

PERSONAL SURVIVAL TRAINING

When any vessel sets sail, you never expect to be involved in any type of accident, be it a collision, man overboard or medical emergency. You can go from a routine task on board to possibly a major incident within minutes and this can be totally alien to most seafarers. To manage and overcome such events, training and preparation is key. Being prepared could genuinely save your life.



HISTORY

When the Titanic sank 100 years ago, it was claimed the men on-board showed immense chivalry by letting women and children climb into the lifeboats first. But new research suggests this heroic moral code is actually a myth with men having a better chance of surviving maritime disasters. Not only that, it has now been suggested that the only reason women and children escaped the Titanic tragedy was because the captain threatened to shoot any man who put himself first.

A study of 18 catastrophes over the past 300 years was carried out by Swedish researchers Mikael Flinder and Oscar Ericson and shows that captains and their crew are 18.7 per cent more likely to survive a shipwreck than their passengers. Knowing what to do in an emergency,

having the right equipment and knowledge to use it, are all equally important in ensuring a happy outcome, should a tragedy occur.

PREPARATION

Preparation is crucial; it involves training and planning and also includes minimising the risk, especially those that can result from the cost-cutting measures that most people are far too often guilty of when buying safety equipment.

When an incident occurs it is too late to discover that the fire extinguisher is empty, the life raft on-board is damaged and there are no flares available. Good seamanship is the result of a combination of knowledge, good training and common sense, which ensures safety at sea. With good planning and foresight many disasters can be prevented, but sadly not all.

ANYWHERE ANY TIME

An emergency can happen anywhere, at any time. Research and experience have shown that when disaster strikes, most people panic, making the event far worse. However, those who have been correctly trained to expect and cope with such risks show far greater survival rates than those who have not. People caught in a crisis or emergency often react by falling back on previous training scenarios.

TRAINING STANDARDS

The Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) Personal Survival Techniques training course is one of four mandatory modules required to work on any commercial vessel ranging from super tankers to fishing vessels. The training must be undertaken

before new entrants are assigned to any shipboard duties. The other three basic STCW modules include; Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities, Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting and Elementary First Aid.

OVERALL AIM

The overall aim of the Personal Survival Techniques course is to provide seafarers with the necessary knowledge, understanding and proficiency to protect and maintain their own and others' safety at sea in accordance with the international regulations.

Students attending the Personal Survival Techniques course learn the principles of survival, abandoning ship, survival in the water and the use of survival equipment/survival craft during a maritime emergency.

ACCREDITED TRAINING

Andrew Hodgson, Business Development Consultant of Whitby Fishing Training Centre said "The overall objective of the accredited training we offer is to give all persons intending to go to sea a basic knowledge of the immediate action to be taken upon encountering an emergency aboard ship and overview of the safety regime that exists within the industry. We are delighted to be involved in delivering vital STCW safety training to the maritime sector."

Andrew Hodgson
Whitby Fishing Training Centre



ED'S NOTE
This is an abridged version - please follow the link to read the full article.

CALL THE BOMB TEAM....

Historically, support for anyone discovering an item of UXO within the United Kingdom and its waters has been provided by the military. Offshore, this service was carried out by the Royal Navy Clearance Divers and whilst this service is still available it only applies to situations where there is a danger to the public or where lives are at risk. In the event that the presence of a UXO item is preventing the construction of a wind farm then the operator or contractor must source a suitable alternative to the, tax payer funded, military teams.

SOLUTION

One solution to this service shortfall is Ramora UK who have been providing offshore Explosive Ordnance Disposal services to the offshore industry since 2006. Just like their Police and Military Bomb Disposal counterparts the Ramora UK team are made up predominantly of former military bomb disposal specialists but are being supported more and more by their own "home grown" specialist personnel. The team are deployed via a 24hour helpline and can mobilise within 24hrs should the need arise.

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE

The actual response to a UXO discovery can range from some simple telephone advice or identification based on video footage or images to determine the steps to take to avoid further risks, through to more positive action. A full deployment of the maritime EOD team involves embarkation of RHIBS, specialist EOD equipment and explosives along with divers and ROV systems, where necessary onto a suitable vessel.

