

Mass Rescue Operations Workshop Report

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1. Executive Summary

Workshop Overview

The United States Coast Guard (USCG) and the International Council of Cruise Lines (ICCL) jointly sponsored a Mass Rescue Operations (MRO) Workshop that was held in Jacksonville, FL on 26 – 27 March 2001.

The purpose of the MRO Workshop was to provide a forum for rescue organizations, the cruise line industry, and others to discuss their ability to adequately respond to a significant casualty on a major cruise ship with 4,000 or more persons on board. The workshop focused on the well-documented issues associated with rescuing large numbers of people from one of those ships when required because of onboard fire or flooding. The workshop also focused on how to work those response issues into a MRO preparedness exercise.

The workshop consisted of a number of briefings and panel discussions on the first day to familiarize all attendees with the issues associated with mass rescues. On the second day, the participants were divided among six breakout sessions which discussed, in detail, three broad issues associated with mass response operations:

- On Scene Coordination
- Overall Incident Coordination
- External Affairs

Upon conclusion of the breakout sessions, each of the six groups made an oral presentation to the entire workshop, summarizing their deliberations. These presentations were followed by a final panel discussion that considered how to turn the broad issues into a practical MRO exercise.

This report summarizes the important points made during both the panel discussions and the breakout sessions and was prepared from detailed notes taken during each workshop segment. Workshop results reported here are intended for use by Coast Guard marine safety and operations program managers and the cruise line industry to design follow-on mass rescue operations exercises. The workshop agenda can be found in Appendix A at the end of this report and the list of attendees in Appendix B.

Attendees

Attending the Mass Rescue Operations Workshop were representatives from domestic and international organizations concerned with safety aboard cruise ships. There were 105 workshop attendees.

- 38% were from the USCG Marine Safety community
 - 27% were from the USCG Operations community
 - 17% were associated with the cruise line industry
 - 11% were from Canada and the United Kingdom
 - 7% were from other offices and agencies, which includes USCG Public Affairs
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Objectives

Establish a baseline of shared information among Industry, the USCG Marine Safety, and the USCG Search and Rescue (SAR) system communities.

Discuss issues related to and impacting an efficient and coordinated response to a significant casualty on a cruise ship.

Discuss and identify the players in such a response, their authorities, jurisdictions and resources.

Identify factors necessary to plan and conduct a successful Mass Rescue Operations Exercise (table-top and eventually a field.)

Initially one of the objectives of the MRO workshop was to develop an exercise scenario, but as events unfolded, developing a scenario did not seem as important. One of the conclusions reached during the workshop was that there would be advantages to holding smaller, element-specific exercises to test those mass rescue components that were considered more critical or were identified as needing improvement.

2. Opening Remarks

Introductions

To begin the MRO workshop, welcoming remarks were made by:

CAPT Jon Sarubbi, Chief, Office of Compliance (G-MOC),
U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters

Captain Ted Thompson, Executive Vice President, International
Council of Cruise Lines

CAPT Gabe Kinney, Chief, Office of Search and Rescue (G-OPR),
U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters

Remarks

CAPT Jon Sarubbi
(G-MOC)

Welcome and thank you for squeezing yet another activity in your busy schedules. I am confident this workshop will be well worth your time and will lay the foundation for follow-on activities such as tabletop and field exercises which are envisioned for the near future.

I would like to give you a perspective on how this workshop came about, the many different Coast Guard offices and members of industry that are involved, and how this workshop fits into the Commandant's number one goal of Passenger Vessel Safety.

The cruise ship industry is growing in both numbers and capacity of vessels. There are about 130 cruise ships operating from U.S. ports that carry 7.5 million passengers annually. This is estimated to grow to 165 vessels and 10 million passengers by 2004. These vessels carry anywhere from 1,000 to 5,000 persons on board and the trend is towards bigger and larger ships. This impressive growth in the passenger vessel industry has the potential to increase not only the risk of casualty, but also the consequences of a casualty due to the huge number of passengers carried on board. Many initiatives are underway and the international community is actively engaged, especially at IMO, to further improve the safety of existing and future passenger vessels.

The cruise industry has enjoyed a remarkable safety record. There have been no passenger deaths in over 17 years due to a marine casualty. However, as the Commandant reminded us earlier this month at the SEATRADE Convention, "Our common challenge is to ensure that we do not let a strong safety record cause us to underestimate the risks that are managed when millions of passengers embark on cruise ships each year." This workshop is about managing one of those risks – that of being able to respond in a coordinated and timely manner to a significant incident or casualty on a major cruise ship.

Remarks

CAPT Jon Sarubbi
(G-MOC)
(continued)

The overall concept of this workshop is to establish a baseline of shared information among all concerned. In any potential incident, there are three immediate elements that are necessarily involved: the industry, the USCG marine safety community, and the USCG SAR system. Each will have a role to play depending on how the incident unfolds. In most cases, each of these components has very little knowledge of what the other two do. This workshop is intended as a first step toward understanding each other's processes, capabilities, and limitations.

The planning of this workshop and for eventual tabletop and field exercises has been in the works for over three years by the ICCL / Coast Guard partnership team. About a year ago RADM North (G-M) and Mr. Richard Fain (Chairman of ICCL and CEO of RCI) not only gave their approval, but also demanded that we move forward with all possible haste.

We have people here today from many different disciplines and parts of the Coast Guard; we have industry representatives from ICCL member companies and non-ICCL member companies that operate smaller U.S. flagged ships; we have Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs, and international participants from the Canadian Coast Guard, Transport Canada, the International Maritime Organization and the UK Maritime and Coast Guard Agency. We expect the final report to be completed within a couple of months of this workshop and each organization represented here today will be mailed a copy.

Remarks

Capt. Ted
Thompson
(ICCL)

Welcome on behalf of ICCL. Although this workshop appears to be a first step, the actual first steps were years ago. Many local and regional exercises have been conducted but we ought to do one with the scope and national attention given to a spill of national significance (SONS). But we can't call mass rescue a SONS so prefer to refer to it as an incident of national significance (IONS). This concept has been blessed by the ICCL Technical Committee and our membership. IONS is more than a regional exercise; vision is to hold an exercise for an incident of NATIONAL significance. This is to be a response exercise, not a drill; not testing anyone nor driving issues to failure. We want to focus on communications and relationships, and not look to blame anyone for any prior incidents.

In this workshop we are interested in getting input from all participants, focusing more on the response to incidents and not the causes; not why did it happen, but if it did happen, what will we do. We are not here to debate cruise ship safety nor are we here to debate lifeboats; those issues are being looked at by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

Remarks

Capt. Ted
Thompson
(ICCL)
(continued)

The intent of this workshop is to gather input on issues that are of national and international significance. Some of the best minds in the world are here today from IMO, the United Kingdom (UK), Canada, the U.S. State Department, the U.S. Coast Guard and the industry. Your outputs from this workshop will be given to the planning team charged with building a tabletop and then a field exercise.

Remarks

CAPT Gabe
Kinney
(G-OPR)

From a search and rescue perspective, there are 60,000 incident calls per year, of which about 90% are routine cases. We need to look at the other 10%. The uncommon cases. That's why we're here. There have been many regional studies, but this is the first step on a national level. However, we need to remember that this process is not free; we still have to be concerned with dollars, people, time, and effort to get to an end state. We need your input to build the groundwork to make us ready for a major casualty. As of now, we don't have all the answers, but this workshop will move us in the right direction.

3. Ship Design Safety (Prevention)

Presentations on Prevention Issues

To ensure that all participants have a basic understanding of the many safety features that are designed into a modern cruise ship, presentations were made by:

Mr. Robert Markle, Chief, Lifesaving and Firefighting Division
(G-MSE-4), U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters

LT Peter Gooding, Office of Design and Engineering Standards
(G-MSE), U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters

Mr. Rajiv Khandpur, Office of Compliance G-MOC), U.S. Coast
Guard Headquarters

To get a better appreciation of these presentations understand that the basic design philosophy of a large passenger cruise vessel is as follows:

- Vessels are designed to enable fullest practical degree of:
 - Fire protection,
 - Fire detection, and
 - Fire extinction.
 - This is accomplished by:
 - Dividing ship into main vertical zones by thermal and structural boundaries.
 - Separating accommodation spaces from remainder of ship by thermal and structural boundaries.
 - Protecting means of escape by thermal and structural boundaries.
 - Restricting use of combustible materials throughout the ship.
 - Constructing vessels with equipment to detect, contain and fight a fire.
 - Vessels' internal spaces are partitioned or subdivided, to limit the quantity of water entering the ship in case of damage to the hull, and thus providing the ability to survive a flooding of the vessel.
 - Vessels have survival craft on board that can accommodate 100% of the people on board. In addition they may have up to 25% excess survival craft capacity.
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**Presentations on
Prevention Issues**
(continued)

- During an emergency, passengers:
 - Gather at Muster stations where they are given safety instructions, and
 - Are led to embarkation stations by crew, if required to abandon ship.
 - Muster and embarkation stations are protected stations.
 - Only in very rare cases do passengers actually have to abandon ship
-

**Fire Safety,
Abandonment &
Survival**

Mr. Robert Markle
(G-MSE)

When there is a fire on board a cruise ship, an immediate evacuation usually is not essential. While it might be necessary to bring in firefighting support and it might be important to evacuate the injured and the sick, the first priority is to get the ship back to dock where passengers and non-essential crew can be evacuated directly to shore and where more fire resources can be brought in, if necessary. But then the questions arises, “Is the ship going to be allowed in the port?” Issues of pollution and keeping the port open may be raised, but safety of the people on board the ship should be the ultimate concern. Abandoning the ship at sea should be the last resort. However, if the situation is not under control, and if there is good weather and daylight, abandonment should be considered.

The reason that abandonment usually is not necessary in case of fire is that ships are built with structural fire protection. Ships are required to be built of steel or the equivalent, and have fire resistant division bulkheads, including main vertical zones (MVZ) at least every 40 meters along the length of the ship. These MVZ divisions are rated as one-hour fire boundaries. Spaces within MVZ boundaries also are built with fire rated divisions to slow the spread of fire. Segregated stair towers with one-hour boundaries and limited furnishings also are required to provide safe passage between decks.

There are extinguishing systems in the machinery spaces, a common site where fires start. These are usually gaseous systems, which require the space to be kept sealed after the fire is out to keep the extinguishing gas inside until the space cools. In the future, water mist systems will be used more frequently in machinery spaces. These systems provide a fog of water mist to cool the space, so the space does not necessarily have to be kept sealed. Ships also are equipped

**Fire Safety,
Abandonment &
Survival**

Mr. Robert Markle
(G-MSE)
(continued)

with automatic sprinkler systems, or will be by 2005. Ships also have fire main systems that supply fire hydrants throughout the ship. Any space must be accessible by two hoses not more than 20 meters in length. The crew is to be organized and trained to fight fires.

External fire fighting support, such as fireboats and shore fire brigades, may be beneficial when the ship is near shore. Ships have a fire control plan with every deck, fire boundary, and all equipment noted. International shore connections are provided on each ship, which allow the ship's fire main to be charged from an external source if the ship's fire pumps are not operating. All potential responders should be equipped with the flange that lets them connect to this international standard connection.

As professionals, external fire fighters may be tempted to take over fire fighting efforts on a ship, but they should interface with crew because the crew knows the ship. However the crew might be intimidated by the firefighters.

If the crew and passengers must abandon ship, the crew supervises the passengers. Passenger ships have three survival craft radios per ship that operate on VHF channels 16 and 6, but these ships also have other two-way radios. The master should have no problem communicating with the survival craft. Two SAR transponders are required on each ship, which operate with 3 cm (X-band) radar only.

