



# The Viking Sky incident

From an ERRV operator's point of view

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## Atlantic Offshore

- Our core business is owning and operating Emergency Response and Recovery vessels – ERRVs.
- Currently operating three large ERRVs in Norway and seven in the UK.
- Employs approx. 300 persons, trained for rescue operations on land and at sea.
- Has over 25 years of experience operating ERRVs.
- Has operated ERRVs in nine different countries.
- The vessels train for emergency towing, rescuing people from water, fire fighting, oil recovery and surveillance at sea, every week!
- We launch FRCs/FRDCs (rescue crafts) more than 200 times per year, per vessel, also in more than 3.5 m significant wave height.



## The incident – from our point of view

- Viking Sky asked for assistance at 14:00, Ocean Response was out of reach and was not contacted.
- The ERRV Ocean Response was under transit from Kristiansund to Florø and was at Gurskøy at 14:00, approx. four hours sailing time from Viking Sky.
- The company was contacted at 18:35 by Viking Sky's insurers, asking for assistance, or if necessary, salvage.
- Ocean Response changed course and steamed at 19:45 after being released from contract by Equinor, on request from the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (No: Hovedredningsentralen).
- Ocean Response reached Viking Sky at 02:45. Viking Sky then had one engine running and it was decided to wait for sunrise before attempting towing.
- Assisted Viking Sky to Molde.



## Ocean Response

- Length 76 m, width 18 m.
- 12,500 hk and 120 ton bollard pull.
- Dextron 129 ton fiber towing hawser.
- FiFi 2, 7,200 m<sup>3</sup> water per hour, 110 m high .
- Can rescue more than 300 persons.
- Well equipped hospital and beds for 25 persons.
- One FRC and one FRDC.
- Complete NOFO oil recovery equipment (ocean going).
- Crew trained in advanced first aid.



## Challenges?

- The weather was not too severe to pass the hawser from the Ocean Response.
- We have trained for these situations, and have also first hand experience from live situations under rough conditions, also very close to shore.
- The cruise ship had no training nor experience in receiving the hawser, and could not attach it on the first try.
- The mooring winch was used, but Dexon can also be used on a «dead ship».
- Without the Dexon fiber hawser it would have been impossible to get the hawser up to the cruise ship.
- An AHTS would have been of no use as it only has a steel wire to get the hawser onboard. It could possibly have caught the anchor, but with high risk.
- A tugboat has too low freeboard.



## Challenges?

- According to Professor in Nautical operations, Margareta Lutzhøft, all statistics show that keeping people onboard the vessel is the safest approach, and that saving the vessel therefor should be the main focus during a rescue operation.
- What do we do in Norway?
- There are 10-15 civil ocean going ERRVs employed by the oil industry in Norway. Has this been assessed as part of the total preparedness?
- Has a well established system for area standby, with focus on rescue by helicopter, reduced the overall preparedness for ships?
- The Petroleum Safety Authority Norway in their assessment of of the «områdeberedskap» asked: have the ERRV vessels become so large, and far from the installations, that they have been forgotten and not used?



## Challenges?

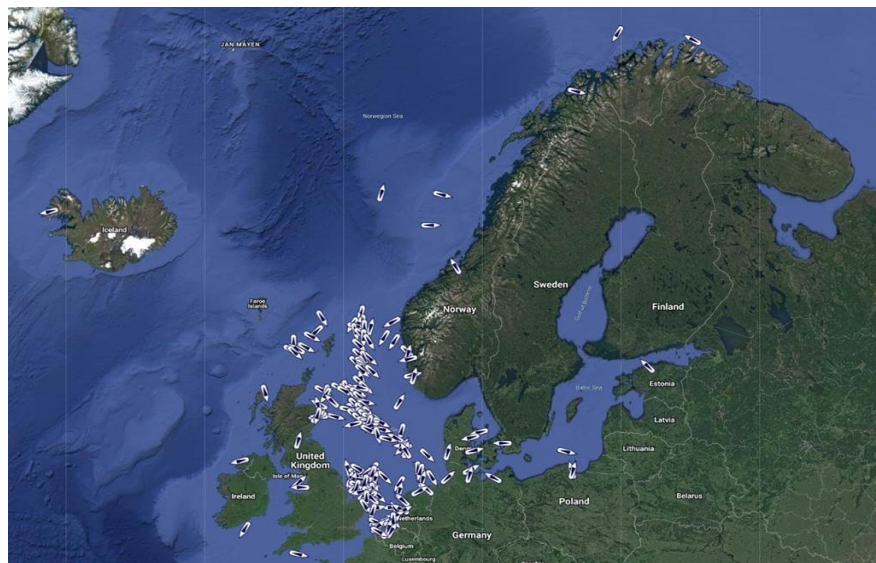
- In our view, the Safety at Sea conference in Haugesund focussed on everything that work (helicopter, onshore organisations etc), and very little on alternatives. Dismissed the possibility that Viking Sky could have been saved by a vessel.
- Has the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre sufficient knowledge about what the different vessels can and cannot do?
- Do they assume that all offshore vessels can be used in the total preparedness? PSVs, AHTS, and subsea vessels, in general do not train on rescuing vessels, they are not equipped for rescue operations.
- Do we need an overview / matrix list over which vessels has towing and rescue capabilities (as they have in the UK)?

## Challenges?

- All focus in the oil industry the last decade has been on helicopters and reducing the numbers of vessels. The number of ERRVs in other countries are: UK approx. 120, DK approx. 15-20 stk, and Holland approx. 15-20.
- What about the northern parts of Norway? The number of cruise ships is increasing. Still a focus on helicopters?
- SARINOR has focussed on warm clothing, tents, suits and food, but very limited focus on actually saving the vessel with emergency towing preparedness.
- What about the oil industry in the north? It's a huge area to cover. In the discussions we have been included in, the focus has been on how far it is for helicopters to fly, not on the rescue vessels' capabilities and area to cover. Is this the right focus?

## ERRVS in the North Sea, September 2019

Kilde: DnB/Vesselvalue







Video fra Bergens Tidende (Geir Martin Strande)

