

# BALEX DELTA 2018

## Oil and chemical spill RECOVERY EXERCISE

### in the Baltic Sea

Karlskrona, Sweden  
27–30 August 2018



HELCOM  
**BALEX DELTA**  
KARLSKRONA 2018

## BACKGROUND



### HELCOM BALEX DELTA

In the case of a major oil or chemical spill in the Baltic Sea, international assistance from some or all Baltic coastal countries may be needed.

The work for co-ordinated pollution preparedness and response takes

place within the regular regional cooperation of HELCOM, based on the 1974/1992 Helsinki Convention. A dedicated inter-governmental group was established in 1977 for this purpose, today called the HELCOM Response Working Group.

The agreed-upon preparedness and response procedures are documented in the HELCOM Response Manual.

The HELCOM BALEX DELTA exercise has been conducted annually for nearly 30 years. The exercise is organized as a practical exercise of the response capability and alarm procedures of the Baltic Sea countries. The exercises are hosted by the Baltic Sea coastal countries according to a rotation schedule agreed upon at the HELCOM Response Working Group.

In addition to the host, other countries regularly participate with their own response ships. Typically, 6–8 countries take part in the exercise, bringing the total number of vessels to 10–20. This makes the Baltic exercise one of the major multilateral spill exercises worldwide.

### BALEX DELTA 2018 EU project

The BALEX DELTA 2018 EU project is a time-limited EU project supporting the organization of the 2018 edition of the HELCOM BALEX DELTA exercise. Thanks to the contribution from the EU, this exercise can take a broader scope and include chemical and shore response in addition to oil spill response at sea.

The project will run from 1 May 2017 to 30 April 2019, with a total budget of EUR 950 000, of which 85 percent is co-financed by the European Commission via DG ECHO's Civil Protection Mechanism Exercise Programme.



SWEDISH COAST GUARD



Länsstyrelsen  
Skåne



Swedish Civil  
Contingencies  
Agency



S Y K E



Co-funded by  
European Union  
Civil Protection

## CONTACT

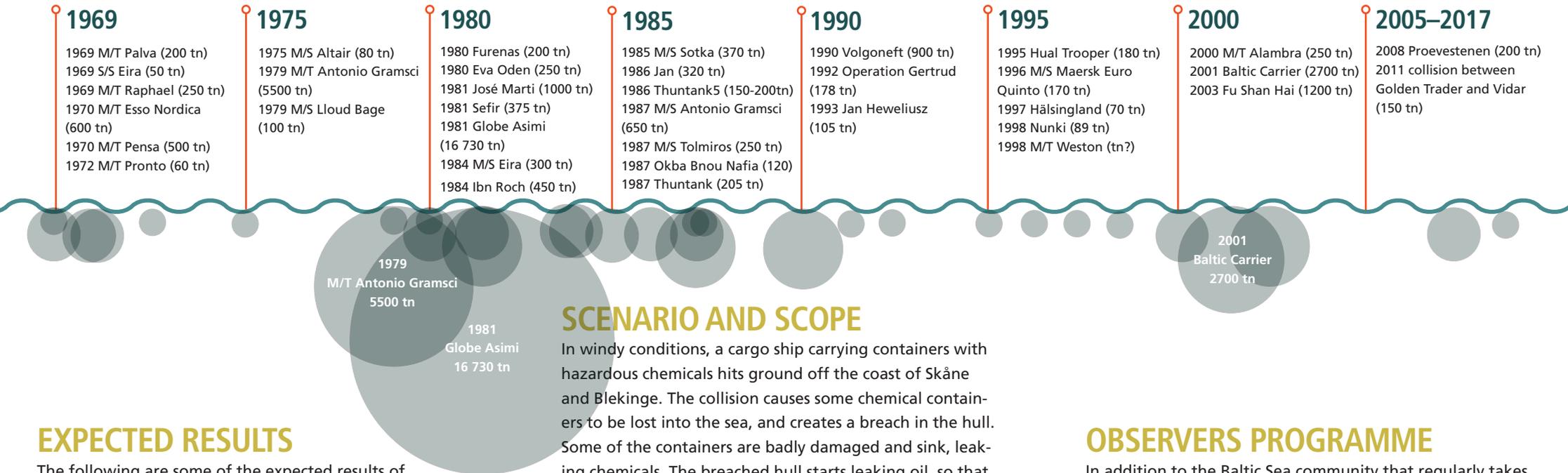
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## MORE INFO

<http://balexdelta2018.helcom.fi/>

## TIMELINE: MAJOR OILSPILLS IN THE BALTIC SEA IN 1969–2017, spills over 50 tonnes



## EXPECTED RESULTS

The following are some of the expected results of the exercise:

- Improved knowledge regarding response capacity for maritime incidents with hazardous and noxious substances (HNS) on all levels.
- Contribute to the development of guidelines on how to react to an international HNS incident.
- An information exchange analysis, with a focus on the host nation request for support.
- A general evaluation report with conclusions and lessons learned.
- The marine pollution services and other involved actors have knowledge of their roles and responsibilities when handling a pollution accident.

## SCENARIO AND SCOPE

In windy conditions, a cargo ship carrying containers with hazardous chemicals hits ground off the coast of Skåne and Blekinge. The collision causes some chemical containers to be lost into the sea, and creates a breach in the hull. Some of the containers are badly damaged and sink, leaking chemicals. The breached hull starts leaking oil, so that before long, a large amount has been released into the surrounding waters. Due to harsh weather, the oil and some of the containers start drifting towards the shore.

Within 24 hours of the accident, some containers have reached the shore, together with the oil. On the rocky shore area, some containers are damaged and may leak hazardous or noxious substances.

A large part of the shoreline is classified as environmentally important (Natura2000 areas, sea bird sanctuaries), and is composed of rocky areas and small cliffs. Other socio-economic values are also threatened, such as a large paper mill.

The exercise will thus cover several different elements, such as combating/handling both chemical and oil at sea as well as onshore response. An alarm exercise, including pre-exercise, will also be conducted within the project.

## OBSERVERS PROGRAMME

In addition to the Baltic Sea community that regularly takes part, observers from an additional 40 countries will be invited to witness the exercise, in order to ensure that the Baltic best practices can be spread throughout the EU. The extensive observers programme will add value by providing a mutual learning experience, with observers learning from the exercise as well as the Baltic Sea response community learning from the observers.

