



ISCO NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of the International Spill Response Community

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ISCO & THE ISCO NEWSLETTER

The ISCO Newsletter is published weekly by the International Spill Control Organisation, a not-for-profit organisation supported by members in 45 countries. ISCO has Consultative Status at IMO, Observer Status at IOPC Funds and is dedicated to raising worldwide preparedness and co-operation in response to oil and chemical spills, promoting technical development and professional competency, and to providing a focus for making the knowledge and experience of spill control professionals available to IMO, UNEP, EC and other organisations.

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The Executive Committee is assisted by the non-executive ISCO Council composed of the following national representatives – **Mr John Wardrop** (Australia), **Mr Namig Gandilov** (Azerbaijan), **Mr John Cantlie** (Brazil), **Dr Merv Fingas** (Canada), **Captain Davy T. S. Lau** (China, Hong Kong), **Mr Li Guobin** (China, Mainland), **Mr Darko Domovic** (Croatia), **Eng. Ashraf Sabet** (Egypt), **Mr Torbjorn Hedrenius** (Estonia), **Mr Pauli Einarsson** (Faroe Islands), **Prof. Harilaos Psarafitis** (Greece), **Captain D. C. Sekhar** (India), **Mr Dan Arbel** (Israel), **Mr Sanjay Gandhi** (Kenya), **Mr Joe Braun** (Luxembourg), **Chief Kola Agboke** (Nigeria), **Mr Jan Allers** (Norway), **Capt. Chris Richards** (Singapore), **Mr Anton Moldan** (South Africa), **Dr Ali Saeed Al Ameri** (UAE), **Mr Kevin Miller** (UK) and **Dr Manik Sardessai** (USA).

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International news

INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON GROUP V OILS

Press release and additional information on page 8.

DESTRUCTION OF SYRIAN CHEMICAL WEAPONS

January 3 - U.S. Ship Readied for Chemical Weapons Mission in Mediterranean

The U.S.-owned cargo ship with the capability to destroy the nastiest of Syria's chemical weapons will depart for the Mediterranean in about two weeks, officials said on Thursday as shipyard workers readied the vessel for new sea trials. *The Maritime Executive* [Read more](#)

January 3 - Nordic Convoy Heads for Syria on Delayed Chemical Weapons Mission

Four Norwegian and Danish vessels, which are due to ship hundreds of tons of deadly chemicals out of Syria, headed for international waters off the Syrian coast on Friday, a Norwegian military spokesman said. *The Maritime Executive* [Read more](#)

January 9 - Germany agrees to help destroy Syria's chemical weapons

Germany is joining international efforts to destroy Syria's stockpile of chemical weapons, the foreign and defence ministries have announced. *BBC News* [Read more](#)

January 12 - How Syria's chemical weapons are being destroyed.

Seven countries are directly contributing to the process of decommissioning Syria's chemical weapons stock and a total of 14 are providing funding.

[Note from Editor: An excellent article in *The Telegraph* includes details of all contributing countries, regional map and information on the destruction process] [Read more](#)

Incident reports

USA: PRESIDENT OBAMA DECLARES CHEMICAL SPILL EMERGENCY IN WEST VIRGINIA

January 9 - Chemical spill contaminates water supply in W.Va.

At least 100,000 customers in nine West Virginia counties were told not to drink, bathe, cook or wash clothes using their tap water because of a chemical spill into the Elk River in Charleston, with Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin declaring a state of emergency Thursday for all those areas. *CBS News* [Read more](#)

January 11 - Chemical levels in West Virginia water drop, but still no end in sight to ban

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Incident reports (continued)

The level of odorous chemical in West Virginians' water dropped Friday, but not enough for authorities to lift a warning to avoid drinking, cooking or bathing with it or to give a clear idea as to when things will change. *CNN News* [Read more](#) [Thanks to Don Johnston of ISCO Industry Partner, DG & Hazmat Group]

January 10 - West Virginia Chemical Spill Emergency Declared

"The President today declared an emergency exists in the State of West Virginia and ordered federal aid to supplement state and local response efforts," said an administration statement on Friday morning. The state's governor has declared a state of emergency in nine counties following the industrial leak, leading to queues for bottled water.