Prior to 1986 most lifeboats were of open construction, providing little shelter from the elements, although they are required to carry a canopy that can be erected over the boat. Current standards require partially enclosed lifeboats and better types of release gear. Also, new types of life rafts can carry up to 150 persons, and possibly more. In addition to conventional davits, slides and chutes now are being offered for boarding these larger life rafts.

**Stability and
Subdivision**

LT Peter Gooding
(G-MSE)

Subdivision is the partitioning of a ship's internal space to limit the quantity of water coming into a vessel. Subdivision can prevent the loss of life, cargo and potentially hazardous materials from entering the water. IMO currently requires passenger vessels to meet either SOLAS Chapter II-1 or IMO Resolution A.265.

SOLAS is a *deterministic* method – ships must be able to survive a set amount of damage. The amount and location of damage is based on the size and number of passengers. SOLAS also includes a residual damage stability requirement that ensures a damaged vessel will meet certain stability requirements (wind keeling moments, passenger

**Stability and
Subdivision**

LT Peter Gooding
(G-MSE)
(continued)

crowding to one side, etc.) Resolution A.265 (1974) is a *probabilistic* method that allows subdivision based on the probability of damage and survival. Regulation 5 of Resolution A.265 deals with intact stability, residual damage stability, and a deterministic measurement.

U.S. requirements are similar to SOLAS (e.g., damage stability is a function of length; it also allows for the option of using the damage stability requirements of Resolution A.265). Future international regulations will combine the probabilistic and deterministic methods in SOLAS II-1, which is similar to the level of safety specified by the current cargo ship regulations. Intermediate flooding will be looked at and minor damage requirements will be added.

There are new guidelines for damage control plans. The use of onboard computers are not required, but can be used in addition to the damage control plans and booklets. The plans and booklets are required by SOLAS to help maintain watertight safety, prevent progressive flooding, and mitigate and recover stability. Damage Consequence Diagrams are simple, clear guidance that provide the master with a rapid means to evaluate the consequence of damage to the vessel based on color-coding. If the master is in a damage situation, he can scroll to review all data, allowing for quick review of problems and timely decision making. However, some countries believe damage consequence diagrams are unnecessary and are concerned that the wrong diagram may be used in the event of a crisis.

Salvage response teams, which are part of the Coast Guard Marine Safety Center, help the Officer-in-Charge of Marine Inspection (OCMI) with cargo ship and cruise ship incidents by providing stability and structural information as needed. Salvage response team information can be reviewed at the following web site: <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/msc/salvage.html>.

**Coast Guard
Verification and
Enforcement**

Mr. Rajiv
Khandpur
(G-MOC)

Section 3303 in Title 46 of the U.S. Code authorizes the Coast Guard to inspect foreign cruise ships; Section 3505 gives the authority to detain a foreign passenger vessel if the vessel does not comply with the SOLAS convention. Further, Chapter 1, Regulation 19 of the 1974 SOLAS Convention allows the port state to detain a vessel if “there are clear grounds for believing that the condition of the ship and its equipment does not correspond substantially with the particulars of that certificate.”

The majority of conventions adopted under the auspices of IMO fall into three main categories. The first group is concerned with maritime safety; the second with the prevention of marine pollution; and the third with liability and compensation, especially in relation to damage caused by pollution. Outside these major groupings are a number of other conventions dealing with facilitation, tonnage measurement, unlawful acts against shipping, and salvage.

The Coast Guard has in place a very aggressive enforcement regime, known as the Control Verification Examination (CVE) program, to ensure safety and environmental compliance on foreign passenger cruise ships. Every foreign passenger ship that intends to embark passengers from a U.S. port goes through a Coast Guard plan review, followed by visits by Coast Guard personnel to the shipyard while the vessel is under construction, and finally an initial examination at the time of vessel delivery. A CVE certificate, valid for one year, is issued at the end of a successful examination. Vessels then are examined every three months, with the CVE certificate renewed annually.

Coast Guard involvement begins early, while a ship’s design is still in the concept stages. Ship owners, designers and classification societies present their concept plans to the Coast Guard for every new or refurbished ship that they plan to operate in the U.S. market. The Coast Guard reviews the plans for substantial compliance with SOLAS regulations and sets up a dialogue to discuss interpretive issues. Correspondence is exchanged until all issues are resolved. Next Coast Guard inspectors visit the shipyard during construction to ensure that fire safety, lifesaving, egress, and all other international requirements are being built into the ship in accordance with Coast Guard “approved” drawings.

When the ship is completed, but before delivery, a team of Coast Guard inspectors visit the ship at the shipyard for the Initial Control Verification Examination (ICVE). This visit includes a thorough examination of the completed ship. To name some of the highlights:

**Coast Guard
Verification and
Enforcement**

Mr. Rajiv
Khandpur
(G-MOC)
(continued)

Emergency escape routes and stairways are checked for ease of use with clear directions and structural fire protection integrity. Fire and smoke detectors, automatic sprinklers, and fire and watertight doors are checked for proper operation. Emergency power and the transition from main to emergency power is tested

The Coast Guard uses the philosophy of a Port State Control Verification Examination on a foreign vessel, in contrast to the inspection process that is used on a U.S. vessel. The owner, applicable classification society, and flag state administration have the responsibility to ensure that the vessel complies with the safety, construction, and equipment requirements in the applicable SOLAS Convention as well as the applicable provisions of the MARPOL 73/78, ILO 147, STCW, and Load Line Conventions. The Coast Guard is on board only to verify that the vessel is in substantial compliance with those conventions. To this end, the Coast Guard may examine the vessel for certain equipment or construction features at the 100% level, or by random sampling.

The ICVE continues when the vessel makes its first port of call in the U.S. At that time, and before issuing a CVE certificate to the vessel, the Coast Guard conduct fire drills, lifeboat drills, checks for valid certificates, verifies crew competency, and wraps up any outstanding items from the exam done at the shipyard.

The purpose of the annual CVE is to ensure that all of the systems that were examined in the ICVE are being maintained in proper operating condition. This examination focuses on the vessel's firefighting, lifesaving, and emergency systems. A comprehensive fire and boat drill also is conducted. In addition, the vessel is checked to ensure that any modifications made to the vessel which affect the vessel's structural fire protection have been approved by the vessel's flag state and reviewed by the Coast Guard.

The purpose of the quarterly examination is to ensure that the vessel is operated in a safe manner. This examination focuses on the officers and crew. Their knowledge of the ship's emergency procedures, firefighting, lifesaving systems, and performance during drills is evaluated. Since the overall material condition of the ship should not have appreciably changed since the annual examination, inspection items identified for examination may be randomly sampled at the discretion of the attending inspectors. The depth of the examination depends upon the material condition of the vessel, the overall level of maintenance, and the professionalism and training of the crew.

4. Response Framework and Infrastructure

Introduction

The Panel 1 discussions focused on jurisdictions, responsibilities, and authorities. Who has what resources, how are they brought into play, and who are the players at various levels? What is the Canadian system like?

Industry Crisis Planning and Response Organization

Mr. Paul Debnam
Princess Cruises

The purpose of the company response organization is to support the ship by organizing support, equipment, advice, liaisons, and communications. There is a real danger of over-communications – multiple people trying to talk to the ship, often asking for the same information, that is either not available or is available from another source. Dealing with these requests can prevent the ship from dealing effectively with the incident. A typical corporate response for an emergency includes a fully coordinated team handling various response functions. This fully manned team is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week and consists of the following disciplines:

- The **Team Leader** is the “captain” who maintains an overview, directs operations and keeps management informed.
 - The **Communicator** maintains an open line to the ship and normally is the sole communications link to and from the ship.
 - The **Marine Representative** is usually a master mariner and is involved with SAR coordination and maintaining contact with the U.S. Coast Guard. He organizes tugs, looks at itineraries, the positions of other cruise ships that may be able to assist, and organizes security for the passengers when they come ashore. In this respect he works with the local agents and authorities to ensure a suitable landing place, so that people can be handled quietly and away from the glare of the media.
 - The **Technical Representative** maintains contact with the classification society, P&I Club, and the underwriters. He also is the damage stability contractor liaison; contacts repair facilities, talks to specialists, and gives technical advice.
 - The **Environmental Representative** is involved with the environmental impact and oil spill response.
 - The **Medical Representative** gives medical advice and tracks casualties. He also is involved with fatality reception and identification.
-

**Industry Crisis
Planning and
Response
Organization**

Mr. Paul Debnam
Princess Cruises
(continued)

- The **Passenger and Crew Representative** passes information to support teams so that next of kin can be kept informed. This is a difficult job because of the different countries, languages, and cultures. This representative also passes on travel requirements, dispatches away teams to the scene, and activates the Care Team looking after relatives.
- The **Media Representative** gathers information and prepares press releases for distribution by company senior management.
- **Other Specialists**, usually a member of the U.S. Coast Guard, are involved depending on the nature of the incident.
- The **Emergency Response Center (ERC) Coordinator** makes sure procedures are followed, that the ERC operates properly, and that the team remains focused on the correct part of the incident.

The ERC has monitors, chart tables, computers, live stability link to ships for monitoring real time flooding sensors, headsets, display boards for charts and communication information, and other equipment used for an incident. Resources and capabilities include information about passengers, crew, ship details, incident details, number of lifeboats, and the best information on the current situation. The day to day logistics of operating a cruise line company include moving 1000s of people around the world; consequently the company has readily available contacts with tour companies, shore excursion companies, other cruise lines, hotels, and airlines. These resources can be used to address many of the problems experienced with landing large numbers of people into a community. For example, it is possible to get passenger evacuation aircraft to Alaska very quickly because of the contacts available, which can reduce the impact on the community.

**USCG SAR
System and
MRO Planning**

Mr. Dave Edwards
(G-OPR)

The U.S. Search and Rescue (SAR) system is based on international standards and guidance. SAR services are provided worldwide by a system of SAR Regions (SRR) with a Rescue Coordination Center (RCC) in each. U.S. SRRs adjoin 20 foreign maritime SRRs. Operational management is provided through a SAR Mission Coordinator (SMC), typically at the RCC, and an On-scene Coordinator (OSC). SAR services make use of all available resources and must work in conjunction with other crisis management systems, if established, e.g., the Incident Command System (ICS) and a ship's company crisis response organization. These different crisis management systems need to complement, not conflict, with each other. SAR exercise planning has tended towards a port/coastal focus and overlooked at-sea implications. For example, a Marine Safety Office and ICS may not have immediate roles in a cruise ship incident at sea.

The USCG and ICCL jointly developed the *Search and Rescue Information Form* to meet the SOLAS requirement for passenger ships to carry a plan for cooperation with SAR services (sometimes called "SAR Plan"). A mass rescue operation (MRO) is defined as, "Civil SAR response with need for immediate assistance to large numbers of persons in distress such that capabilities normally available to SAR authorities are inadequate. There are many types of MRO scenarios, including a large passenger ship disaster."

Canadian SAR System and MRO Planning

Mr. Mike Voigt
Canadian Coast Guard

A Canadian SAR response to a cruise ship disaster is similar to that of the U.S. Coast Guard. However there are some subtle differences because of the many challenges to SAR delivery in the Canadian search and rescue region. Canada has a population of about 30,000,000, has the longest coastline in the world, and the lowest population per square mile. In Canada the lead minister for SAR is the Minister of National Defense. Also involved in SAR are maritime and aeronautical organizations, joint rescue coordination centers, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Defense Headquarters, and Canadian Coast Guard Headquarters.

