



OCEANOS SAR INCIDENT

3 AUGUST 1991

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Head: Maritime SAR operations



DISTRESS SITUATION

3 AUGUST

- **23H15** Port Elizabeth Port control receives a very distorted message from OCEANOS - "Vessel taking water in engine room. Require urgent assistance. About to launch lifeboats. Position 32°07'S. 26°06'E."
- Portnet Tug (listening on 2182Mhz) confirms wrong longitude.
- MRCC Cape Town (Silvermine) request sitrep. Durban radio reported they had intercepted a garbled message from OCEANOS that she was in trouble and required immediate assistance and was launching lifeboats.
- After some confusion about the longitude it was established that the vessel's position was 32°07'S and 29°07'E.



INITIAL ACTIONS

3 AUGUST

- **23H35** MRCC at Silvermine was updated and took over coordination and helicopters and fixed wing aircraft were dispatched.
 - 11 Puma helicopters
 - 2 Alo helicopters
 - 1 x C160
 - 1 x C130
 - 3 x DC3

- MRCC requests the following message to be transmitted
“All vessels: MV OCEANOS Position 32°07'. 29°07' sinking.
Abandoning ship. 600 passengers on board taking to
lifeboats. Please assist”



AIR ASSETS USED





EARLY DEVELOPMENTS

4 AUGUST

- **00H15** The Navy report no ships in the area but 4 strike craft are being prepared for launch.
- **01H25** MV. "VARDA" reports she will be at scene in approximately 1 hour.
- **02H00** The "NEDLLOYD MAURITIUS" reports that she is in contact with "OCEANOS" and steaming to assist. ETA 3 - 4 hours.
- **04h45** "NED. MAURITIUS" reports "OCEANOS" listing 20°- 30° starboard - 220 still on board.
- **05H03** "KAZSUBY II" reports picking up survivors.
- **07h30** "NEDLLOYD MAURITIUS" picking up survivors.
- Other vessels in area "GREAT NANCY", "REEFER DUTCHESS" and "ANIK"



FINAL MOMENTS

- **07h22** At first light, the SA Air Force helicopters began evacuating remaining passengers from “OCEANOS”
- **11H45** All 251 on board taken ashore by helicopter
- **13h45 OCEANOS SANK**



VIDEO



ORGANISATIONS CONCERNED WITH THE “OCEANOS” RESCUE OPERATION

- TFC Tours
- South African Airways
- Shipping Agents
- Civil Protection
- The Haven Hotel
- RCC Piraeus - (Greece)
- Hospitals
- Dept of Foreign Affairs
- National Sea Rescue Institute
- Private companies
- **METRO**
 - METRO Border
 - METRO East
 - METRO West
- Department of Environmental Affairs
- South African Police Service
- **South African Navy**
 - Naval Command Post
 - 4 x Strike Craft
 - 14 x Divers
 - Silvermine Comms Centre
 - Naval Bases
- **South African Air Force**
 - MRCC Cape Town
 - Air Force Command Post
 - Mobile Air Operating Team
 - Air Force Bases
 - Air Force Squadrons



ORGANISATIONS CONCERNED WITH THE “OCEANOS” RESCUE OPERATION

■ Port Captains (Portnet)

- Durban
- Port Elizabeth
- East London

■ Coastal Radio Stations

- Durban
- Port Elizabeth
- Cape Town

■ Civil Aviation Airfields

- OR Tambo (Jhb International)
- Durban International
- East London
- Port Elizabeth
- Cape Town International
- Bloemfontein
- Umtata

■ South African Medical Services

- SAMS Head Office Operations
- Med Command Eastern Province
- Med Command Natal
- 1 Military Hospital Pretoria

■ South African Army

- Eastern Province Command
- Group 8 Eastern Province



HIGHLIGHTS AND CHALLENGES

■ Highlights

- 571 persons rescued -100% success rate
- Quick reaction of SAR resources
- Commitment
- SANDF major contribution
- Positive media coverage
- SASAR organisation “is working”

■ Challenges

- No communications in area
- Passenger name lists
- Limited equipment for scale of operation
- MRCC swamped by national and international media



Thank you.

Any questions ?