The spill of 4-Methylcyclohexane Methanol, a chemical used in the coal industry, into the Elk River happened above a water treatment plant in Charleston - the largest in West Virginia - and affects 100,000 homes and businesses. *Sky News* [Read more](#) [Thanks to Don Johnston of ISCO Industry Partner, DG & Hazmat Group]

USA: OIL SPILL INTO ESCAMBIA RIVER NEAR CENTURY; CLEANUP UNDERWAY

January 9 - According to the Florida Department of Environmental Management, up to 126 gallons of crude oil overflowed from a holding pit at the facility. The oil drained into a nearby creek that flows into the Escambia River near Century. The incident was reported to Santa Rosa County 911 just after 5:00 a.m. and reported to the DEP a short time later. *NorthEscambia.com* [Read more](#)

SOUTH AFRICA: MINE SPILL CAUSES 'EXTENSIVE POLLUTION' IN KRUGER PARK RIVER

January 7 - South African authorities revealed Tuesday that a phosphate mine spillage has caused "extensive pollution" to a river in the country's famed Kruger National Park. Park officials said "highly acidic water" from a dam at the Bosveld phosphate mine spilled into a tributary of the Olifants River, killing thousands of fish. *Terra Daily* [Read more](#)

Incident reports (continued)

NETHERLANDS: DIESEL SPILL IN ARNHEM PORT

December 27 - Rijkswaterstaat, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment, has been busy all day cleaning up an oil spill in the Nieuwe Haven in Arnhem. By a cause, yet unknown, about 2,650 gallons of diesel fuel spilled into the water. *NL Times* [Read more](#)

MOROCCO BEGINS EMPTYING BEACHED OIL TANKER



January 1 - Morocco has launched an operation to empty an oil tanker that ran aground during a storm near the southern port of Tan Tan with 5,000 tonnes of fuel on board, an official said.

The fuel was being pumped into trucks, with the operation to last between five and seven days depending on the weather, M'Hammed Atmani, police chief at the national ports agency, was quoted as saying by the official MAP news agency late on Tuesday.

The ship was travelling from the Canary Islands when it ran aground last week, with heavy waves dragging it towards a rocky area, sparking fears of an oil slick on Morocco's Atlantic coast. *Terra Daily* [Read more](#)

CANADA: HIBERNIA PLATFORM OIL LEAK CURBS PRODUCTION

January 4 - An oil leak at the site of the Hibernia offshore platform on the Grand Banks off the coast of Newfoundland has resulted in a significant downturn in oil production. Workers reported a small leak on Dec. 18. Hibernia management company officials said it happened in a valve that is part of the rig's offloading system. Only 10 litres of crude oil spilled at the time, and no oil sheens were spotted on the water at that time. *CBC News* [Read more](#) [Thanks to Gerald Graham of World Ocean Consulting]

Incident reports (continued)

CANADA: CN TRAIN CARRYING CRUDE OIL DERAILED, ON FIRE NEAR PLASTER ROCK

January 8 - A CN freight train carrying dangerous goods has derailed and caught fire in northwest New Brunswick, not far from the U.S. border.

Jim Feeny, director of public and government affairs for CN Rail, said 16 cars are believed to have derailed, including four carrying propane and four carrying crude oil.

The train derailment happened just after 7 p.m. AT about five kilometres outside of Plaster Rock in Wapske, N.B. Feeny said the train was coming from central Canada and heading to Moncton. *CBC News* [Read more](#) [Thanks to Don Johnston of ISCO Industry Partner, DG & Hazmat Group]

CHINA: "11.22" EXPLOSION INCIDENT INVESTIGATION IN FULL SWING AND SINOPEC WILL FACE POTENTIAL COMPENSATION AND PUNITIVE GOVERNMENT PUNISHMENT FOR THE INCIDENT

According to the latest investigation, SINOPEC will face the potential compensation and punitive government punishment as a result of "11.22" pipeline explosion incident in Qingdao.