Primary SAR resources include Canadian Forces SAR aircraft and Canadian Coast Guard SAR vessels. Secondary government resources include Canadian Coast Guard auxiliaries, civil air search assets, rescue vessels of opportunity, charters, the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Air Force. There are three SAR regions: Victoria, Trenton, Halifax, which together handle about 6,800 SAR incidents per year.

A response to a major SAR incident requires a larger Command, Control, and Communications (C3) organization, and use of agencies and resources not normally engaged in SAR operations. For example, when the NORWEGIAN SKY, with 2,712 passengers, went aground in the St Lawrence River on September 24, 1999, there was no distress but several worries, including the possibility of capsizing due to the ebbing tide. Favorable factors included daylight and good weather. The main challenge was to safely remove passengers and transfer them to a reception point.

We are looking into adapting the airline SAR plan to fit the cruise line mass rescue problem. Major SAR incidents nowadays include mass casualties and remote areas that further complicate the rescue mission. Sending a rapid response team to the Arctic is infeasible. In remote locations we need to get passengers to bigger airports, however only small airports exist in the Canadian Arctic. We are pre-planning for the worst by implementing passenger vessel SAR plans, exchanging company and Joint Rescue Coordination Center (JRCC) / Maritime Rescue Sub-Center (MRSC) contact information, appointing company liaison officers to assist incident commanders, and conducting company liaison officer visits to the JRCC/MRSC.

Consular Affairs

Ms. Cathy Hurst
U.S. State
Department

The Crisis Management Coordinator for the Foreign Service Office within the State Department deals with the safety and day-to-day crises of private American citizens overseas. The big Five D's that the agency deals with are:

- Deaths (and illnesses): 6000 per year (heart attacks/car accidents primarily). State Department coordinates notifying next-of-kin, shipping remains, and legal issues.
- Disappearance: large number of cases per year ranging from "haven't heard from son" to serial killer, all taken seriously. There is an officer on duty 24 hours a day.
- Destitution: individuals running out of money; they loan about three million dollars to American citizens each year.
- Detention: There are approximately 2,500 Americans in jail overseas (primarily drug-related), also commercial offenses (these types of offenses occur largely in Russia).
- Disasters: State Department has 24/7 operations center; set up task forces for evacuations, airlines crashes, etc. Foreign governments are getting on board about response. Red Cross and other agencies are developing better plans.

The U.S. issues about 7 million passports a year. The Consular Information Program is at www.travel.state.gov. The web site includes regulations, travel advisories/alerts, etc. for all overseas areas and shows the location of the U.S. embassy. Also, public announcements regarding threats are made on the web site. There are about 25 countries that U.S. Consulate considers to be in the "No Go" category.

The State Department Consular Affairs Office does not have memorandums of understanding for mass rescue operations, but if a crisis occurred, the embassy or consulate would help in any way possible. The consulate works to get people back to America when needed. There are several examples: problems with shore excursions (e.g., people being robbed, people getting sick while on shore, etc.), problems with obtaining airline's manifest in a crash situation, companies going out of business and "ditching" their customers overseas, small planes in South Pacific landing for refueling and leaving American citizens stranded, etc. Terrorism is also becoming a larger threat.

Questions and Discussion

Do members of the Emergency Response Team have decision-making authority on site? Yes, the person in the Emergency Response Center has the authority to make decisions as needed.

When a drill is set up, does the ship develop the scenario? Yes, but ERC needs to know the date for planning requirements.

Is the SAR Information Form going to be at the district level? SAR info forms filled out by cruise ship companies are being sent to the Districts for use in the RCCs. Distribution below the RCC level will be at the District's discretion.

MRO, IONS, and similar words have been used for this topic. Which term will be used? Are there recommendations going back to committee (ICCL and USCG)? Different definitions could lead to misunderstandings so an alignment in terms could help to rectify this problem. From USCG perspective, IONS and mass rescue operations don't necessarily mean the same thing. The National SAR Committee needs to cover many types of incidents, which seems to be the reason for different definitions. Some type of common definition is needed. IMO is in the process of setting up an index of common definitions on a website which will be promulgated in May 2001.

To solve part of the communications problem, would the USCG work through the company ERC communicator as the sole contact? The "communicator" position in the company's ERC ashore is the primary point of contact for coordinating emergency response, but that does not preclude SAR services from contacting the ship directly.

When doing an exercise, is the communicator on speakerphone or is he on a regular headset, which requires him to digest then convey the information to the team? The communicator uses a headset the same way everyone else does, and then passes the information on to the team after writing it down.

The NTSB also has next-of-kin notification and there may be times when USCG and NTSB and others are all involved. Does the NTSB have a good idea of their responsibilities vs. other agencies? Consulate/embassy has primary responsibility for notifying next-of-kin, but there is still a problem with other agencies wanting to help.

Questions and Discussion
(continued)

Does the U.S. State Department have a crisis team that they can dispatch to a crisis area? Yes, teams are trained to go to smaller areas, but there also are other crisis teams on rotated duty to run the task force. Additional crisis teams are at other major cities abroad.

When you come up with lessons learned at the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG), are they evaluated and incorporated? Yes, to an extent, because other countries are run differently.

When the CCG nationalizes the SAR scenario, does the CCG have a designated Incident Commander? Yes, the CCG does. We are working on the Major Air Disaster Plan, but questions still remain (e.g., who is the Incident Commander?)

Large vessels are usually well organized, but what about small tour boats with small organizations? Does CG provide the same type of support that a large cruise line would offer? ICCL member companies have excellent safety records; yes, we need to be as concerned about the smaller organizations as we are about the larger organizations. Because ICCL members are as developed and concerned as they are, we're starting with ICCL first, and then we'll take the next step to look at smaller groups; perhaps they could be handled at a regional level. Use the same principles, but keep the same effort by looking at it as a national and international program.

What level of tolerance does CCG have (incident wise) before bringing other agencies in to assist? Other agencies are brought in on an as-needed basis, case by case. Medical evacuation decisions are at a different level and handled individually. CCG just wants a "heads up" and the rescue centers briefed with minor issues so they can be ready for larger issues.

The SAR philosophy is to be bigger than the event, but there are events that can overwhelm us; therefore, at what point do you (CG and ICCL) bring in additional support? Breakout sessions need to look at the decision point during the exercise where this happens (the scenario could range from a routine SAR mission to a major SAR mission).

Questions and Discussion
(continued)

How do you go about combining smaller commands as a joint command as the issue becomes a major crises? [NO CLEAR ANSWER CAPTURED.]

How large will cruise ships get, which may ultimately overtax rescue operations? How is this being regulated? How are the crews being worked to manage these passengers? How is it going to affect their response? Industry has reached a plateau in size (right now). Cruise ship size seems to grow in spurts, so right now there doesn't seem to be another growth on the horizon. Larger ships have more assets on board; more main vertical zones, better firefighting systems, etc. However, while industry argues that larger ships are safer, there is a challenge once the passengers are offloaded – with larger vessels comes more passengers ultimately needing to be rescued. Working groups are chartered to work on this issue. As ships grow, safety concerns grow; therefore, continuing improvement in safety is a must.

What defines a large passenger ship? Gross tonnage? Number of passengers? The majority of cruise ships being built today are in the range of 30,000 to 80,000 GRT and have from 1,000 to 3,000 persons on board. However there are some outliers – smaller specialty ships and larger ones up to 140,000 GRT carrying about 5,000 persons on board. Again, the larger the ship, the more people in the water. Idea for being here today is to address mass rescue off a large cruise ship, with many people at once. But remember that with larger ships more crew is on board to assist in this rescue.

What is IMO's role with regard to the response effort? IMO would like to see a methodology that can be applied universally. Global systems have been developed with a fair amount of coordination. We are trying to get simplified SAR plans on board vessels. Different companies have different types, but with a methodology there may be some consistency in the future. We would like to use this opportunity to influence agencies/companies to do this.

Will large passenger vessel evacuation be a continued area of focus for the IMO and Marine Safety Committee? Yes, although a plateau of large capacity passenger ships is being reached. Ships however are going to remote areas where SAR operations may not be available. This will always be a continual process as we deal with issues on board and how to get people off the vessel.

Questions and Discussion
(continued)

Does USCG have authority to task Department of Defense (DOD) assets? Yes, to an extent; the USCG can draw on any of the DOD resources on a not-to-interfere basis with their primary mission.

With reference to California's ongoing power blackouts, is there backup power to the crisis action centers/emergency rescue centers? CCG – Yes; USCG – Yes, for a limited period of time. All USCG rescue coordination centers have emergency power with communications set up (depending on the extent of the disaster). Also, USCG rescue centers can move to where a power setup can be accommodated. Some places have identified primary people/offices etc., that can be moved and accommodated.

5. Command, Control and Communication (C³)

Introduction

The Panel 2 discussions focused on how a situation is actually coordinated. Discussions included:

- The Unified Command System – initial response vs. long term response, location of unified command, who is involved
- How an event grows from individual response activities at the beginning to a unified response as the nature and extent of the incident becomes apparent
- Importance of public affairs.

Incident Command System

CAPT Scott
Hartley
Activities Europe

We need a new way of thinking of response. The Incident Command System (ICS) was originally developed by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group to coordinate firefighting in the western United States. ICS grew out of the National Interagency Incident Management System (NIIMS). The Coast Guard has mandated use of ICS for their management response system because it was free (in the public domain) and it works equally well for planned and unplanned events – all hazards, all risks.

The ICS organization has the flexibility to grow or shrink as the situation dictates. ICS provides a logical process and progression to achieve desired results. Once a person becomes familiar with the ICS process, they know what to expect and what is expected of them during any crises. Training is essential and practice makes perfect. However, a little bit of knowledge in ICS is dangerous; there is a tendency to tweak the organization and/or the process. People have to understand that the ICS organization has to grow when they are overwhelmed and shrink when operations are declining. Both require anticipation. ICS organization is good, fast, and cheap so long as sound objectives are established.

**Company
Initial Actions,
Command and
Control**

Capt. Nick
Schowengert
Holland America
Line

We, the company, should be prepared to provide assistance to operating units (i.e., ships and other operating assets owned by the company) confronted with situations that are beyond the unit's ability. Possible scenarios include a ship fire, loss of propulsion, collision, oil or hazardous material spill; ship evacuation, transportation accident, earthquake affecting a hotel; hostile takeover of a ship; hotel, bus or train accident, and major medical problems.

Holland America's strengths include worldwide communications, tested incident command system, experienced organization, access to resources, and expertise. Communications include satellites (two independent commercial systems with broadband, and multi-channel capabilities), cell phones where available, GMDSS, and VHF-FM. Initial actions include activation of the Seattle Incident Command Center (SICC) and establishing an open line to the affected unit. Another action is to designate backup communications.

Our company also deploys field incident command personnel to the scene, establish communications with appropriate authorities, brief the situation in both directions, agree on whether to establish a joint command center (real or virtual), agree on initial actions, and agree on establishing a Joint Information Center (JIC). There should also be an open link to the agent who is authorized to act on our behalf. We always invite the USCG Thirteenth District staff (D13) to the SICC. If Canada is the port state, we also invite the Canadian Coast Guard to the SICC. If the port state is not the U.S. we brief Department of State operations and agree on initial actions. Our company uses the American Bureau of Shipping in Houston for stability advice, so we put them on a standby three-way link with the ship. We also put assets on standby for large-scale passenger needs including transportation and accommodations. We open a link to the flag state, brief them on the situation, and agree on initial actions.

Then we activate specific contingency plans. Key points to remember are to take the burden off the ship and master, and to share responsibilities, capabilities, expertise and assets among government and industry to take maximum advantage of the strengths of each.

