that the development of the regional contingency plan and MOU will further promote co-operation and communication for marine environmental protection in this area.

The International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation (OPRC 1990) has been an important focus of concern for every Member State of IMO since its establishment, entry into force and implementation. After the approval of the State Council, China accepted this Convention on 30 March 1998, and put it into operation three months later.

The Government of the People's Republic of China pays a great deal of attention to the protection of the environment, especially the

marine environment. In order to implement the OPRC1990 Convention, CMSA is undertaking a series of actions including developing the oil spill contingency plan, building capacity, training personnel, and so on.

In 2000, China amended the Marine Environmental Protection Law of the People's Republic of China and added in a new article concerning the oil spill contingency plan. According to Article 18, the State will formulate the national oil spill contingency plan for serious marine pollution accidents according to the need to prevent marine pollution. The CMSA is responsible for formulating a national oil spill plan for serious marine pollution accidents from ships, and for putting it on record in the State Environment Protection Administration.

The establishment of oil spill contingency plans for the whole China, Bohai Sea, Yellow Sea, South China Sea and Taiwan Strait began after approval by the Ministry of Communications. They were developed by CMSA and were issued by the Ministry of Communications and the State Environmental Protection Administration in the joint press conference on 31 March 2001.

As a basis of implementing the Bohai Sea oil spill contingency plan, the CMSA established a

model project of oil spill response. It aims at updating information on oil spills from ships in the northern sea area, and at achieving effective control of important waterways nearby. It also aims at gaining experience of administrative structures regarding oil spill prevention and response, and pollution damage claims.

According to the Bohai Sea oil spill contingency plan and the design of the Model Project, CMSA will build up an oil spill emergency center at Yantai.

CMSA is organizing the compiling of training materials on oil spill response. In keeping with the work plan, training on the basic technology of oil spill response, study and discussion have been held. This year CMSA will emphasize the need for high level training to the supervisor and manager.

China is a developing country and we still have long way to go in the field of marine pollution emergency response. I hope that countries in this area take further effective measures to strengthen co-operation, and that international organizations continue to provide assistance in the form of technology, facilities etc.

I believe that what we do will be helpful for the NOWPAP area and the whole world.

KOREA NATIONAL SYSTEM ON THE MARINE POLLUTION, PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

by *Wan-Sub Lee, Director, Marine Pollution Response Division, Korea National Maritime Police Agency (KNMPA), Republic of Korea (MERRAC Focal Point of Korea)*



As one of the MERRAC Focal Points and Director of Marine Pollution Response Division of the Korea National Maritime Police Agency (KNMPA), which covers oil

pollution response in the Republic of Korea, I am extremely pleased to announce the imminent establishment of the regional co-operative system for marine pollution preparedness and response in the Northwest

Pacific region, within the framework of the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP) adopted by the Republic of Korea, Japan, People's Republic of China and Russian Federation in September 1994.

It is especially remarkable that the texts of the draft NOWPAP Regional Oil Spill Contingency Plan and draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) have been forward to the next NOWPAP Intergovernmental Meeting for its approval. This achievement can help to ensure practical, realistic and thorough regional cooperation.

As one of the Focal Points, I would like to

express again that these outcomes have resulted from the valuable efforts and contributions of NOWPAP Member States and MERRAC, as well as active support from Dr. Eirik Adler of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Mr. Jean-Claude Sainlos of the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

Here, I would like to briefly introduce major missions and activities of Korea National Maritime Police Agency (KNMPA) related to marine pollution preparedness and response.

Major Missions

- Guard for protection of territorial seas and

EEZ

- Prevention, enforcement and investigation of maritime crimes
- Surveillance and response of marine pollution
- Maritime traffic safety and rescue in the maritime casualties

Major Activities related to Marine Pollution Preparedness and Response

1) Establishment of the Area Contingency Plan

Together with ratification of the OPRC '90 in Republic of Korea in November 1999, the Korea National Contingency Plan (NCP) was prepared and approved in January 2000. The Government also initiated the projects for establishment of Area Contingency Plan (ACP), as the technical and operational document to NCP in 1999. We had developed these projects, which cover the entire Korean coast, by August 2002.