Preliminary investigation showed that "11.22" pipeline explosion incident is the largest incident in china's petrochemical industry following the CNPC oil well blowout incident in Chongqing on 23th December 2003 which caused 243 people's death, and is also the most severe incident involved with the highest death toll in the history of SINOPEC.

It is reported that although the pipelines layout project by SINOPEC just went ahead of the municipal pipeline and its surrounding residential areas construction projects, SINOPEC still held the responsibility for the safe operation of oil pipelines.

As far as environmental impact is concerned, according to the report this accident not only brought huge losses on the lives of the working staff and residents of surrounding communities, but also severely polluted the environment. Pipeline burst led to a large scale oil spill and polluted the surrounding waters with about 3,000 square meters of sea surface covered by oil. The time when maritime department received report of the incident occurred four hours after the leakage, and therefore the best time to clean up was missed. Some substances contained in crude oil, such as asphalt will sink to the bottom, difficult to find and clean up and the slow degradation of these toxic and harmful substances may have a long-term effects on nearshore marine ecology and aquaculture. [Thanks to Michael Frank of Sunic Ocean Marine Technology and Service Co. Ltd. <http://www.sunic-ocean.com/>]

FIJI: OIL SPILL NEAR NASINU



Photo: Kinoya Village headman Kaminieli Volau at the oil spill in their village in Nasinu yesterday. Picture: ELIKI NUKUTABU

January 8 - Villagers of Kinoya in Nasinu have expressed concern over a recent oil spill in the sea beside their village.

Village headman Kaminieli Volau claimed the spill had started two weeks ago.

"This is not the first time such a spill has happened and we fear for the lives of our children as well as our next generation," he said. "If this continues, they might not be able to enjoy and get a chance to eat fresh seafood from our fishing ground in the future. This has been our source of food for many years and we rely on it for our daily living." *The Fiji Times* [Read more](#)

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO: FOLLOW-UP TO REPORTS IN ISCO NEWS ISSUE OF 4 JANUARY

January 2 - Oil spill spreading north, says Aboud

The Gulf of Paria will become a toxic dead zone if thick crude is not vacuumed from the ocean floor before Petrotrin begins its underwater seismic surveys, president of Fishermen and Friends of the Sea Gary Aboud warned yesterday. Aboud made the claim as he accused Petrotrin of trying to cover up the magnitude of the massive oil spill which has wreaked havoc on plant, human and marine life along the south-western peninsula since December 21.

The 11 oil spills, some of which Petrotrin officials suspect are acts of sabotage, have started spreading to the Oropouche mangroves, Aboud said yesterday. He explained that fishermen as far as Cocorite have recently been picking up oil on their fishing spoons. *Guardian Media* [Read more](#)

January 6 - Wildlife response falls short



ANIMAL SUFFERING: Oiled bird. – Photo courtesy Marc De Verteuil /Papa Bois Conservation

Reports indicate that the oil spill is contained. However, the south-western peninsula will continue to feel the effects as cleanup efforts, though scaled down, are ongoing. It is a disaster that continues to impact the health of people, animals (domestic and wild) and the environment.

This spill activated the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan (NOSCP) to Tier 3. NOSCP Section 5 deals with a programme to address wildlife impacted by oil. Unfortunately, recent events have demonstrated that in practice, the response is inadequate. It highlights the urgent need for a comprehensive national approach to oiled wildlife that meets international standards and applies irrespective of the company that spills.

In a recent workshop on oiled wildlife hosted by bpTT participants learnt from international experts, Sea Alarm Foundation and Tri State Bird Rescue and Research, that oiled wildlife is an extremely complex challenge. It involves more than searching the area, picking animals up from the oil, washing them with a cleaning agent and releasing them or sending them off to a rehab centre. *Trinidad Express Newspaper* [Read more](#)

Other news reports from around the world

CHINA: SHIP POLLUTION EMERGENCY JOINT DEFENSE ORGANIZATION ESTABLISHED IN JINGTANG PORT

On 3th December 2013, Ship Pollution Emergency Joint Defense Organization was established in Jingtang port of Tangshan. Buttressed by the advantage that dock owners are comparative concentrated within Jingtang Port's jurisdiction area, this cooperative organization between enterprises is the first Ship Pollution Emergency Joint Defense Organization in Hebei province established under the mode of "joint- investment, joint defense buildup and Centralized management"with the principle of "resource sharing, cost saving, coordinated action and efficiency improvement".