**USCG Public
Affairs**

CDR Jim
McPherson
G-IPA

There is no real playbook for public affairs because every situation is different. There is only one media truth: it does not matter what we do, it only matters what the media reports. Public opinion determines how successful an operation is, and the media shapes public opinion.

In this age of technology, passengers will have cell phones and video cameras. It's harder to delay information. In the first hour we need to tell the media that we're in charge. There must be a plan that outlines what the spokesperson will say. If we don't provide a spokesperson, the media will. A good example of this was the JFK Jr. incident. The story will not go away just because we don't speak. Merchant ships, cruise ships, aircraft, cutters are all involved in an incident. There needs to be one message with many messengers.

Handling the media has gotten better; the work between the industry and the search and rescue teams is getting better. Joint Information Center (JIC) interviews must be live. The media market is a 24-hour global market. News is broadcast around the clock now; at any time we can see what is going on in the world. It is important to get the media out to the scene. If we don't get them out there to see what we want them to see, they will get out there on their own anyway. By providing transportation you can control what they communicate.

**ICCL Public
Affairs**

Ms. Molly
McPherson
ICCL

The ICCL has an important role during a crisis or a significant maritime incident. During the incident, the ICCL would fill in information gaps and augment the work of the cruise line's public relations staff. While the cruise line is disseminating their information and responding to hoards of media calls, the ICCL will support their efforts and communicate the industry's message as well. The role of the ICCL would be similar to that of the International Air Transport Association during a plane crash; they speak on behalf of the airline industry – similarly, we would comment on the cruise industry in general terms. How do we do that?

The ICCL would take an active role in the JIC. Extremely important during an incident is for all players (i.e., the cruise line and other on-scene agencies) to agree on the proper procedures for getting messages out and to establish what those messages are. Since the messages may be sensitive in nature, it is vital that everyone is communicating the same information. We must have one message, many messengers. ICCL would write and distribute our own press releases. We would assist the cruise line's public relations staff in their PR efforts. Our archived b-roll, or background video, pertaining to the incident would

**ICCL Public
Affairs**

Ms. Molly
McPherson
ICCL
(continued)

be made available to news outlets. Third party experts would be identified and used in our efforts to get accurate messages out to the press. While we are distributing this information, we need to keep the families in mind. The industry must develop proper methods to keep families informed. Victims' and families' rights must be a part of the dissemination process during a crisis and as we move ahead in all of our public affairs efforts.

Finally, the ICCL is in the process of creating a dark page, or dark site, on our website. The dark site would remain dormant until a crisis occurs. As soon as we have our background information and messages relating to the incident, the information will be integrated into the dark site, which will then go live. This dark site is one more tool we will use to keep with our one message, many messengers theme. The site will be timely, and most important – accurate. We will encourage the media to go to the site first for background information in hopes that, in their rush to get the story on the air or in print, the story will be more accurate. The dark site will include contact information, basic industry facts such as vessel statistics, maritime definitions, frequently asked questions, and will also include third party expert contacts for the media. The site will also house photos and archived ICCL b-roll that can be downloaded in Real Video format. Depending on the incident, the site also will include hard links to other involved parties such as the cruise line or the Coast Guard.

The issue now for the development of the dark site is describing what constitutes an incident? How significant does it need to be in order to justify a dark site? These are some of the questions that we need to still answer.

**Questions and
Discussion**

Why are public relations not part of the incident command system? Is it part of command and control systems? [NO CLEAR ANSWER CAPTURED.]

Do the plans work? How do we do sufficient background planning for tactical folks? ICS is becoming the worldwide standard for communications and sharing information. The plans are there because they work. There must always be exercising and practice. ICS is not a substitute for exercising the plans.

When informing the public, how much is legally approved? Anything that is told to the media also goes onto the website. We must ensure that it is technically accurate prior to reporting via ICCL staff and CG.

Questions and Discussion
(continued)

How often are the cruise lines conducting ICS exercises? Due to low personnel turnover, once a year is reality, although the goal is twice a year.

Can USCG Public Affairs avoid a shutdown in the media exchange when a crisis occurs (e.g., as occurred during the response to JFK Jr. airplane crash)? G-IPA currently is dealing with this issue, but nothing has been set at this time. Stress again the importance of getting the media the correct facts quickly.

Why is the press not here for involvement with this workshop? They were invited [and did attend during the second day]. There are two media issues: How do we play the media with the exercise and how do we play the event in the real world? The purpose is to have us define the event, not the media. We need to let them know the facts.

International industry likes to make contact with CG; how does USCG feel about the initial contact? A challenge to the ICS is the need to have a contact (where ICCL is trying to go) in the industry.

What is an open line? An example provided by a cruise line company was the use of a multi-channel satellite telephone system (i.e., like leaving the phone off the hook). The open line is not on speakerphone; a real person monitors the connection using headphones. A second line may be opened for three-way communications. Up to eight simultaneous lines may be open along with email, as needed.

How does the CG see these open lines fitting into the UCS? It is a great idea; CG has used these lines to talk to the company shoreside.

Where will the other end of the open line be located? Perhaps in the command center.

What is the difference between UCS and ICS? The Incident Command System is a response management system that describes how all responders are organized in carrying out a response. Typically it consists of an Incident Commander who directs the response through planning, operations, logistics and finance cells. The Unified Command Structure(UCS)recognizes that multiple parties (typically the federal On Scene Coordinator(OSC), state OSC and company OSC) all have responsibilities and command authority in a given incident. The UCS is intended to foster cooperation between those potentially competing entities to ensure coherent incident command.

Questions and Discussion
(continued)

What is the panel's response to criticism that ICS does not lend itself to a quick response in regards to a cruise ship casualty? It is a matter of exercising/practicing it to become proficient in this type of casualty for successful resolution.

In event of an incident, the ship's classification society has basic info; therefore, should they have been invited today? No, they were not invited because the intent of this workshop was to cover the issues, not set up the exercise. When the planning takes place and the table top exercise comes together, they will be included along with other interested players.

How many times in the last three years has the industry had to implement ICS? Answer from one cruise line company was once, although mini-drills are conducted by that company periodically.

What is the timing in getting the stand up to occur once the crisis call comes in? The cruise industry has people in the emergency center within 20-30 minutes to form a skeleton operating staff. Key staff use cell phones while in transit to the command center.

From industry point of view, if a crisis is small, is there a hesitation in reporting the incident to keep the media from finding out immediately? Bad press will never be an issue for us (cruise lines). No, we would not keep from reporting a crisis – small or big. Every precaution is taken and acted upon quickly regardless of crisis size and media concern. Over reacting is better than under reacting.

When should ICS be used? When events occur quickly, casualties usually last longer than the immediate crisis; therefore, from USCG point of view, ICS should always be used. From industry point of view, ICS works so well because there are so many things that are going on during an incident; ICS ensures that all issues are addressed properly. However, not all countries know or use ICS. Based on the International Aeronautical and Maritime the SAR system is more internationally recognized. Therefore the SAR system could be considered a plug in module to the ICS system. ICS may be the big umbrella with SAR as a module inside it. ICS system works with respect to assets being needed and is flexible with plugging in necessary personnel.

Questions and Discussion
(continued)

Is there a problem created by ICS being incident oriented vs. SAR which is geographically oriented? SAR is actually an event since each SAR is unique. Although SAR is approached from a geographic orientation, SAR lends itself well to the ICS format. In most events that include SAR, SAR is taking place in the early stages. However, even with SAR there is planning, execution and evaluation as with ICS.

Where does the operations center fall in the ICS format? It's desirable to have a command post as close to the incident as possible. However the USCG operations center is responsible for everything else going on within an area (e.g., pollution, hazmat, etc.) An operations center could lose its ability to focus on the necessary issues at hand. Therefore, there should be a separate command center as well as a rescue (operations) center. The operations center can manage issues other than the incident. ICS manages the incident.

Is the Coast Guard Forces concept still in effect? How is it impacted by mass rescue operations? It depends. This is an issue that can be wrestled with tomorrow during the breakout sessions. Setting up the command post structure immediately is imperative.

6. Response Operations Ashore and at Sea

Introduction

The Panel 3 discussions focused on what resources are available to respond to a mass rescue incident, how they would be employed, and how these response efforts fit into the unified command or incident command structure. Both Coast Guard and industry perspectives were discussed, as were issues related to at sea and ashore response activities.

USCG SAR Coordination

CAPT Michael
Moore
CGD7 (osr)

The U.S. Coast Guard mission includes search and rescue, law enforcement, national security, marine environmental protection, among others. We are organized into two Areas: Atlantic and Pacific. The Areas are broken down into Districts, each of which has a Rescue Coordination Center (RCC). Units that answer to the RCC include Groups (who control rescue boat stations and patrol boats) and Air Stations. USCG aircraft include the HH-65 helicopter (150 nautical mile radius of action), the C-130 fixed-wing turboprop used for long range surveillance, the HH-60 helicopter (300 nautical mile radius of action), and the HU-25 jet used for medium range search.

When a distress call is received, the appropriate Group and/or Air Station is contacted. Within 30 minutes of an alert, Coast Guard aircraft and vessels will normally respond; any additional vessel or aircraft must be requested for use. Next there is a notification to appropriate foreign RCCs that may be able to provide other assets. The RCC also coordinates with foreign embassies, marine safety specialists, medical representatives, hospitals, and public affairs.

When the RCC receives information that a cruise ship is in distress others who can help are alerted. Along with Coast Guard units, DOD, state and local agencies are contacted to provide potential assistance. Amver¹ is a primary resource for offshore cases outside the range of Coast Guard units. In the event a high capacity passenger vessel, such as a cruise ship, must be abandoned the Coast Guard is unlikely to have adequate resources to pick up all involved. The best resource would be another cruise ship.

– ¹ Amver – formerly an acronym that stood for Automated Mutual-assistance Vessel Rescue System, which is now an internationally accepted word that refers to the system.

**Resources
Available**

LCDR Mark Rizzo
LANTAREA (Acc)

300 miles is the USCG maximum for an efficient helicopter rescue where refueling is not an issue. Planning a response beyond 300 nautical miles offshore is increasingly more difficult because you must find a vessel that can refuel a helicopter or a vessel that is capable of performing the rescue in a timely manner. The USCG has coordinated rescues as far out as 2,000 miles and the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) is the primary means of distress notification for almost all cases. For these types of deep ocean SAR cases, the USCG relies heavily on Canadian resources and other nontraditional assets such as military vessels/ aircraft and commercial vessels that voluntarily participate in the Amver System. The USCG also relies on assistance from other international RCCs and therefore assigns liaison officers to those RCCs. We try to visit RCCs in Canada and the United Kingdom every year to maintain those relations.

Amver is a proprietary system that can only be used for search and rescue. Merchant ships voluntarily submit position reports that are processed into a computer database maintained by the USCG Operations Systems Center in West Virginia. With this system, a U.S. RCC can quickly find other vessels within a 300 mile radius of the distress scene. U.S. RCCs routinely provide these reports to other RCCs upon request. Information available from Amver includes the type of ship, course/speed, course deviation required, distance/time to intercept, and number of doctors and nurses on board. This information is used to decide which vessel should be asked to assist. Using Amver, RCCs can usually get another vessel to the incident within 8-12 hours, and sometimes sooner.

The Department of Defense (DOD) supports SAR throughout the world. The Navy's Second Fleet is our primary point of contact for SAR assistance in the Atlantic Ocean. Additionally, local military commands along the entire U.S. coastal region and the Air National Guard para-rescue jumpers regularly provide assistance, operations permitting. During rescue cases, we always have received full support and cooperation from DOD units.