The main contents of the Plans are as following:

- Risk assessment for pollution incidents in each region, practical procedures and technical methods available to the response

operation, based on regional environments

- Data and Information System including coastline type and biological and socio-economical data
- Environmental Sensitivity Map (ESI) based on electronic map including the distribution of fishery grounds, industrial facilities etc.

2) Operation and Management of Scientific Support Unit (SSU)

SSU was set up in 2000 with a view to minimizing pollution damage by providing technical support from experts in various fields such as identification of quantity of spilt oil, method of treatment of incident ships, prediction of diffusion of spilt oil, selection of response method, etc. It is composed of twenty-eight experts from relevant institutes, universities and law offices. The SSU especially supports the following:

- Planning response strategies and selecting response methods
- Securing the safety of incident ships, and predicting the possibility of magnification of the incident
- Identification of the characteristics of spilt oil and noxious substances
- Prediction of diffusion of spilt oil
- Assessment of environmental impact and

pollution damage

- Legal matters related to cleanup operations

3) Training and Exercises for marine pollution response

Every year, we have carried out Joint Exercises for preparedness to mass oil pollution, together with relevant domestic and/or foreign authorities and/or civil organizations. Also, we have dispatched our staffs to training programmes organized by specialized training centers for leveling up their knowledge and experience

4) Enlightenment for prevention of marine pollution

In order to prevent illegal discharge of oil and wastes, the following actions are carried out:

- Enlightenment through television, newspapers, media, photo exhibition on marine environment, etc.
- Management of the Honorary Surveillance Officer, designation of Green-ship
- payment of reward money for declarations of illegal discharges
- Holding the Joint Sea Cleaning Campaign together with relevant authorities and nongovernmental organizations in major ports

OIL SPILL RESPONSE EXERCISE IS A VERY IMPORTANT ELEMENT TO PROMOTE THE REGIONAL CAPACITY ON MARINE POLLUTION PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

by Yury Rusin, Expert of State Marine Pollution Control Salvage & Rescue Administration (MPCSA), Russian Federation



A very important element of the success and effectiveness of oil spill response (OSR) at sea is the ability to focus on major tasks during the response exercise. Moreover, it is

necessary to have adequate equipment, materials and qualified personnel.

Now that the NOWPAP Regional Oil Contingency Plan has been finalized, it is important to work quickly to increase multilateral co-operation on OSR in the northwest Pacific region within the framework of Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP).

The main tasks of the exercises are summarized

as follows:

- Warning and communication;
- Coordination and cooperation of personnel and methods;
- Personnel training with respect to equipment use, technical procedures and materials;
- Working for technological schemes? Development of technological systems of OSR;
- Strategic and tactical matters related to possible future OSR operations at sea;
- Checking of emergency plan effectiveness (local, regional, etc.).

In addition to the above, the success of multilateral exercises is also dependent on effective communication between ships of different countries, joint work orders, and the ability to surmount language barriers. Most importantly, the people involved in the operations

must be committed to working harmoniously, side by side. Once this is done, we can rest assured that in a real OSR operation these people will know exactly what to do, how to do it and how to minimize expense and use of resources.

The types of joint exercises which can be used by member countries of NOWPAP in the near future, are given below:

1. NOWPAP ALPHA (Table-top exercise)

This is a "paper exercise", the aim of which is to create a basis for discussion of matters relating to organization, communication and logistics in joint response actions involving two or more countries. The exercise is planned so that "the players" will be presented with a pollution incident, and given facts of the incident of the sort that most probably would be at hand in the initial

phase. This initial phase is followed up by presentation of the situation as it has developed at selected later stages.

After each presentation the players are given the necessary time to consider their national follow-up action in relation to the incident situation. The planning and conduct of the exercise could be the responsibility of a designated lead country. For detailed planning, a contact person from each country should be appointed.

2. NOWPAP BRAVO (Warning exercise)

The aim of this type of exercise is to test the agreed procedures and lines of communication for reporting, requesting and providing assistance, and to get a picture of the current readiness of the responding countries to call for assistance.

