

The role of the Rescue Service at the liquidation of marine pollution

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The Baltic Sea is a water body characterized with an extremely dense vessel traffic. About 200 ships sailing on it in a day, 200 of them are oil tankers. The Estonian Environmental Inspection has analyzed the possibility of occurring a massive oil tanker accident in Estonian territorial waters and found the probability of it to be quite high – from 3 to 5 cases during a year. This is why the governmental organizations need to be able to answer in case of pollution accidents quickly and effectively, cut down its spreading and begin to collect the polluting product. The Rescue Service has elaborated a service standard which presents the basis by training and composing educational material.

In addition to rescue system in case of emergency situations connected with sea transport accidents an enormous load lays on environmental institutions and local coastal municipalities.

Several laws and orders of the Estonian Republic handle the guaranteeing of preparedness for sea pollution and the finding the solution to emergency situation.

The responsibility for monitoring and control of marine pollution in Estonia is divided between several organizations. In the administrative territory of Ministry of Interior the border guard is responsible thorough its marine guard centre for the open sea pollution. The regional rescue institution is responsible for the pollution in the coastal sea areas. By this the local municipality helps it with its resources. For the rescue of polluted sea birds the Ministry of Environment is responsible.

It is differentiated between small/local oil pollutions and large pollution cases (10...50 tons) where its liquidation is beyond the abilities of municipal rescue institution.

As a responsible body for the rescue education In Estonia the Rescue College is organizing training in this field in the form both basic and additional training. The publishing of the respective Estonian language educational literature is also related to this. In 2008 two diploma thesis were successfully presented on this subject at the Rescue College.