**Response
Operations by
Owner**

Ms. Nancy
Wheatley
Royal Caribbean
International

SAR is based on saving lives and often can be completed quickly, but, the next phase can take much longer. Planning for emergencies is a key part of the safety management system. Components for the cruise industry include both technical response and guest considerations. Area of guest response has typically received less focus. On December 15th in the Caribbean 2,600 guests plus 900 crewmembers were evacuated from a cruise ship after it ran aground. Local tenders took people off, and put them ashore. However, there were no hotel rooms available. Added to this fact was that after the passengers were mustered in the middle of the night they were not allowed to go back to their cabins, so many had no money, clothes or medications.

Guest issues include providing information to guests and making decisions about where and when to move people. Having the guests properly prepare for evacuation can eliminate problems once they are ashore. Communications was a big problem, both from the ship to the shore and from the ship to company headquarters. No one knew where everyone was; no one was keeping track of the passengers. Record keeping is imperative. Also, orchestrating transportation for 2000+ people and arranging food and shelter ashore were big issues. Other problems included trying to match luggage with passengers and getting U.S. citizens into the country without their passports. An idea: give each passenger a card with a number to call to let the company know where they are. Training down in the organization is a good idea so that everyone knows that they are responsible for the passengers, even ashore.

Amver was an asset during this incident and we also did a drill recently and Amver was an asset again. Most companies now have a response center which means that more senior-level people are looking at more minor details as well. Chain of command is important – recognizing everybody’s responsibilities. Availability of information to those coordinating response, keeping accurate and complete records, and having sufficient staff to handle the details are all critically important.

UK SARS

Mr. Dave Smith
UK Maritime
Coast Guard
Agency

Broadly speaking, the United Kingdom (UK) SAR organization is almost the same as in the U.S. To illustrate, I'm going to be talking about the collision between the container ship EVER DECENT and the cruise ship NORWEGIAN DREAM near the Falls Bank, off southeast England. NORWEGIAN DREAM had 2,388 passengers and crew aboard. The collision occurred just before midnight, in slight seas and good weather.

In mass rescue terms, this was a near-miss. The NORWEGIAN DREAM suffered bow and bridge wing damage, and lost two ship's lifeboats. UK military and Coastguard helicopters and RNLI lifeboats (40-50 foot boats) were deployed. During the SAR operations several merchant ships and a nearby German warship, AUGSBURG, responded to broadcasts. The container ship DART 8 was first on scene. Ultimately three helicopters and two fixed-wing aircraft were deployed, and 15 passing ships were involved. EVER DECENT developed a list - soon stabilized - and several bays of containers caught fire. Some containers were lost overboard; others fell onto the NORWEGIAN DREAM's bow. The EVER DECENT's cargo included all classes of dangerous goods except Class 1 (explosives). However, just over one hour after the collision, NORWEGIAN DREAM was able to confirm that her collision bulkhead was holding, all her passengers and crew were safe, and she was proceeding on passage to Dover.

This time, a mass rescue operation was not required. But what if the EVER DECENT had run into the side of the NORWEGIAN DREAM instead of the other way around? Would there have been a controlled evacuation? An uncontrolled abandonment? What if this incident occurred somewhere else? What if the on scene conditions were worse? What about the passenger profile - not all are young and spry? How do we get them aboard rescue units? How do we get them ashore? And then what - how are the shore authorities to cope? These are just some of the things that we need to think about when considering mass rescue operations.

Questions and Discussion

How many people are on the Go-Team? How much staff (outside the ship crew) is there to help assist in the crisis rescue effort? Go-Teams are set up with 10 to 12 people per team for reasonable management. There are 7 to 10 teams available at any time. There are 10 to 15 staff members from our home office focusing on staff areas and technical aspects and there are many people working with the air transportation aspect. The total number involved is around 100 for the first five days of an incident.

After awhile the master on board will be worn out; it's beneficial to send down a new master as part of the go-team to help out.

Was everyone accounted for? No, we did not know where people were. We now have people trained for this aspect. Industry has learned that it is beneficial to send 80-100 crew ashore to assist passengers and to find out who has come and gone. The Coast Guard is concerned with the accountability of passengers. In the exercises we should have passengers who don't always do what you want them to do because in real incidents they, the passengers, are scared, stressed, and they don't always do what they are told. We now have vests and hats for crewmembers that say "Ask Me" for identification. There is a staff member on every plane that flies back home that passengers can talk to.

What kind of equipment do you take with you, especially in remote areas, for the Go-Team? We have some satellite communications. Cellular phones where that is available. We discuss with port agents to have a supply of cell phones available on short notice. We also have communications equipment, laptop computers, chargers, converters, water, and food (very important to sustain efforts).

Go-Team use of cell phones may be a problem if the volume of cell phone use all at once overwhelms a cell site. However, use of cell phones for the Go-Team goes beyond the initial casualty.

What kind of authority do the Go-Teams take with them? They maintain open lines of communication. There are port agents around the world and they have all the authority to take action on behalf of the company. Training down in the organization for people to make decisions in terms of moving people around is beneficial.

Questions and Discussion
(continued)

Is there anything like OPA-90-contractors for crisis management consulting in the cruise line industry? Industry has regular meetings. Open discussion on what went right and what went wrong. Mandatory standards for ICCL from lessons learned. We are moving forward with sharing information formally and informally. Yes, crisis management consulting is now used. Open communications is important. There are not many written reports because of the legal issues. There are many discussions but no paper trails.

If the Coast Guard were to collect those lessons learned, would cruise ships be able to use the lessons learned legally? Yes, if depersonalized. This would be much less objectionable both from public affairs folks and lawyers who want to avoid a negative spin. From any exercise, we always look for lessons learned. Breakout sessions need to think about capturing info that encourages people to read/use them. Lessons learned may be made available through ICS website. Publish lessons learned on a regular basis internationally. If important, especially if from industry, they will be taken and published as an information paper.

Have ICCL industry standards been sent to IMO for international application? There have been three areas where industry standards have been added: additional lifejackets, infant PFDs, and helicopter pick up areas. Additional standards are currently being looked at.

What about thermal protection in Alaska once passengers leave the ship? There are no thermal protection regulations at this time; the only protection is the passenger's own warm clothing. Thought has been given to this issue. There could, however, be a problem of overheating with a large number of passengers in tight enclosed spaces (enclosed rafts/boats) if they were wearing protective gear.

Questions and Discussion
(continued)

Is something other than lifeboats being considered for rescue for the future? An important factor is the age of the vessel, not the size of vessel. Design is better these days, which makes staying on the ship a better option. A bigger concern is what to do once the people are in the water. Depending on weather, etc., other ships may not be able to retrieve people from the water.

A requirement was added to SOLAS Chapter III for Roll-On Roll-Off (RO-RO) passenger ships to provide a “means of rescue” to bring people from the water to the deck of a rescuing ship. This is not currently a requirement on cruise ships.

Comment regarding observations on a real emergency to muster passengers: The main concern (although the passengers were compliant) is the anxious passengers, who do not always remember what to do in an emergency. Another concern is getting good information immediately to passengers to avoid panic.

Comment regarding lifesaving equipment and vessel interface: Breakout sessions should review this issue; how do we simulate it in an exercise?

7. Breakout Sessions

Explanation of Breakout Sessions

On the morning of the second day the workshop participants were divided into a total of six breakout session groups. Assignments were based on their expressed preferences. Three of the breakout groups addressed topics within the broad area of *On Scene Coordination*, two groups addressed *Overall Incident Command*, and one group addressed *External Affairs*. The breakout session summaries in this section combine the input from all of the groups who considered each broad discussion area.

On Scene Coordination

Topic: On Scene Coordinator

How can we best describe the relative roles of an On Scene Coordinator (OSC) and the ship's Master? What if another merchant vessel is first on scene? Who is in charge?

The roles of the On Scene Coordinator (OSC) and the ship's master vary depending on the situation of the ship. For instance if the ship's master has abandoned ship, he/she is obviously no longer in control of the situation. The master should coordinate activity on the ship so long as he/she has the capacity to do so. Even after abandoning ship he/she still retains responsibility for the overall care of crew and passengers. This responsibility extends to general seamanship considerations, allocating medical care and necessary resources, and discipline in so far as the master is able to communicate and effectively exercise his command authority/responsibility.

At any point prior to abandoning ship, all resources should be focused on supporting the master's efforts to save his/her ship and people. Any vessel or aircraft on scene (whether designated as the On Scene Coordinator or not), the company Emergency Response Center/official, and the SAR Mission Coordinator's efforts to provide service should not usurp or replace the master's responsibility, authority or prerogative. The OSC in a situation where the ship is not abandoned might handle certain communications for the master, or otherwise assist the master to retain or regain the integrity of his/her vessel. When possible, delivering a boarding team to the vessel who are qualified to assist the ship's crew in resolving the problem is very desirable.

Some participants maintained that the ship's parent company was in charge once the master was in the water, and further, that the OSC and SMC should follow company direction on many aspects of the

**On Scene
Coordination**

Topic: On Scene
Coordinator
(continued)

ensuing rescue operations. However, there was no agreement on this point. The first vessel on scene should not automatically assume the OSC position. While any resources first on-scene may be rescuers, they may not have the communications, coordinating, seamanship, or endurance capacities required to be an OSC. There are many variables affecting who should be the OSC, including whether there is more than one response asset on scene and whether the potential OSC has the communications capabilities (ship to shore; ship to ship; ship to air), willingness, and on scene endurance to perform those duties effectively. In order to determine the OSC, there should be communication between the master of the ship, the first ship on the scene, and emergency response agents, i.e., the RCC or ICS command post and the company Crises Action Center (CAC) / Emergency Response Center (ERC). Session participants strongly reiterated that the cruise ship itself is its best survival craft. The industry voiced concerns about untrained merchant ships lending help to a cruise ship, since the cruise shipmaster is liable for the safety of his/her passengers. Also noted was that a merchant ship would be unlikely to have the capability to rescue people from life rafts. A Coast Guard participant argued that if the master of the cruise ship is the target for help, he/she is no longer liable for passenger safety once they have left the ship.

The workgroups generally agreed that the master of the cruise ship and the OSC should have separate duties, i.e., the cruise shipmaster is in charge of his/her ship and passenger safety and the OSC should coordinate other assets and the rescue on scene. They noted, however, that the OSC becomes responsible for passenger safety once passengers have evacuated the ship.

All agreed the OSC should be a mediator between other assets and the damaged vessel. Participants stressed that the OSC role is to provide support to the master – not to intervene or challenge his/her authority over the vessel or passengers unless absolutely necessary. Participants specifically charged the OSC with tracking on scene conditions, threats to the victims, and tracking people in the lifeboats and life rafts. They noted that in a Captain of the Port zone, the Coast Guard has the authority to direct the vessel's movement or require certain actions when there is a pollution incident; however, this authority is limited when the incident occurs in the open ocean.

**On Scene
Coordination**

Topic: On Scene
Coordinator
(continued)

A Coast Guard participant argued that some masters, in certain situations, may not take prudent action for fear of subsequent liabilities. That participant offered the concept that a COTP might direct the master to take action under a COTP authority, e.g., pollution prevention authority, in order to preclude the need for a mass rescue operation.

Two workgroups indicated that the SAR Mission Coordinator (SMC) should coordinate the rescue elsewhere (e.g., coordinate landing passengers ashore). Ideally, the SMC should designate the OSC.

**On Scene
Coordination**

Topic:
Information
Exchange

Is the current exchange of information between the Coast Guard and the industry adequate? Have there been any drills or exercises where this information exchange was tested? What were the results?

