Report by South African Weather Service for ETMAES-I

Background

South Africa is responsible for issuing service for METAREA VII (see attached map). In addition to providing the High Seas Forecasts in this area, the SAWS provide Coastal Bulletins for **Namibian** and **Mozambican** waters. **Météo France**, through its regional office on La Réunion, provides all the marine forecasts in the east of the region and also provides the tropical cyclone forecast products for METAREA VII throughout the season. Although the main activity is the marine forecasting, it is also involved in providing analyses of other parameters such as sea ice and the preparation of hindcasts.

All forecasts are collated in Pretoria and then sent to Telkom Maritime in Cape Town and other coastal radio stations. All marine forecasts are also posted on the SAWS webpage and also made available through a fax-on-demand system. Six-hourly sea level pressure analyses are also made available through these channels. The SAWS also provides warnings of possible **abnormal wave events** in its coastal bulletins.

Present Scenario

The South African Weather Service's (SAWS) Marine Unit, only acts as a support base during a Marine Accident Emergency. The South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) is the national body which has been given the responsibility to coordinate and administer safety and security at sea and prevent pollution by ships. They also perform the investigations for accidents, un-seaworthy ships and hazardous cargoes. The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) also offers support during the event of emergency sea accidents by running the hydrodynamic model.

Thus SAWS's support is limited to the provision of the following meteorological elements:

- wind speed and direction;
- wea, swell (direction and height);
- wind waves (direction and height);
- visibility;
- general summary of the synoptic conditions.

Activity chain events during the sea emergency accidents: **SAMSA↔CSIR↔SAWS**

Latest incident

The bulk carrier MV '*Alexandros T*' left her loading port of Punta da Madeira on 13 April 2006 with a full cargo of iron ore bound for China. The *Alexandros T* sank late on 3 May at roughly 38S 30E.

The SAWS offered the hindcast support as well as the summary of the synoptic conditions to the Port Authorities and the SAMSA for the use in coordination of the accident investigation.

Difficulties in implementation of the System

Currently, the main difficulty is that SAWS is only able to act as the support base during marine incidents, whereas only SAMSA has been given the authority to coordinate and investigate the incidents.

Another difficulty is that at the immediate time, SAWS has limited human capacity and resources (i.e., at the moment, only four personnel are running the marine forecasting unit.

Additionally, lack of modeling support serves as a hindering factor.