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PRIVATE SECTOR AND PUBLIC SECTOR IN THE SHORELINE RESPONSE: FACTS AND LEARNINGS
M. Loïc Kerambrun – Cedre – Rue Alain Colas BP 20413 – 29604 Brest
Loic.Kerambrun@le-cedre.fr

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private sector and public sector in the shoreline response: facts and learnings

Loïc Kerambrun
Cedre

ERIKA OIL SPILL RESPONSE
A four stages long story

• 24th Dec. 99 - Jan. 00: landing crisis
  set up Polmar scheme + gross recovery
• Feb. - Jun.00: saving the beaches
  gross recovery + beach cleaning
• Jul. - Sept. 00: response slow down
• Sept.00 - Summer 02: Final clean up
TOPIC 1 : Lutte à terre

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A long story : why?

- Type of oil : viscosity and persistance
- Type of pollution : successive arrivals of fuel
- Bad meteorological and sea states conditions
- Awarding public contract : procedures in the frame of European market
- A national oil company involved in the pollution

origin of response staff and equipment:

Before Erika spill

- **Polmar strength**: army, firefighters, Civil Protection Corps + administrations (public works)
- Local communities
- Volunteers
- **Private sector** (mainly for logistics, transport, and vacuum pumping)
  - requisition
  - provision of service

origin of response staff and equipment:

During Erika spill

**POLMAR units**

- (the same as previously)
- + dedicated short-term jobs (STJs), funded by MoE
- Big decrease after summer 2000,
- Only firefighters and STJs during 2000
- until end of 2000

**Private sector**

- Called on in the early January by TFE
- Then Polmar around March
**Recourse to private sector**

**Why?**
- Tailing off / replacement of Polmar units
- Weariness / units balk at picking up tarballs
- Sometimes, units refuse to be managed by local supervisors
- Deterioration of relationships between fire brigades and Army
  - daily allowance
  - mecanization

**What contribution?**
- Accommodation
- Permanent teams on the field
- Maintenance and repairs
- Know-how
- Long term motivation

**Direct Involvement of Total Fina in cleanup operations**

- End of December 99: TFE, not legally responsible, accepts moral obligation to participate in cleanup operations

- Authorities entrust the company with cleanup of the sites which require the highest technical level (economic and ecological point of view)

- TFE does not want its cleanup units to be the only ones involved at the scale of a commune. In most cases, concomitant presence of Polmar units on the same area.

- TFE asks for
  - an official request from Polmar
  - precise guidelines and specifications

- TFE is well aware that it is going towards an obligatory result principle and not only an obligation regarding the means

- TFE calls on the very few oil spill response companies, which will introduce innovations
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Les leçons techniques de l’Erika et des autres accidents maritimes - Brest, 13-16 mars 2002

**Rocks cleaning**

- Protection
  - anti-splashes
  - effluents recovery
- Hot water without pressure

**Accessing uneasy work sites (cliffs)**

- Professional ropeworkers
- Lifting gears

**Cliffs : why to clean them?**

An ecological & economical impact
- Emblematic landscape
- Wild and natural coastline
- Dangerous but frequented (tourism and goose barnacles, harvesting)

A source of contamination
- Coves with boulders full of oil
Cliff cleanup: How was the decision taken?

In the course of January 2000:
- "firefighters and militarymen are not assigned to risking their own life for oil"
- But dangerous sites are frequented by volunteers (what to do?), so specialised firefighters are called on
- On Belle-Île Island: volunteers from Alpes (= mountaineers)

Early January 2000:
- Contact with professional compagnies
- Transfer to TotalFina

Early Mars 2000:
- First ropeworkers site opened by TFE on Groix island

Public contract during crisis (1)

- Private sector not used to emergency supplying (renting, purchase)
  - Skips
  - Overalls
  - High-pressure cleaners
  - Sieving machines

- Just-in-time methods (no stock)
Public contract during crisis (2)

- Public contract procedures not suitable for emergency situations (purchase, renting and provision of service)
  - An emergency situation imposes reductions in consultations and time limits more or less in accordance with an actual competitive procurement. Persons in charge can thus be induced to risk personal sanctions
  - A reflection on this subject should be initiated

Public contract and crisis (3)

- As regards cleanup call for tenders:
  - After crisis but works require a relative urgency
  - Conformity to the reglementation imposes quite long consultations times (70 or 52 days) and therefore even longer times before cleanup can start.

RESULTS

- Privates cleanup sites generated stimulation
  - Between teams
  - Private sites became reference
    - Techniques adopted
    - Level of cleanup

- Output of operations was significantly increased

- A new player appeared on cleanup sites: the « Health & safety » co-ordinator (initiated by Polmar)
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Conclusions (1)

- The **opening to the private sector** is a major innovation in the French shoreline response system

- This opening and the involvement of TFE :
  - had obvious consequences on the quality of the cleanup
  - will probably have repercussions on the future French system, and possibly on the organization of other countries

Conclusions (2)

The Erika spill showed that :

- If the **opening to the private sector** is beneficial from a certain point, Polmar units will go on playing a major part in the first days of the spill (gross recovery), especially if the pollutant cannot be pumped

- Some **private companies** had the opportunity to demonstrate their professionalism and know-how (not all of them)

- **Techniques and procedures** have been improved, leading to better output of cleanup techniques and better preservation of the environment, but also a better compliance to health and safety requirements

- **Cleanup of cliffs** is feasible (as long as professional workers are involved and safety procedures clear and complied with)