The exercise further aims at familiarizing personnel with the use and national handling of the adopted POLREP reporting form. When receiving an Exercise POLREP (POLWARN), countries should record the time of receipt, time of transmission to the responsible national authority, and time for the receipt of it by the person responsible for initiating further national action. When receiving an Exercise POLREP (POLINF/POLFAC), in addition to the time recorded as for POLREP (POLWARN), countries should, for example, make a realistic evaluation of the types and amount of equipment as well as personnel at their disposal for rendering the assistance called for, as well as the estimated time of arrival at the scene of the accident. After the termination of each exercise, countries shall submit a report containing the afore-mentioned times and evaluations, as well as a description of the management structure during the event, to the lead country for the drafting of the Exercise Report. NOWPAP BRAVO is executed without notice within a specified period of time, and the participants in the exercise are not notified of the incident before the exercise.

3. NOWPAP CHARLIE (Equipment exercise)

The purpose of this exercise is to test co-operation

between response units of countries with respect to both communication and equipment. It is intended to involve staff authorities only to a very limited extent. This exercise is arranged and conducted after direct consultation between countries involved and following the lead country principle.

4. NOWPAP DELTA (Operational exercise)

The aim of this exercise is partly to test the warning procedure, the response capability and the response time of countries, partly to test and to train the staff functions and evaluate the co-operation between response units of countries. Besides the afore-mentioned tasks, communication matters between ships of different countries, the overcoming of language barriers, and study of new technologies of oil spill response are also important for multilateral exercises.

It is necessary to mention that Russia has wide experience in conducting and participating in bilateral and multilateral OSR exercises in the Baltic, Barents and Black Seas, and also in the Far East Region.

An international exercise was conducted in May 1998 with participation of the US Coast Guard and the Maritime Safety Agency of Japan. The exercise included working through the tasks on OSR, fire-fighting, and rescue.

A joint Japan-Russia exercise on OSR was conducted in Summer 2001 near Mombetsu port (Japan). Japanese and Russian ships as well as response teams took part. There was special emphasis on warning and communication, information transmission, co-operation of participants, effectiveness of Headquarters work, and personnel training. The exercise showed very good level of organization and co-operation.

Conclusion:

It is necessary to create and develop a system of conducting OSR joint exercises in the framework of the NOWPAP Regional Oil Spill Contingency Plan. Doing so will help facilitate co-operation in further joint OSR operations.

WELCOME

MERRAC greets new MERRAC Focal Points of Japan and China

Mr. Matsuhiro ITO and Mr. LI Enhong were named the new MERRAC Focal Points for Japan and the People's Republic of China, respectively. MERRAC sincerely welcomes Mr. Ito and Mr. Li, and express our sincere thanks to their predecessors, Mr. Haruhiko NONAKA (Japan) and Mr. E HAILIANG (China) for their invaluable support and many contributions to MERRAC activities. The updated list of the National Focal Points for MERRAC is as follows:

Japan:

Mr. Matsuhiro ITO
Director
Marine Environment Protection and Disaster Prevention Division
Guard and Rescue Department
Japan Coast Guard, Japan

People's Republic of China:

Mr. LI Enhong
Deputy Director
Department of Ship Safety and Pollution Prevention, Maritime Safety Administration
People's Republic of China

Republic of Korea:

Mr. Wan-Sub Lee
Director
Maritime Pollution Division
National Maritime Police Agency
Republic of Korea

Russian Federation:

Mr. Vladimir Karev
Director
State Marine Pollution Control Salvage & Rescue Administration (MPCSA), Ministry of Transport, Russian Federation

Announcement

Welcome to the second issue of the NOWPAP MERRAC Newsletter! This newsletter will be published every year, and is distributed free of charge. For additional copies, or if you would like to be placed on our mailing list, please contact MERRAC at the following address: nowpap@kriso.re.kr. Alternatively, should you wish to have more information about our activities or have information that you would like to disseminate to the experts and relevant authorities of the NOWPAP countries, please contact MERRAC. Suggestions are also welcome, simply e-mail us.

NOWPAP MERRAC

Northwest Pacific Action Plan
Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response
Regional Activity Centre

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