



Directorate General of Shipping

SITREP – 35, 1800 hrs on 02/07/2025

Sinking of MSC ELSA 3 (IMO no. 9123221, Flag Liberia) South West of Kochi

The contents of this SITREP are based on both written and verbal inputs received from the stakeholders

1. Incident Overview:

Refer to SITREP – 6

2. Response Actions Initiated:

Refer to SITREP – 6

3. Present Status:

The salvage operations and coastal cleanup efforts in response to the MSC ELSA 3 incident are progressing steadily under close inter-agency coordination. MERC has confirmed that the vessel Canara Megh continues to perform 24/7 caretaking duties at the wreck site, with no fresh sightings of oil sheen reported in the vicinity.

Shoreline cleanup operations are ongoing from Trivandrum up to Rameshwaram and Kanyakumari. Recovery of plastic pellets (nurdles) continues, with a total of approximately 350 tonnes collected at Kollam/Trivandrum, 200 tonnes at Rameshwaram, and 50 tonnes at Kanyakumari so far.

Additionally, water quality monitoring is ongoing, with 20 samples taken since May 26th, all of which have returned normal results. Weekly testing continues with the Kerala Pollution Control Board, and arrangements are in place to communicate these results through official channels.

Regarding the wreck site, SMIT Salvage has reported that the Dive Support Vessel (DSV) and support personnel are fully prepared in Singapore. Induction training for approximately 30 staff members has been planned, with mobilisation to site expected shortly. The salvage team has indicated that diving operations will commence within 24 hours of the DSV's arrival at the wreck site. The remaining three containers are expected to be recovered within the week, and arrangements are underway to shift

collected nurdles from customs control to the designated port warehouse for further processing.

4. Situation Assessment:

The latest assessments indicate that the containment and monitoring measures at the wreck site remain effective, with no significant oil leaks or environmental hazards reported as of date. The continued absence of oil sheen suggests effective sealing of fuel tanks and containment systems.

A critical area of focus remains the verification of hazardous cargo onboard. MSC has confirmed the presence of 13 containers listed under the IMDG Code but has been directed to re-examine the cargo manifest for potential marine pollutants. Additionally, the Directorate has emphasised strict compliance with instructions from MMD Kochi, particularly regarding cargo categorisation and environmental risks.

While the salvage mobilisation is on track, the current phase of operations depends on the timely arrival of the DSV and seamless commencement of oil extraction efforts. The ongoing claims process, initiated by affected stakeholders, is under review by MSC and the P&I Club, with DGS urging expedited responses, especially concerning claims forwarded by the Kerala Government. Inter-agency collaboration remains crucial to ensure environmental safety, effective containment, and timely resolution of outstanding operational and regulatory requirements.

5. Environmental Risks:

Refer to SITREP – 6, 1800 hrs on 28/05/2024

6. Coordination Measures

Refer to SITREP – 6 for the overall coordination measures being undertaken

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