


.....@ SkagEx11

Exercise SkagEx11,
September 6th- 8th 2011

*SkagEx11 will exercise the ability of
countries in the Skagerrak basin to
handle major disasters at sea.*





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**SKAGEX11 – AN EXERCISE IN HANDLING
MAJOR DISASTERS AT SEA**

We must continuously strive to have sufficient preparedness and capability to deal with major disasters. SkagEx11 will exercise the civil protection resources in Norway, Sweden and Denmark, as well as the ability of these neighboring countries to cooperate if a major ship disaster should occur in the Skagerrak basin. Although maritime safety in general is very good, there is always inherent danger involved in sea transportation of people and / or goods. This exercise will train and improve plans and mechanisms within as well as between these countries in order to achieve the best possible preparedness for a “worst case scenario” in these waters.

The Norwegian Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning (DSB) is responsible for planning and conducting exercise SkagEx11.





BACKGROUND

The Skagerrak basin is among the busiest waters in Northern Europe, with significant shipping traffic consisting of fishing vessels, cargo ships, passenger ships and a substantial leisure fleet. This year alone, Oslo is port of call for almost 180 large cruise ships in addition to the normal daily schedule of large ferries that sail these waters north - south, or east - west. There is also a large oil refinery at Slagen-tangen that is port of call to large oil tankers on a daily basis.

The coastal regions in this area are densely populated, despite the fact that the environment is especially fragile, both at sea and on land. The area in which this exercise takes place was established as a national park in 2009 (Ytre Hvaler nasjonalpark).

Should an accident occur in these waters, it could quickly escalate into a major disaster, and put our ability to handle such a disaster to the ultimate test, both in terms of rescue efforts, and in our efforts to protect the environment. An accident in these waters involving a major oil spill situation would have serious consequences for the environment and the recreational value of this area for years to come.

OBJECTIVES

Large complex exercises like SkagEx11 are necessary in order to train interaction and efficient cooperation between actors in case of real emergencies. The most important objective of exercise SkagEx11 is to improve emergency preparedness and crisis management mechanisms within and between the participating countries.

Exercise SkagEx11 will:

- ⊙ Exercise and test procedures for reception of assistance from neighboring countries and the EU (expert team from EU MIC).
- ⊙ Exercise and train emergency services in response to a situation at sea involving fire-fighting, search and rescue (SAR), a high number of casualties, as well as an oil spill.
- ⊙ Exercise understanding of roles and responsibilities at different levels of decision making during and after an emergency, and test procedures for coordination and cooperation between several nations in an emergency situation. This includes mechanisms for repatriation of casualties.
- ⊙ Exercise and improve national, regional and local preparedness and emergency plans relevant for disasters at sea, to include handling of acute pollution.
- ⊙ Exercise media management and crisis communication to the public during and after an accident of this scope



SCENARIO

The passenger ferry MS Bohus, enroute from Strömstad to Sandefjord, will experience a fire in the engine room. An ensuing collision with another ship creates a scenario with two distressed ships that must be dealt with simultaneously.

The situation calls for firefighting, evacuation, and search and rescue (SAR) at the accident site. Firefighting teams and rescue services from Norway as well as neighboring Sweden, Denmark and Finland will be involved in this operation.

Passengers from the distressed ferry will be airlifted to reception centers at several locations on both sides of the Oslo Fjord, as well as in Sweden, and triaged for further treatment in local hospitals, or for transportation to other relevant medical facilities.

The other distressed ship will simulate a massive oil leak, and a coordinated effort will be mounted to try to prevent this spill from polluting the Norwegian/ Swedish coastline. This operation will involve Danish, Swedish and the Norwegian pollution response efforts and is more long term in nature.

PARTICIPANTS

The list of participants is long, and includes Coast Guard, police, search and rescue services (SAR), firefighting services, health and hospital services, and pollution response resources from Norway, Sweden and Denmark, as well as Finland (SAR helicopter and fire-fighters). There will also be participation from different government agencies and ministries, and several municipalities and embassies. Some volunteer organizations will be involved, and more than 800 role players have been recruited to pose as passengers on board the distressed ferry, many of them with serious injuries. In all, close to 3000 people will be involved in the exercise in one way or another.



KYSTVERKET

OLJEVERN 02
ALSTAD



Jon A. Lea, Director General of DSB,
is Head of Exercise SkagEx11

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Exercise Skagex11 is organized as a project funded by the European Union with a total duration of about two years. Apart from the exercise itself, the project includes the planning phase, as well as a comprehensive evaluation, and follow-up process in the wake of the exercise.

The Norwegian Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning (DSB) is responsible for organizing and conducting exercise SkagEx11, and is in charge of planning and management throughout the project.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

In order to measure results against defined objectives, and translate lessons identified into future improvements, a comprehensive evaluation and follow-up process will be conducted following the exercise. This evaluation will be concluded with a presentation of findings, and recommendations for procedural and/or system changes to be implemented. The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) and the Danish Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) will have leading roles in this process, and they have also been major contributors in the planning process.

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