

Chapter 15: Environmental Disasters and Crises

Introduction

The Law of Environment Protection No. 4/1994 assigned Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs (MSEA) the responsibility of lay down an emergency plan to respond to Environmental Disasters in A.R.E. and establishing a Central Operations Room to receive reports of environmental disasters and manage accidents which affect environment elements. These responsibilities will be carried out by specialized work groups from Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency staff (EEAA) with participation of experts and specialists from universities and specialized research institutes, also with other concerned governmental bodies.

MSEA Achievements

First: Emergency Planning

1. National Emergency Plan for Response to Environmental Disasters:

- a. Guidelines to set up local plans for governorates have been prepared.
- b. Guidelines to set up local plans for protectorates and RBO's of EEAA have been prepared.

2. National Oil Spill Contingency Plan:

- a. Equipments and Contact Points database has been updated and roles and responsibilities of EAFMS and SCA were modified.



Picture (15-1) Vessel Carrying Hazardous Materials Drowned

3. Drills and exercises for Oil Spill response:

- a. Drills on Oil Spill Response at the Main Combating Centers, in addition to monthly drills for the sub-centers of Petroleum sector and marine ports.
- b. Major drill on marine pollution response at Port Said Coastal Zone area with participation of Naval and Air Forces, Petroleum sector, Red Sea Ports Authority, Suez Canal Authority and Private Sector Companies.
- c. Major drill on marine pollution response at Alexandria Coastal Zone area with participation of Naval Forces, Petroleum sector, Alexandria Port Authority and Private Sector Companies.



Picture (15-2) Practical training on marine pollution abatement in ports

Second: Regional and International Cooperation

1. Organizing a Regional Workshop for Middle East and North African countries (MENA) in “Natural Disasters Risk Reduction”, in coordination with the International Strategy for Disasters Risk Reduction, under the UN Secretary General, during 18th -21st April, 2007, in Cairo.
2. Organizing a National Workshop on “Oil Spill Compensation” in cooperation with the Regional Marine Pollution Response Center for the Mediterranean Sea, during 17th -19th July, 2007, in Cairo.
3. Participating in establishment of the Marine Emergency Mutual Aid Center (MEMAC) for the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden in Hurghada. MEMAC has been donated by MSEA and is operated by PERSGA.
4. Participating in the International Meeting to Support Lebanon in Clean up operations of the Oil Pollution resulting from Israeli Attacks.
5. Participating in the proceedings of “Navigational Hazards Reduction and Marine Pollution Prevention Committee” held in MEMAC, I-Hurghada.
6. Participating in a Regional Training Course for Arab Mediterranean Countries, in cooperation with “AASTMT” and under supervision of “REMPEC”.



Picture (15-3) Participation in meetings and committees on navigational hazard reduction and marine pollution prevention

Third: Field Follow-up and Training

1. Training of Mass Communication and Media Professionals on Media Role during environmental disasters.
2. Training a group of Naval forces officers on “Planning for Marine Environmental Disasters Response”.
3. Training EMUs heads in all governorates on “Planning for Environmental Disasters Response”.
4. Doing Field visits and Follow up (Oil companies, marine ports and Governorates) to check the preparedness level for environmental emergency.

Fourth: Follow up of Management and Operation Activities of the “Marine Pollution Response Center” at Sharm El-Sheikh

Doing field visits to follow up operations and maintenance activities of the Marine Pollution Response Center at Sharm El-Sheikh, and the co-trainings between the center and South Sinai Protectorates.



Picture (15-4) Following up management and operation of Marin Pollution Prevention Center in Sharm El-Sheikh

Fifth: Environmental Pollution Accidents Management

Major Accidents Managed by Central Operation Room (COR) of MSEA :

1. Response to 10.000 tons of crude oil spill, from “El-Samedoon” oil tanker into Suez Canal navigational passage at 14/2/2004.
2. Response to 550 tons of crude oil spill resulting from collision between oil tankers “Genmar Kestrel” and “Trijata” in the Mediterranean north of Damietta at 5/2/2005 .
3. Response to and beach clean up operations during three months to 3.000 tons of heavy crude oil spill, from “Gregorossal” oil tanker at 26/2/2006, in Kabrit area, “Great Bitter Lakes”, Suez Cannel.
4. Response to and beach clean-up operations during 42 days to 600 tons crude oil spill from “ Anna BC” oil tanker at 20/9/2006, in Kabrit area.



Picture (15-2) Practical training on marine pollution abatement in ports

Table (15-1) Accident Reports received by the Central Operation Room throughout 2004–2007

Sr.	Report Type	2004	2005	2006	2007
1	Vessel accidents (drowning/ drifting/oil leaking)	36	29	33	15
2	Oil pollution from marine oil fields	6	18	10	4
3	Oil spills from unknown sources	21	28	26	10
4	Accidents in River Nile	1	8	4	4
5	Others	17	3	5	9
Total reports received		81	86	78	42

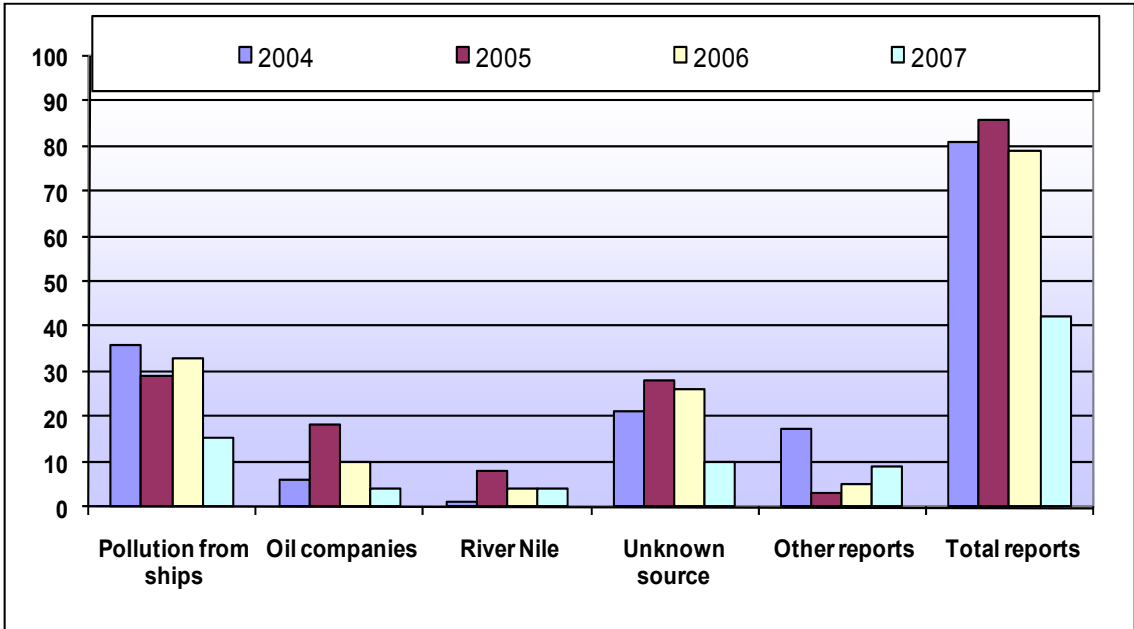


Figure (15-1) Statistics of accident reports received by the Central Operation Room Throughout (2004-2007)