Two groups had a basic consensus that the adequacy of communications between the USCG and industry varied depending on the situation. The third group's participants said emphatically, "No, the exchange of information is not adequate now." From that group's perspective, in some cases information concerning a ship's situation is held too long by the master and the company before notifying SAR authorities. Also, the Coast Guard often does not use information provided by the company, thereby wasting time while they rediscover the information by themselves. Finally, communications in real life events often are hampered by overcrowded frequencies, language/jargon differences, and equipment failure.

One group felt that the inability to pick a name for these mass rescue situations signified the existence of less than desirable communications between the Coast Guard and other entities. What do we call these things? An informal straw poll in one group scored 3 votes for Incidents of National Significance, 3 votes for Marine Mass Rescue; and 6 votes for Mass Rescue Operations.

All groups noted that pre-planning communications were generally better than communications during an actual response, and that industry communications were generally more coordinated than Coast Guard communications. Both industry and the Coast Guard expressed strong interest in furthering initiatives that would increase the amount of information collected during the pre-planning stage

**On Scene
Coordination**

Topic:
Information
Exchange
(continued)

and stressed that better dissemination of lessons learned from drills and exercises would help. They suggested that websites would be the best tool for this, and noted that information should be maintained and focused at the local level. They pointed to the Coast Guard Seventeenth District website as a good example.

The industry feels that their preparedness and response efforts have been boosted through use of SAR checklists given to them by the USCG. However, a few shortcomings of the SAR checklist were noted, including the need for more detail on vessel engineering information and updated regional contact information. Another shortcoming was the lack of universal application/awareness of the SAR checklists/plans. Participants noted that many Marine Safety Offices are not fully apprised of this initiative and that many cruise ships do not prepare SAR plans. Industry also requested more guidance on the SAR checklist/plan, yet noted that IMO guidance might be more than what is desired.

During the initial stage of an incident, information frequently flows freely. When liability becomes an issue communications often are poor. Liability issues usually hinder actually learning anything from the lessons learned process.

The major problem in the initial stages of an incident is information request overload. There are too many requests for similar information from too many parties directed towards the master of the damaged vessel.

To help alleviate this problem, USCG participants suggested that industry should be part of the Coast Guard Crises Action Center (CAC) or that a unified incident command post should be established. Industry countered that the CAC should obtain information from the ERC instead of from the master of the ship. There was consensus that all other agencies should go through the CAC/ICS command center or the ERC to obtain information. Participants recommended an exchange of personnel such that the company is represented at the RCC (or ICS command post, as appropriate) and the RCC is represented at the company ERC.

What is the best way to reconcile the need for information from the master as well as minimizing his/her time demands? There is a need to make information exchange more efficient. One answer is that more information should be communicated during the pre-planning stage, possibly through the use of a comprehensive SAR

**On Scene
Coordination**

Topic:
Information
Exchange
(continued)

checklist/plan. Another easy answer was that other federal agencies should be cut off from communications with the ship. (Note that other federal agencies were not represented in the session). The USCG noted that with modern communications technology there should be a way to reconcile the problem of information request overload. USCG participants stressed that they need direct communications with the ship; ideally a unified command center would be created. Alaska has used an “away team” concept in rescues and drills to address this problem. Included on those away teams are police, medical, fire, and USCG personnel, who then communicate directly back to their parent agencies.

Session participants noted that internal USCG communications between the marine safety and operations staffs, although good in some districts, could use improvement in others. Communications between cruise ships, companies, and the USCG are good for day to day incidents such as passenger medical evacuations.

There was recognition that the current design of drills and exercises do not adequately test communications systems in preparation for an actual incident. Participants stressed that this type of exercise, though difficult to simulate, is needed.

**On Scene
Coordination**

Topic: Lifeboat
Recovery

In recovering people from lifeboats and from the water after a ship has been evacuated are there any unique situations that pose a particular challenge? What improvements need to be made in order to overcome these challenges? How can we incorporate evaluating recovery procedures into drills and exercises?

There was a general recognition that the industry, as a whole, is unprepared for a mass rescue operation in which large numbers of people have been evacuated to lifeboats and life rafts. A critical point is that rescue assets, technologies, and methods have not grown proportionately with the size of cruise ships. There was general agreement that exercises have relied too much on simulating evolutions and that future exercises must actually attempt physically doing tasks in order to adequately test procedures.

One issue raised was that of lifeboat management – the imperative to track and account for all lifeboats during a long mass rescue operation. The challenge of keeping lifeboats and life rafts together was noted. An extension of this is to accurately track empty life rafts

**On Scene
Coordination**

Topic: Lifeboat
Recovery
(continued)

or lifeboats. Relocating one of these can lead to unnecessary, time-wasting attempts to determine if there are survivors on the boat/raft.

While one suggestion was to sink empty rafts after rescuing the people, this might not be wise given that other survivors might subsequently find the life raft, thus saving their lives.

The problem of liability of merchant ships was brought up. Would merchant ships be held liable for injuring people while helping them from the lifeboats? Even though liability is always a concern in our society, Good Samaritan provisions of law generally cover rescuers unless they are completely negligent or abusive.

The other issues raised highlighted the limitations of current methods/technology for mass rescue operations. There were several suggestions for improvement and new alternatives identified; however, each had significant drawbacks.

The first suggestion was to design merchant ships or require them to have suitable equipment to pick up loaded lifeboats. Tremendous logistical problems were noted with respect to this suggestion. If this were to happen, all lifeboats and lifting gear would have to be a universal model. Doing this for existing ships would be extremely costly. Also handling gear today is only designed to drop lifeboats, not to pick them up fully loaded. A loaded lifeboat weighs 20 tons. This solution does not address the related problem of recovering people from life rafts or out of the water.

One ship's crew in an actual rescue made reverse use of its abandon ship slides by pulling people from the water to the deck via the slides. This novel use of evacuation slides is an option. Costs to equip all merchant ships with these slides would be low. However, the recovery process is slow, as they can only accommodate one person at a time, and this method would not benefit the less mobile or injured.

Two other ideas that surfaced were using accommodation ladders as a way to move people from the water to the deck in mild weather conditions and designing ships with a floodable well deck that would receive lifeboats or rafts. A Navy Landing Ship Dock (LSD) was suggested as the ideal lifeboat recovery asset. The ship could take in many lifeboats and allow people to safely exit. This would be especially good for people with limited mobility or the disabled. Participants suggested that, overall, the Navy is best equipped to provide critical support to a mass rescue operation.

**On Scene
Coordination**

Topic: Lifeboat
Recovery
(continued)

Another suggestion was to increase lifeboat life saving capabilities. Lifeboats are currently designed to carry 150 people, to have a fuel endurance of 24 hours at 6 knots, are equipped with a wet compass, carry food that should last 3-5 days, and may have a radio. The idea here was that the lifeboat should keep passengers safe until either they can safely navigate to shore or a suitable recovery asset can be brought to the scene, which may take several days. A significant review and redesign would be necessary to accomplish this. Other considerations pertaining to this approach would be how the condition of the survivors would be aggravated by seasickness, lack of prescription medications, injuries, weakness or infirmity of age, and the varied effects of adrenaline on people such that while many are super-energized to assist in their own rescue others are effectively unable to help rescuers or themselves at all.

The option of helicopter recovery was discussed. Like most of the other options, this is costly, hard to execute in rough weather because of the precision and training needed, and very slow (i.e., can only accommodate one person at a time). Hoisting survivors from rafts or boats is made more difficult by the small door or hatch through which the aircrew has to negotiate rescue appliances. However, in spite of the difficulties and danger, this may be the only viable option for timely recovery of those who are weak or immobile. The pros and cons of training lifeboat crews in helicopter hoist operations or dropping an emergency rescue swimmer to the lifeboat were discussed, with no consensus on which is the better approach. Also noted was that many cruise ships operate outside of the range for a land-based helicopter rescue and that additional support would be needed from large ships with helicopter landing areas.

Two participants in different groups suggested developing new technologies that could be deployed by air, similar to bladders dropped for oil spills, etc.

The classic stage method was touched on, i.e., moving people on lifeboats to larger boats, then to even larger boats, and finally to a ship. Boat to boat transfer is easier than lifeboat to ship transfer and with this method more people can be fit progressively onto a suitable platform.

**On Scene
Coordination**

Topic: Lifeboat
Recovery
(continued)

Almost all of the options mentioned are challenged by one or more of the following variables: speed of transfer, cost, or rescuing the injured. They are all made much more complex when the variables of bad weather and distance from shore enter the equation.

A central issue in preparing for a mass rescue operation was whether such preparations were cost efficient since there is such low probability of one occurring and the cost of preparing is so high. The participants were reminded that “risk equals probability times consequences,” and the consequences of not being prepared for a mass rescue are enormous. Also suggested was that it is to industry’s advantage to take the initiative in addressing this issue before an incident forces congressional response and costly regulation (e.g., Oil Pollution Act of 1990 following the EXXON VALDEZ oil spill). One participant suggested that both industry and government need to have a brainstorming session to identify new mass rescue operation technologies and planning methods, suggesting that new technologies could be developed to facilitate mass rescue operations once there is a market for them. One participant suggested that industry might want to pool resources to develop appropriate technologies and response systems.

**On Scene
Coordination**

Topic: Exercise
Objectives

What objectives should be included in a future mass rescue operations exercise to evaluate on scene coordination?

Participants pointed out that simulation has been overused in past exercises.

Objectives:

- Accounting for people and resources
 - Availability of crew & passenger lists
 - Location of passengers and crew once rescued or ashore
 - Accountability for all people associated with the rescue/aftermath operations (e.g., go-teams, staff brought to the scene)
 - Lifeboat management, including empty boats or rafts
 - Note: will need 1,200 volunteer passengers

**On Scene
Coordination**

Topic: Exercise
Objectives
(continued)

- Ability to identify and task available resources
 - Use of Amver (Note: use real Amver SURPIC as basis for exercise.)
 - Identify all potential resources ashore and afloat
 - Use of resources from local agencies (medical personnel, hospital facilities, fire department, general community, transportation assets)
 - Use of national (DOD and other) assets
 - Capabilities of various OSCs (i.e., Coast Guard vs. merchant ships) and transfer of OSC duties from first on scene to most qualified/most capable
 - Effectiveness of span of control
 - Evacuation of the ship
 - Interactions and information exchange
 - Establishing communications between RCC/ICS command post, company ERC, and ship
 - Ability to minimize information overload between RCC/ICS command post, ERC, OSC, and the ship
 - Effectiveness of internal (Operations & Marine Safety) USCG information exchange
 - Effectiveness of information exchange between USCG / industry / other agencies (federal, state, local)
 - Effectiveness of various communications technologies (e.g., radio, phone, fax, email, satellite)
 - Media
 - Transfer of passengers from ship to lifeboat to rescue asset (commercial vessel/helicopter, etc.) to shore
 - Test freeboard issues for rescue assets that are likely to be used
-

**On Scene
Coordination**

Topic: Exercise
Objectives
(continued)

- Medical triage and first aid
- Effectiveness of ship’s Safety Management System (SMS)
- Exercise coordination with local response agencies
- Functionality of existing mass rescue plans
 - USCG
 - Vessel / company ERP
 - State, local, & other federal agencies
 - Fire fighting & medical
 - Housing
- Effectiveness of the “lessons learned” dissemination process; how well lessons learned are incorporated into contingency plans
- Salvage and pollution abatement capabilities
- Emergency towing of disabled cruise ship

Participants noted that these objectives need not be addressed by one large mass rescue operation exercise, but could be incorporated into multiple small-scale drills that are testing the effectiveness of other systems as well. Participants recognized that a considerable amount of pre-work needs to be completed before rescue operations systems are tested industry-wide. Additionally, there was a concern that drills be as realistic as possible, noting, however, that realism would have significant cost to the industry.