All the systems are designed to work from any vessel and also be interoperable to provide maximum flexibility. Ultimately, any deployment of the team is in response to



an unexpected discovery and, as such, will impact on project timelines. As a result, the system, personnel and operating procedures are configured to ensure expedient removal of any UXO hazard whilst ensuring appropriate levels of safety are maintained at all times.

PROCEDURES

On average, the team deal with, in excess of, 20 large UXO items offshore per annum, along with 1000's of smaller munitions and pyrotechnics discovered on shore. Each large UXO item (bomb or mine), depending on the situation, can be relocated away from any critical infrastructure, such as monopiles or pipelines and safely destroyed within a 6 hour window.

APPROACHING UXO RISKS

Operators and contractors must balance a number of factors when determining how to approach the UXO risks and one area requiring clear understanding is that of the marine permits which give

approval for the physical underwater activities however, specifically, the permits required to undertake EOD work offshore. Dependent upon the arrangements in place, these permissions can take up to 6 weeks to obtain, somewhat defeating the 'Emergency Response' definition.

Whilst it's evident that good project planning, alongside effective risk mitigation and survey strategies, is crucial in determining the risk from and presence of UXO items, the need for an Emergency Response solution remains for the unexpected discoveries.

Ramora UK

CHALLENGING WATERS

The arrival of two new emergency Fast Rescue Craft at Stonehaven Harbour, Scotland signals the imminent restart of a wide range of Maersk Training programmes at the newly opened Maritime Training Academy, which is owned by their Aberdeen-based partners, Survival Craft Inspectorate (SCI).

10 YEAR AGREEMENT

The two companies have entered into a ten year agreement, aimed at establishing the facility as a world leader in the training of Boatmen and Coxswains in the use of Fast Rescue Craft. The two craft arrived on June 22nd. This is a significant investment by Maersk Training, coupled with the investment made in the recruitment of additional instructors for the facility. An Open Day to showcase the Academy and to learn more about the courses on offer will be held on August 27th.

Stuart Cameron, UK Managing Director for Maersk Training, a global training company involved in oil and gas, maritime and wind training, said: "Companies in these sectors can be assured the Academy offers first rate training facilities and, more critically, that the challenging waters of the North Sea around the Stonehaven coastline - with its coves and inlets - provides the sternest test of any facility in the UK for fast rescue training. The industry has been aware for some time of our plans and there is a tremendous level of interest already generated. Indeed, we believe that in the first year a high number of delegates will be trained at the facility with demand increasing as new vessels come online by 2015 and grow from there on."

LEADING PROVIDER

Maersk Training, as a leading provider of OPITO related training ranging from survival to firefighting to boat training, will offer a wide range of courses from the Academy including Fast Rescue Craft Boatman, Fast Rescue Craft Coxswain, Daughter Craft Coxswain, Twin Fall Lifeboat Coxswain and technical training associated medical courses ITSO and AMA, alongside technical training. With all of its emergency response facilities located within a ten to fifteen minute drive of each other, Maersk Training is the only training provider in Aberdeen able to offer these courses in such close proximity.

NEW FACILITY

Following extensive storm damage to the previous facility, with tremendous support from Stonehaven Harbour Board and Aberdeenshire Council, SCI has invested a substantial six figure sum in building the new facility and equipment, so as to train its own customers in its emergency marine evacuation systems. The Stonehaven site includes the main building, offices, classrooms and workshop on the harbour front and an additional building which will be used as a training room.

Stuart continued: "The industry will be well aware that prior to the storm damage

Maersk had successfully operated training courses from the Maritime Rescue Institute and the loss of the facility was a great blow to the town. With all the fresh investment that has now taken place we are returning with great confidence and vigour in the knowledge that out of that sad period we have seen the development of a world class facility for the Oil and Gas sector and one that the community of Stonehaven can be extremely proud of."



SCI has more than 22 year experience in the manufacture, supply and maintenance of lifeboats, davits, liferafts and fast rescue craft and the Academy - which complements SCI's established training school at Findon - will enhance the skills and competence of those personnel who use, install and service lifesaving equipment.

Maersk Training

