

БЪЛГАРСКА АСОЦИАЦИЯ НА СОБСТВЕНИЦИТЕ НА ВЛЕКАЧИ

BULGARIAN ASSOCIATION OF TUG OWNERS

POSITION OF THE BULGARIAN ASSOCIATION OF TUG OWNERS ON THE ROUND TABLE ORGANISED BY BULSAR AND ON THE MEMORANDUM ADOPTED DURING THIS ROUND TABLE

BATO takes note of the Round Table organized by BULSAR on 22 and 23 March 2012 and of the Memorandum adopted during this Round Table.

BATO recognises the important role of BULSAR in the field of humanitarian search and rescue (SAR). Therefore BATO hopes for closer cooperation and coordination between BULSAR and BATO. As a proof of this good will BATO invites BULSAR volunteers on its members tugboats for joint participation in Breeze 2012 drill.

BATO supports the position of BULSAR that it has to have at its disposal adequate technical means for SAR activities.

BATO supports the necessity of a unified coordination centre for the SAR and salvage activities. Considering the operational efficiency it would be appropriate to define two regions for SAR and salvage (SARS) – North and South, delimitation line passing at the level of Cap Emine. Each of the regions should have its own unified coordination centre. How these centres shall be institutionalised is a subject of Government policy.

BATO is also of the position that:

- An open and constructive dialogue between all interested parties is needed on search, rescue and salvage (SAR and Salvage) issues.
- It is impermissible to mix-up the volunteer SAR activities with those on salvage. These two types of activities, although often closely interconnected, are different in substance and are based on different principles. In this regard the Salvage Convention of 1989, signed and ratified by Bulgaria, should be borne in mind.
- With regard to the salvage, including marine pollution abatement, the good European public-private partnership practices should be applied as they have proven cost and operational effectiveness.
- The state has regulatory, coordinating and controlling functions with regard to SAR and salvage. The responsibility of the state with regard to SAR and salvage should not be misinterpreted with ownership of the salvage means and with the operational activities done on volunteer or commercial basis. The good European practices should be taken into account on this issues as well.
- Performing salvage with equipment bought and/or supported through the state budget will lead to unnecessary increase of government expenses and bears considerable risk of market distortion breaching the basic principles of the European Union.

Members of BATO are all towage companies operating in the Bulgarian Black Sea ports. Its members have over 40 tugboats operating in the Bulgarian ports, including specially equipped tugs for salvage and firefighting.

Members of BATO are in the management of the International Salvage Union (ISU) and BATO is affiliated member of the European Tugowners Association (ETA).

BATO maintains 24-hours emergency telephone number in case of marine incidents.