

Good drill for crisis situations

By S. ARULLDAS

north@thestar.com.my

A FORKLIFT driver was unloading three drums of hazardous material for chemical cargoes at the Bagan Dalam Deep Water Wharf in Butterworth. Then, disaster struck. While moving the load, **the forklift hit a corner and the drums fell on the ground.**

The impact caused the **drums to leak** and **more than 40 litres of ethyl succinyl chloride liquified flammable gas evaporated**, causing the driver to nearly suffocate to death.



Two workers who went to help him suffered the same fate. The clerk at the go-down alerted the Penang Port Sdn Bhd (PPSB) fire station, occupational safety and health and environment team and the port police for help.

The above was the scenario for the PPSB's Fire and Rescue Unit fire drill at the wharf yesterday.

Figure 1: Hazardous situation: The Fire and Rescue Department's Hazmat team rushing to the scene during the chemical spill exercise at the wharf.



Figure 2: Quick response: A 'victim' is rinsed and cleansed of dangerous chemicals during the disaster simulation at the wharf.

More than 80 workers from the Penang Port Commission, Fire and Rescue Department, Hazardous Material team (Hazmat), Civil Defence Department and the Department of Environment took part in the event.

PPSB acting fire officer Mohd Azwadi Mohd Noor said the **90-minute exercise** was successful and helped the workers to **tackle such emergencies better and faster**. He said that the quick response shown by other government agencies during the drill was very encouraging.

members from the HAZMAT team from Prai, using a tanker and water tender from Butterworth fire station, joined the exercise.

Fire Drill



A fire drill is a method of practicing the evacuation of a building for a fire or other emergency. Generally, the emergency system (usually an alarm) is activated and the building is evacuated as though a real fire had occurred. Usually, the time it takes to evacuate is measured to ensure that it occurs within a reasonable length of time.

HAZMAT (Hazardous Materials) Team

HAZMAT Team is established on 29th October 1992 with concurrence of the Cabinet as consequence of fireworks factory Bright Sparklers explosion tragedy at Sungai Buloh, Selangor in 1991.

The role of HAZMAT Team is to deal with hazardous materials incidents that could threaten lives and destroy the environment. About 2,000 officers were given special training on "Hazmat Incident Command System" to complement the knowledge of the procedures dealing with hazardous materials. Terengganu is a "Pusat Kecemerlangan Unit HAZMAT" in Fire and Rescue Department.



Prepared by,
Amy Cheam Boon Shi
QA/QOSHC Engineer

Checked by,
Mohd Azam Mujaini
QA Executive II