**Overall Incident
Coordination**

Topic:
Command Posts

What skills, knowledge, and capabilities do we need from each organization at a command post for a mass rescue operation? What other organizations need to be involved? What is the best command post organization? Who should be in charge?

Industry and Coast Guard participants in one breakout group strongly disagreed over whether a single/central command post organization was a good idea, and what skills, knowledge, and capabilities were needed from each organization at the command post. The idea of a single/central command post was not acceptable for the industry. Major concerns were location of the command post, travel, lodging, and basic logistics (phones, computers, and reference material availability) for industry personnel.

Agreement on the idea of a virtual command post was as close as the two sides could come. The virtual command post is a structure where each side would have an independent command post working on the responsibilities of their respective organization. Ideally these independent command posts would each have a representative from the other organization to answer questions directly or research answers through contact with the other command post via phone call.

The second breakout group felt that all command post personnel should have a base knowledge of ICS. Any personnel reporting without basic ICS awareness would be plugged in where appropriate with the expectation that they will learn on the fly.

In addressing what organizations would be involved, the second breakout group agreed that essentially there are already two command posts, industry and RCC. That should not be a problem. The cruise ship industry will do what they normally do anyway, regardless of the Coast Guard set up. The bigger issue is what will the CG and the industry provide each other? That's how we need to look at it.

What will industry provide? A call from the ship's master who will provide the ship's specific information/situation along with plans from the ship, stability calculations, class society, lifesaving appliances, passenger manifest, and expertise.

A key is that the CG and industry response plans mesh and work together. Communications between the company and the Coast Guard command centers, based on information supplied by the master, are how to solve this problem. This must be done before

**Overall Incident
Coordination**

Topic:
Command Posts
(continued)

dispatching a Go-Team. It is essential that the Coast Guard knows who is running the company's command center and the company knows who is running the Coast Guard's command center to get key information to one another quickly. The Coast Guard should hear from the company command center rather than vice versa since the company has the actual crisis information provided from the master.

We must decide who should be the primary communications person. Although the master has all the key information he/she should not be the contact individual for the Coast Guard command center because he/she is going to be overwhelmed by phone calls, etc., asking for accident information. Therefore, he/she should have one of the ship's officers or another on-scene crewmember be the communications person. The issue is multiple Coast Guard units talking to the ship (master) (e.g., this occurred when the REGENT STAR caught fire); this must stop. Only during on scene evacuation should those communications really start. The Coast Guard has to resist the temptation to talk to the master, and should instead, go through the central communications location.

Although there was discussion of the importance of "knowing the company beforehand", there is no reasonable expectation that any government organization can know all of the cruise ship companies. It is a bonus to know the major players and their organizations (e.g., ICCL). There must be an ability to effectively exercise MRO plans in spite of no familiarization with a particular company. Perhaps IMO could mandate companies to have a Coast Guard liaison. Industry participants recommended that there should be a policy to establish an open line of communication (three way call service) between the master, company, and incident commander. Such a requirement would require only "State of Industry Communications".

In the first breakout group the industry and the Coast Guard were in hard contention over what the best command post organization should look like. When they agreed on the concept of a virtual command post, they envisioned that both sides would have an independent command post (with their own unique structures) with a central unified command. The unified command would have a representative from Coast Guard and industry, along with other agencies who have a stake in the incident. Both Coast Guard and industry participants agreed a representative/liaison in the other's command post would be beneficial. However, the Coast Guard would like the owner or equivalent representative from the involved company at the unified command, whereas the industry would like that representative to be middle to upper management.

**Overall Incident
Coordination**

Topic:
Command Posts
(continued)

The second breakout group recommended, if there are two command centers initially, that an individual should be sent to the other location as a representative from the other command center. They recommended that this exchange be mandatory.

The second breakout group felt that staffing a command post would begin to happen after the incident is well underway. All parties represented at a command post should have one person empowered to make a decision and allocate resources. We must realize that while vital that the command post be set up as soon as possible, it needs to be formed with the right people.

Who should be involved? The first connection is to the company and then the following people/agencies are brought in as needed via the company: company representative, civilian authorities (Red Cross, etc.), police, emergency medical, immigration, health department, State Department/consulates, classification society, and public affairs. When other organizations need to be involved, the command post will pull in who they need as they see fit. In a unified command center (doesn't have to be at same location until later), the CG and company will be "together" in taking care of contacting the above listed people/agencies/organizations. Personnel should be available for the sole purpose of making notifications.

The agreement on who should be in charge came down to a situational position of being in charge. Each organization (CG and industry) would be in charge in their area of expertise or responsibility. An easy example brought up was that the Coast Guard is in charge of the rescue operations.

How do we focus on such a large incident? There are three distinct phases of such an incident: short-term (SAR), medium-term (transportation, logistics), and long-term (recovery, psychological aspects). This recognition is essential to an efficient effort.

What is needed from the COMPANY: ship specific info, plans, lifesaving appliances, stability calculations, reliable communications, passenger manifest, situation information, public affairs, expertise, logistics agents, finances.

What is needed from the GOVERNMENT: resources coordination (gathering assets NOT actual resources that are out on water, etc.), coordination, communications, expertise (ship safety and salvage), public affairs (coordinated with company), authority, money, general security (e.g., air space, water, shore side).

Overall Incident Coordination

Topic:
Command Posts
(continued)

We must resist the temptation to believe that we can get the passengers off the vessel in any sort of immediate manner, other than putting them all in lifeboats. We currently have no resource that could accommodate 4,000 to 6,000 passengers and crew. The truth is that the best lifeboat is the cruise ship itself. Those needing immediate assistance should be removed but others should remain on the vessel if at all possible. Even though government (CG) often sends everything immediately, all immediately available resources would be insufficient to recover a cruise ship's passengers and crew from the water and or lifeboats.

Overall Incident Coordination

Topic: Exercise Objectives

What objectives should be included in a future mass rescue operations exercise to evaluate overall incident coordination?

There are no regulations right now that require exercises and the practice of these exercises; one should be made.

Evaluate notifications, resources availability, timeliness of response, real-time elements (e.g., refer to Sitka exercise), open line communications, overall coordination including coordination of personnel on shore, transfer of command / person in charge, government plans for major emergencies, company plans and objectives, and coordination between Coast Guard and industry. Ensure different agencies "stay in their lane".

What are the short/medium/long-term responses that we want to evaluate in this exercise? If industry has plans for this, then we need to exercise their plan objectives/steps.

Test open lines to make sure they actually work at all needed locations. Three-way communications needs will depend on the type of casualty. There may be a timeframe problem if interstate/province, etc. There may be no worthy information every single minute of the case; therefore, it should be case specific.

Recommend using a real place with separate rooms rather than actual command posts set up in different locations. All exercise participants do not necessarily need to be at separate offices in their own locations, but could just be in separate rooms at one location simulating distance. This would be good for allowing company/government interaction.

External Affairs **What are the most critical issues involving public affairs, external relations and information dissemination?**

Topic: Most
Critical Issues

The greatest concerns were releasing accurate information as quickly as possible, how to make information readily available to concerned individuals, and how to improve the information exchange between the cruise line and government agencies.

With respect to how to get out accurate information as quickly as possible there was consensus that a Joint Information Center (JIC) should be set up in an Incident Command System (ICS). However, releasing information before the JIC is set up is extremely important. As soon as the public finds out that a mass rescue operation is occurring, families, media, and agencies want information. If information is not provided, information will be found and disseminated that may or may not be accurate. If the U.S. Coast Guard is involved, a press release is sent out quickly that gives information about how the Coast Guard is responding to the incident. Such information may include what vessels or air resources are being sent to assist. The group agreed that at the end of this initial release, a web address and/or a list of contact numbers should be added for the families, media, and other agencies to obtain information.

Once phone numbers and website addresses are released, the public has somewhere to go for information. The next questions that arise are who has the phone bank to handle the massive amount of phone calls that will be generated as a result of a large passenger vessel mass rescue operation and who is responsible for posting and maintaining a dedicated website. Previous incidents show that the number of people calling can quickly overwhelm a phone system and the number of website hits can crash a computer server. Approximately 30,000 calls were generated when a helicopter had an accident with a cruise ship even though only six of the cruise ships passengers were affected. The Navy's server crashed after they advertised an information web page for the USS COLE incident.

The purpose of the JIC is improving the information exchange between the parties involved in an incident. How long will it take to set up the JIC? This will depend on several factors including the location of the incident and the location of the cruise line's headquarters. A proposal was made to have a virtual JIC until the necessary individuals are in proximity to each other. This way the information coming out of the cruise line is the same as that coming out of the Coast Guard and local agencies.

External Affairs

Topic: Most
Critical Issues
(continued)

Critical information needed by the government includes accurate passenger lists and next of kin information. Some cruise lines have passenger manifests in electronic form, which will be very beneficial. The manifest provides a list of names, cabin numbers, age, gender, and special needs; however, manual searches of files are usually required to obtain next of kin information. A determination still needs to be made of who is in charge of next of kin notification.

Other crucial information needed is background information on the vessel. The International Council of Cruise Lines (ICCL) is setting up hidden pages on their web site that will contain specific information on their vessels, including basic specifications (e.g., passenger capacity, vessel size, crew size), vessel plans, and fire fighting capabilities. This web page would be activated during an incident. Background video footage is also highly sought after during an incident. This footage should be prepared prior to an incident and could show such things as the inspection of the vessel or the crew performing lifesaving drills.

External Affairs

Topic: Passenger
Management
Ashore

What problems can be expected once a large number of passengers reach the beach? What mechanisms are in place to deal with these situations?

The greatest concerns when passengers reach the shore are accountability, communications, and welfare.

Accounting for all the passengers once they have arrived safely on land is the biggest problem. Crewmembers may be placed at various landing locations to record passenger names and whereabouts. Another possibility is to attach plastic cards to life vests in order to give passengers toll free or collect phone numbers for the cruise line. Some cruise lines are using bar coded bracelets to track children on board their vessels. These may be helpful in accounting for them ashore, but adults currently do not wear these bracelets.

Communicating to passengers once they are on shore is significantly more difficult if the landing is in a remote area. In remote areas phones may or may not exist. If they do exist, then calling the cruise line collect may be the best way to check in and find out information. If the landing area is populated, then local agencies usually have an emergency evacuation plan and/or mass rescue plan that can be implemented. Local agencies should be represented in the Incident Command Center so that operations of the federal government, the cruise line, and the local agencies can be coordinated.

External Affairs The goal of the cruise line industry is to return passengers to their homes as quickly as possible. The cruise lines basically agree that they will charter planes and other vehicles as quickly as possible. Sometimes hotel-type services (food and shelter) and medical services are required before passengers make it home. The resources and infrastructure available to provide these services is dependent on the incident location. In order to protect passengers from harassment by interviewers and cameras, participants recommended placing passengers in separate hotels or places of refuge. Triage locations and landing locations must be established and publicized to all rescue personnel and good Samaritans.

Topic: Passenger Management Ashore (continued)

External Affairs **What are the issues that need to be considered concerning a vessel after it has been evacuated? What are potential solutions?**

Topic: Post-Evacuation Issues The potential problems that may arise after the vessel is evacuated include environmental issues, vessel safety issues, local economic issues, and the disposition of personal belongings.

Depending on what caused the evacuation of passengers off a cruise ship, environmental issues such as leaking fuel oil may have to be mitigated. Decisions regarding the ability to move the vessel and how the movement will take place need to be made so that no further environmental damage is done.

