

What we can learn from firefighting at sea for our DevOps organizations and teams.

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Fire Fire Fire ...

Autumn 1992

08:30PM, somewhere at the North
Atlantic



Meanwhile



Let's attack...



1992



2023

What happened back then? Why were we able to deal with these situations? Can we learn from this?



Fire preventing ...

- **Scheduled maintenance for all equipment.**
- **Boy scout rule, clean up debris**
- **Risks are solved immediately**



- **Make technical debt a priority.**
- **Know your system and potential risks.**
- **Peer reviews as your first line of defence.**

Train

- Frequent fire drills on board.
- Basic training in a simulated environment.
- Real life Chaos Monkeys (FOST)



- Practice in prod(like) with multiple teams.
- Basic training in a sandbox environment.
- Have the ~~guts~~ trust to go Chaos Monkey.

No trust? Crossing fingers might help but training and learning would be better.

The right people ...

- **Getting to know the ship is top priority**
- **Everybody could do attack 1 or 2**
- **Specialists could do attack 3 and Halon**



- **Every team member has basic knowledge.**
- **The whole team can work with the tools.**
- **Majority of the incidents are solved by the team, specialists are always available.**

Trust

- **It's my life, so I must trust you.**
- **Trust goes two ways.**
- **Following orders (almost) blind
(sometimes literally)**



- **Build a team.**
- **Spend time on helping and learning.**
- **In time of emergency, we need leadership.**

Leadership ...

- Ultra short and clear line of command.
- Lead with intent.
- Attack crews make their own decisions.



- Be clear on purpose, method and endstate.
- Decentralized decision making if possible!
- Trust the teams!

The right tools ...

- **Specialized tools for different environments.**
- **Know how to use the tools.**
- **Access to all rooms and spaces.**



- **Have the right tools for logging, monitoring.**
- **Know how to use them.**
- **Tested Identity & Access Management.**

Monitoring ...

- Numerous detectors.
- 24/7 real time monitoring.
- Every alarm is treated as serious.
- Scenarios are there.



- Measure and be sure the measurements count!
- Think about 24/7
- You can't ignore red.
- On intervals (re)Think of scenarios.

Wrap up ...

- **Incidents will happen, so better be ready for it.**
- **Finger crossing is not a solution, train!**
- **Invest in your people!**
- **Invest in your tools!**
- **Trust**



Thank you!



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Questions, remarks or just curious?

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