Oil spill incidents

As connecting nodes between land and sea, ports around the world are vulnerable to the occurrence of oil spills and therefore should be prepared to prevent, respond, and recover accordingly, mitigating the negative impacts and seizing the opportunities that may appear. Ports and terminals also play a relevant role during response actions, sharing equipment, supplies and qualified manpower as they concentrate significant emergency resources as it acts as support base for sea operations and, thus, are the ideal places to gather those involved in emergency management.

Political and regulatory framework will vary from port to port and, just as the extent of government's participation on attending to major emergencies (or lack of it), it holds a great level of influence on port's emergency and crisis management frameworks. Regardless of the context, some basic practices can be listed as key elements to ports and terminals aiming at strengthening the resilience of its operations:

1 **Well dimensioned resources and procedures:** estimate oil spill scenarios and the respective resources required to an efficient response. Maintain an adequate inventory of material and equipment including not only quantities but storage locations within the port area. to allow for a quick mobilization. Keep track and properly train the human resources available, defining the response procedures to be followed in advance. An effective response will reduce operational, financial, and reputational negative impacts.

2 **Invest in emergency drills and trainings:** from tactical levels to the highest response management level, preparedness is a key element to efficiency and crisis management, guaranteeing operational continuity even during major adverse events.

3 **Efficient and transparent communication:** previously mapping all stakeholders and preparing to deliver up-to-date, clear and objective communication is a key element for a good crisis management, playing a central role on preserving the company's reputation after all. Good communication also strengthens the relationship of trust with key stakeholders.

4 **Engagement with local port community:** collaboration with terminals, regulatory agencies, local government, community organizations such as fisherman associations, NGO's, neighborhood citizens etc. to develop integration and add efforts that could lead to have such local stakeholders as part of the response team, making them part of the solution.

5 **Port Authority leadership and integration with Regulatory Agencies:** When responding to a major incident, knowledge is everything. The Port Authority should therefore engage efforts to maintain complete up-to-date information about the port's available resources and procedures to allow for a better integration of resources and stakeholders that can be involved on the response and crises. A collaborative agenda between terminal operators should be in place in order to promote the integration of procedures and drills to be conducted during the year.

6 **Learn with real events and drills:** Emergency response practices have evolved generally because of experience and will keep evolving. It is mandatory that the lessons learned from every event, as well as from each drill, should be incorporate in the procedures and routines aiming to improve emergency response preparedness and crisis management. Major events around the globe should be studied and understood with this end in mind.

7 **Seek improvement by innovation:** improve routines by investing in innovation, aiming process efficiency and optimization, reducing the risks to people and assets in an emergency.

Case Study - Port of Açu

PdA has a tactical team dedicated to responding to environmental emergencies at sea, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. This tactical response team is operated by a service provider that currently has the largest inventory of resources to combat oil spills at sea in Latin America stored within the Port of Açu itself. This makes the Port of Açu a national and transnational reference in cases of large accidental scenarios with oil at sea occurring in the South Atlantic. Also, the port also has environmental emergency response plans, where the tactics adopted to deal with this type of unwanted event are established.

The execution of simulations and exercises is a routine action. These simulations involve, in addition to the PdA's own management structure, customers, service providers and institutions such as the Brazilian Navy, the fire department, environmental agencies, the municipality, among other stakeholders. This integration with the various stakeholders has already resulted in coordinated actions that have been recognized by the IAPH as the "Emergency Preparedness Project" that was submitted in 2019 and which presented the integrated actions to prevent possible impacts caused by the largest oil spill in the history of Brazil (https://sustainableworldports.org/project/port-of-acu-emergency-preparedness-project/).

In addition to adopting the ICS (Incident Command System) and having a routinely trained emergency response organizational structure, the PdA seeks to ensure that it is prepared to deal with crises and emergencies, by created CORE. CORE is an innovative action that integrates Security, VTS and Emergency and Risk Management in a single,shared organizational structure, promoting greater synergy. (https://sustainableworldports.org/project/port-of-acu-core-center-of-operations-and-response-to-emergencies/)