



## **KIMO RESOLUTION 1/11\***

**Presented by KIMO UK/Secretariat**

### **Emergency Towing Vessels (ETVs)**

The need for ETVs as a preventive measure has arisen since the number of available commercial salvage tugs has reduced while potential dangers from individual vessels have increased. Vessels are now much bigger than in the past and can carry large quantities of dangerous and hazardous cargoes and fuel.

ETV's are generally ocean going tugs, with expert salvage crews and a bollard pull of over 150 tonnes. They also have firefighting and counter pollution equipment onboard allowing them to undertake multiple roles including acting as onsite command and control centers and communication platforms.

A UK report commissioned published in 2008 <sup>1</sup> concludes that *“Lack of capability within the commercial tug and towage sector (in effect market failure), European Union obligations, and societal expectations (zero tolerance of major marine environmental incidents) combine to dictate the need for this contingent capability. In cost benefit terms, averting one major shipping disaster and environmental incident of the scale of the PRESTIGE would justify a contract price far in excess of that currently being paid until its expiry in 2011 and beyond.”*

Currently (late 2011) Spain has fourteen ETV's, Germany operates eight, Norway has seven, France has five, Sweden three and the Netherlands, Poland, Iceland and Finland each have one.

The United Kingdom's four strong ETV fleet is to be stood down in September 2011 due to budget cuts and KIMO believes that this sets a worrying precedent. KIMO, along with many others, is calling for this service to remain in place to protect the lives and the environment of the UK and neighbouring coastal waters. Similarly there is no dedicated provision in Faroe, Ireland or

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<sup>1</sup> Marico Marine (2008), Emergency Towing Vessels Assessment of Requirements: Final Report,

the Danish West Coast leaving a wide area of the approaches to Northern Europe unprotected.

There have been significant developments in ship design and operational practice that have impacted on salvage service provision. Initially the need to manage a large disabled tanker was viewed to be the focus for emergency salvage however increasing demands on the use of the sea for wind farms, marine renewables, aquaculture and marine conservation mean that has changed. New vessel types such as Ultra Large Container Ships (ULCS), deep sea drilling operations and an increase in large cruise liners visiting more hostile and remote areas present salvors with a new and different challenge.

The market for alternatives to State sponsored ETV's (commercial salvage capability, the offshore oil industry or the port and harbour tug sector) are either in decline or increasingly vessels are not available or suitable for the ETV task. Commercial salvage providers can no longer fulfil societal demands, particularly the need to respond to an incident in a limited window of opportunity. Falling revenues render the provision of emergency salvage services uneconomic. Specialist skills are required to manage the risk presented by offshore towage, any degradation of these skills by a gap in provision could present serious consequences for future salvage operations.

State owned tugs are always on standby and ready to steam to an incident within 30 minutes. Any arrangements with the private sector to provide emergency response are unlikely to be able to rely on such quick response times.

Without specifically requiring the provision of ETVs, or laying down operational service standards to be met, both the IMO and the EU oblige member states to facilitate places of refuge for disabled ships and, with that, to have in place a suitable salvage service to meet their needs (i.e. and ETV) yet some countries seem to think otherwise.

**KIMO urges the European Commission and Member States to introduce legislation to ensure that:**

- 1) Emergency Towing Vessel provision is a requirement for each member state with a coastline.**
- 2) That the Emergency Towing Vessels will be dedicated ocean going tugs equipped for saving life, counter pollution and fire fighting activities.**
- 3) That the vessel will be able to aid any type vessel that is reasonably expected to use its waters.**
- 4) To ensure that the Emergency Towing Tugs are stationed at appropriate intervals to ensure adequate response times**

**5) That the vessels will always be on thirty minutes standby.**

**KIMO members:**

**Agree to submit this Resolution to all National Governments, the European Commission and other relevant organisations.**

\*This Resolution was agreed unanimously by Delegates at the 21st KIMO International Annual General Meeting in Aberdeen, United Kingdom on October 9th, 2011 and became KIMO policy upon that date.