

Abstract

Cooperation Between Authorities and Volunteers in Oil Spill Cases

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Estonian Fund for Nature (Eestimaa Looduse Fond - ELF) and Estonian Rescue Board have made a cooperation commitment since 2007: in an oil spill case Rescue Board will ask for volunteer help from ELF, who has more than 1200 volunteers in their database. Rescue Board has also agreed to the training of volunteers and has ensured the participation of their specialist in ELF volunteer trainings. Altogether, 450 volunteers are trained this way, who are willing to help in oil spill accidents. 50 volunteer group-leaders are also trained in depth, to help at the accident scene in coordination of volunteers. Personal protective equipment and tools for volunteers are mostly stored in Rescue Board's premises and ready to use. Estonian Rescue Board is in the middle of procurement of the mobile bird cleaning unit, which will also be mostly used by volunteers in an accident case. The aim of the cooperation is to provide a trained and organised work force for key authorities, create good training modules and training materials for volunteers and also for authorities, and include volunteer troops to national contingency plans. A short conclusion of actual oil-spill cases, where volunteers have participated: 2006 South-West coast of Estonia, Mystery Spill, tier III accident with oiled birds; 2007 Keila-Joa, small-scaled spill with no wildlife involved; 2008 Sõrve, Saaremaa, oiled birds came to beach, no actual oil spill.