

Project information

Project title

A-LEX 2012. A Case Study: Combined heavy-lift and container shipping from Europe to Russia

Year

2011/2012

Project leader

Tore Henriksen, UiT

Participants

- Professor dr. juris Tore Henriksen, Faculty of Law, University of Tromsø (Project leader)
- MarinTek (SINTEF)
- Akvaplan-Niva

Flagship

Sea ice in the Arctic Ocean, Technology and Systems of Agreement

Funding Source

Fram Centre

Summary of Results

The project consist of two elements:

Developing a case describing several realistic incidents: The case included a description of a chain of events, jointly making up a scenario, involving a realistic vessel on a realistic voyage, as a basis for describing the formal framework regulating Arctic shipping. Vessel, voyage, time and cargo are chosen to be representative for future shipping, representing a type of transport which is expected to be more frequent in the region as development of petroleum resources and other raw materials progresses. A container vessel Oleum is departing Hamburg in late October destined for the Russian port Yamburg in Ob Bay. The containers are loaded with a variety of equipment, spare parts and 130 tons of chemicals. 15 nm north of Fisherman's Peninsula, engine of Oleum stops completely but manages to restart the engines. In Murmansk port the engines are checked and the vessel permitted to leave port after the Captain reports that the vessel is seaworthy. In the vicinity of the Kara Strait under deteriorating weather conditions the engine stops again and the vessel drifts towards shore. There are no towing boats in vicinity to assist the vessel and it grounds and the containers are released into the ocean, some of them ripped open with chemical released into the sea. After some time the crew is rescued. However, the cleaning capacity is limited.

Identification and analyses of research questions related to each of the incidents: The scenario is developed by researchers at Akvaplan niva and Marintek, representing work packages I and 2 (technology and natural science). The description of the vessel, the areas where it operated, weather conditions and available infrastructure provides a realistic basis for an interdisciplinary research. The main purpose of the analyses has not been to provide answers to questions, more to identify questions for further analyses, to be undertaken through A-LEX when the mai11 project is launched in April. These questions include analyses of obligations of coastal states to on SAR and oil prepared ness and response and other infrastructure (ice and weather forecast) and to what extent they are adequate, the role of the port state to ensure seaworthy vessels. What is seaworthy in our Arctic context (e.g. radio communication, design and equipment)? The scenario raises also questions on salvage and liability.

Published Results/Planned Publications

Publication of findings from the project will be published during 2013 and 2014.

Communicated Results

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Interdisciplinary Cooperation

The project description was developed through cooperation between researchers from law, natural sciences, technology and political science partners. It has been challenging but rewarding to develop a real inter-disciplinary project.

Budget in accordance to results

The Fram Centre funding was helpful in completing the project. The project had its main funding from the Faculty of Law, University of Tromsø and did not receive any other external funding.

Could results from the project be subject for any commercial utilization

No

Conclusions

The findings of the project will be highly relevant for A-LEX main project to be launched in April 2013 after receiving full funding.