Vessel safety concerns include protecting the vessel from further damage and preserving evidence for government agency investigations. These may include the U.S. Coast Guard and the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB).

Economically, the effects of a marine incident of this magnitude can be devastating. If the vessel is aground or has sunk, there may be a hazard to navigation in the shipping lanes which could affect the flow of maritime shipping. Oil pollution can affect the fishing community by inhibiting their fishing schedule or harming aquatic life. The tourism industry can be brought to a halt with oily beaches.

After evacuation from the vessel, passengers can be stranded on the shore without their personal belongings and/or identification. Government agencies on all levels can work together during exercises to prepare for this situation. Cruise lines must consider the task of reuniting passengers with their belongings that will likely be left on board the vessel during evacuation.

External Affairs

Topic: Exercise
Objectives

What objectives should be included in a future mass rescue operations exercise to evaluate external affairs?

- Determining whether all the necessary players are involved (e.g., industry, Coast Guard, NTSB, local agencies, State Department).
- Determining whether the Joint Information Center (JIC) is manned properly.
- Evaluating whether press briefings were handled effectively. We do not want contradictory information coming from different sources.
- Evaluating how quickly the JIC was set up.
- Evaluating the division of responsibilities within the JIC: notification of next of kin, family briefings, media briefings.
- Determining how many incoming calls the phone bank can handle.
- Evaluating how well passengers on the beach are kept informed.
- Evaluating how well we can track passengers at multiple landing points.
- Evaluating how well we can provide for passengers basic necessities, i.e., food, shelter, and clothing.
- Determining how quickly passengers are transported from landing points to home.
- Evaluating how quickly and smoothly passengers are reunited with their belongings.

Note: the Marines are doing a bracelet evacuation exercise in Korea. This may be useful for the Coast Guard and industry to observe and possibly duplicate for incidents occurring in both remote and populated locations.

8. The Way Ahead

Introduction

Panel 4 took the form of a dialogue between the workshop participants and three panel members:

- CAPT Scott Hartley, Commanding Officer, USCG Activities Europe
- Capt. Ted Thompson, Executive Vice President, ICCL
- CAPT Gabe Kinney, Chief, Office of Search and Rescue, U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters

Discussions focused on existing needs that should be addressed immediately. How do we turn all these general issues into an Incident of National Significance / MRO exercise from which we will all learn something? What is a realistic long-range exercise schedule? What needs to be exercised? What would be a good scenario?

Questions and Discussion

The feedback we got today far exceeded our expectations. Now, the Coast Guard needs time to digest all the information before we can come up with what needs to be exercised.

One question that is most pressing, though, is the realistic exercise schedule. What are we going to do next? Within one year, we want to have a tabletop exercise to reflect the results produced here today, and one year after that we will shoot for a full-blown field exercise.

Can we mutually agree on whether that schedule is possible, too ambitious, or not ambitious enough? Any suggestions? Yes. Possibly scale back. Maybe take more baby steps before encompassing the whole world in on it.

It takes about 3-4 years to get from here to a fully developed, comprehensive field exercise. Maybe that time can be compressed by limiting the scope of the exercise.

Questions and Discussion
(continued)

How do you put together a virtual or real command post?

Maybe we are trying to do too much with multiple jurisdictions. Maybe limit to a smaller geographic area. Or maybe go for the big time. There have been a lot of issues identified.

We don't have the other responding agencies, classification societies, etc. here at this workshop. Maybe think of fitting in shoreside responders.

We need to take into account the political reality that we need to do something. We will feel the pressure over time. DOD was invited and they didn't show up. We need to move faster instead of delay.

In between the tabletop and field exercises there is no plan for a communications exercise. Why not? The oil spill community has been doing exercises. We find out a lot when we look at the pieces, not just the whole. This workshop has identified some broken pieces, and we need to fix them in a realistic, field-supportable way.

Where are we going with this workshop? It seems like we're getting in the weeds. We've identified various areas of concern, but let's go ahead with this; I don't like the waiting time (one year). Maybe a shorter version leading up to a field-exercise. Maybe test equipment. Is it usable and feasible? International arena wants this to go forward now, not in 3 or 4 years.

Maybe keep the same broad scope but break it down into chewable bites and exercise each at once. Work on solutions.

Biggest bang for mass rescue contingency planning effort - planning has been on the mark. Delay exercises if you want, but don't delay planning.

Mass rescues with a ferry have been done. We don't have the planning staffs in the USCG District (osr)'s. But, to use what was done in Alaska would work. Take a step to create a scenario and play the game to give us an ability to see what would be done and see how we would handle it. We don't have to develop something new for everyone, but let us all observe the tabletop and field exercise that has occurred.

Take the Alaska cruise ship SAR exercise, make it more generic, and give it to various units as a tailored exercise. That would exercise the crisis action teams, fulfill the need for knowledge, and everyone can learn from it.

Questions and Discussion
(continued)

Use a standard exercise but fashion it to the needs and geography of those involved.

Look at something on the high seas – more realistic.

We should approach this in a developmental manner and build on it.

What are the most critical objectives that we're looking at?

Have you gotten the passengers off the ship? Can you do it? Do we need to look at requirements put on the masters onboard? Can you get the passengers rescued? Do you know how? Maybe, do one section of the exercise, assess it, and then finish it.

We have plenty of scenarios out there already. Take those exercises and upgrade or downgrade them. Don't reinvent the wheel. It would also save money and time by not making new scenarios at this time.

The plans are stale. We need something to incorporate the lessons learned back into. We also have to make sure that the plans are used and distributed.

Let's look at taking a bite size chunk vs. broad exercise. When this is over we want to say that we were successful. Who defines success? Everyone saved? It is not ambitious enough just to have a rescue mission on a ship.

9. Closing Remarks

Remarks

RADM Bob
North
G-M

Good job focusing on the issues and things that need to be done in the future. You've laid a great foundation during this workshop.

Let me give you two examples related to handling mass rescue operations from my own experience. Recently, when I was visiting Greece, a ferry sank (real people in a real life evacuation); the media was criticized for not getting information out quickly enough. Earlier when I was the Captain of the Port in New York, we were involved with an aircraft that went in the water with 60 passengers; two died on impact, the others were brought ashore. It took 24 hours to account for only 60 people! If this were magnified as in a cruise ship crisis, these issues would become very big concerns.

Contrast HMS VICTORY (wood hull, eighteenth century warship technology) and HMS WARRIOR (iron hull, reflecting 100 years of engineering advances). Vastly different ships except for one minor detail: both ships had boarding weapons on the gun decks to be used when the fighting got up close and personal. Despite 100 years of progress in hull design, propulsion, and weaponry – and 100 years of technological improvements in just about every other facet of ship design, the ships were basically designed to fight by the same tactics. Creatively deployed, a ship like WARRIOR could have forced any ship then floating to surrender without having to draw alongside. Instead, it appears that she was prepared to fight the very sort of clawing battle her innovative design and features should have rendered unnecessary. Having the newest boarding arms mounted on the gun deck is an example of getting the technology right but failing to grasp its larger significance.

The relevance to the cruise ship industry is clear. HMS WARRIOR is a lesson on the importance of properly incorporating technological advances in an era of accelerating change. WARRIOR'S boarding arms are a good example of what we don't want to see happen in the cruise ship industry. It is very important for the Coast Guard, the international maritime safety community and the industry to make sure we think through the implications of the innovations that we introduce to make sure we're not giving ourselves the best weapons for fights that no longer need to be fought.

Remarks

RADM Bob
North
G-M
(continued)

Evacuating thousands of passengers at sea is everybody's worst nightmare. Maybe we need to rethink our approaches to evacuation. Will we ever reach a point at which passenger safety is no longer facilitated by having more lifeboats lining longer rails ever higher above the waterline? Are better lifeboats and stronger davits really the answer? How else could people be evacuated? I can tell you right now that the Coast Guard doesn't have the platforms to do the job, but we do have to figure something out.

Remarks

Mr. Tom Allan
IMO

Congratulations to the USCG and ICCL for taking the initiative to organize this workshop. Normally within IMO a working group is not established for such a thing. This initiative is worthy of support.

This is a very technical issue and the public is not clear on what it is that we are trying to do. Many things are done in an attempt to keep passengers on a cruise ship from entering the water in the event of a casualty, e.g., survivability standards and structural fire protection. Should an accident occur, however, (as has been represented by various cases shown yesterday), it is not a straightforward scenario. This workshop and mass rescue initiative are what the public wants to see; they cannot understand survivability but when a situation does occur they want to see a properly organized evacuation from the vessel. This they can understand. Your task is to sell this message to the public. You also need to be aware of the different philosophies, i.e., if there is a crisis on a ship you expect to survive vs. being on an airplane that is crashing, in which you expect to die! In Europe, an exercise was forced on us by the Consumer's Association which resulted in a poorly reported exercise. So, the fact that the USCG is taking this initiative is the good first step. If you do not take the initiative then the politicians and the public will ultimately take over the agenda and tell you how to regulate (e.g., EXXON VALDEZ).

Ships are increasing in size and are hopefully safer, but the safety issues still need to be continually addressed. This initiative is an excellent step forward; I hope to come back for the actual exercises.

Remarks

Capt. Ted
Thompson
ICCL

We have a long way to go. This workshop was intended to tap into your expertise rather than be an exercise planning session, which will be held at a later date. We will have to review how we are going to approach exercising these objectives (as defined by the breakout sessions). The next step will be to get together with the USCG to determine what the outcome recommendations from the workshop really are, i.e., review all the comments and output from the breakout sessions then put together an exercise planning staff from the Coast Guard and industry, set exercise objectives, and develop scenarios based on the issues identified. Hopefully we will be able to do so within an adequate timeframe to benefit IMO's schedule.

Remarks

CAPT Gabe
Kinney
G-OPR

General thanks to all.

**Mass Rescue Operations Workshop
Jacksonville, FL
Agenda**

Monday, 26 March 2000

Introduction

Presentations on Prevention Issues

Passenger Ship Arrangements for Fire Safety, Abandonment & Survival
Passenger Ship Subdivision and Stability
Passenger Ship Control Verification Examination

Panel 1: Response Framework & Infrastructure(s)

Focus: Jurisdictions, Responsibilities, and Authorities. Who has what resources, how are they brought into play, and who are the players at various levels? What is the Canadian system like?

Panel 2: Command, Control and Communications (C3)

Focus: How a situation is actually coordinated; the Unified Command System - initial response vs. long term response, location of unified command, who is involved; how an event grows from individual response activities at the beginning to a unified response as the nature and extent of the incident becomes apparent; importance of public affairs

Panel 3: Response Operations Ashore and at Sea

Focus: How resources will actually respond: at sea, ashore, and from industry and how this fits into the unified command or incident command structure.

Tuesday, 27 March

Alaska SAR Exercise Briefing

Breakout Sessions

- On Scene Coordination
- Overall Incident Coordination
- External Affairs

Reports from Breakout Sessions

Panel 4: The Way Ahead

Focus: Are there existing needs that should be addressed immediately? How do we turn all these general issues into an Incident of National Significance / MRO exercise from which we will all learn something? What is a realistic long-range exercise schedule? What needs to be exercised? What would be a good scenario?

Wrap-up & Adjournment

- Remarks by RADM Bob North (G-M)
 - Remarks by Mr. Tom Allan (IMO)
 - Remarks by CAPT Ted Thompson (ICCL)
 - Remarks by CAPT Gabe Kinney (G-OPR)
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USCG GRU / MSO Long Island Sound

Tom Allan
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Paul Debnam
Princess Cruises

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