Liu Lijun, the director of the Maritime Safety Administration in Tangshan introduced that: as a rising number of ships sailing in and out of Jingtang port of Tangshan, and Jingtang port's handling capacity skyrocketing increase, port pollution especially potential risk for ship-induced pollution has been on rising, which creates a sharp contrast with the weak ship pollution emergency capabilities of the port. The establishment of Ship Pollution Emergency Joint Defense Organization, on one hand can be able to fully implement the principle of "causer of pollution responsible for prevention" to prevent marine pollution, on the other hand, can vigorously strengthen the cooperation between enterprises to achieve the goal of resources optimization and integration to keep port owners from making duplicate investments and wasting funds.

Under the instruction of Tangshan Maritime Safety Administration, the establishment of the organization covering the entire area of port will help each member to keep their jurisdiction area maximum clean with minimum cost to achieve the result of the most optimized ship pollution emergency treatment. President of Tangshan Port Group Co., Ltd as the initiator of the organization said that members will stick to the principle of "high starting point, high quality and quick speed" and strive to quicken the pace of port pollution prevention capacity build-up to make the project completed by the end of June 2014. [Thanks to Michael Frank of Sunic Ocean Marine Technology and Service Co. Ltd. <http://www.sunic-ocean.com/>]

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Other news reports from around the world (continued)

aquaculture. [Thanks to Michael Frank of Sunic Ocean Marine Technology and Service Co. Ltd. <http://www.sunic-ocean.com/>]

JAPAN: FUKUSHIMA GHOST TOWNS STRUGGLE TO RECOVER AMID HIGH RADIATION LEVELS



Photo: Homes, shops and streets are deserted in the town of Namie, which lies six miles from the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant. Photograph: Damir Sagolj/Reuters

January 1 - Nearly three years after a major earthquake, tsunami and nuclear radiation leak devastated coastal and inland areas of Japan's Fukushima prefecture, 175 miles north-east of Tokyo, Namie has become a silent town of ghosts and absent lives.

Namie's 21,000 residents remain evacuated because of continuing high radiation levels, the product of the March 2011 disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power station, six miles to the south. Homes, shops and streets are deserted except for the occasional police patrol or checkpoint. *The Guardian* [Read more](#)

LIBYA: PM WARNS MAY SINK OIL TANKERS NEARING EAST PORTS

January 8 - Libya may sink tankers trying to load at eastern ports seized by armed protesters in an escalating confrontation over control of oil exports, Prime Minister Ali Zeidan said on Wednesday.

His warning came after Libya's navy fired shots at the weekend to ward off a tanker that the state-run National Oil Corp. (NOC) said tried to load at one port that has been out of government control for six months. *The Maritime Executive* [Read more](#)

CANADA: LATEST NEWS

December 23 - The Government of Canada announces that Zalinski Pollution Recovery Operation Successfully Wraps-Up

The Honourable Gail Shea, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, announced the successful completion of the Zalinski Pollution Recovery Operation in Grenville Channel—roughly 100km from Prince Rupert on the North Coast of British Columbia. The two-month operation safely extracted approximately 44,000L of heavy Bunker C oil and 319,000L of oily water from the wreck.

"This significant achievement is another example of our Government's commitment towards a clean environment and making sure that our agencies have the resources they need to ensure environment safety," said Minister Shea. "This successful operation was an important experience building exercise for the Canadian Coast Guard. We thank the B.C. Ministry of Environment, the Gitga'at First Nation and the Gitxaala First Nation for their important support and cooperation." *Fisheries & Oceans Canada* [Read more](#)
[Thanks to Gerald Graham of World Ocean Consulting]

January 6 - Piloting oil tankers in our waters

CBC re-examines some of the details of Kinder-Morgans's tanker proposals with the head of the government's Pacific Pilotage Authority. [Listen to audio recording](#) [Thanks to Gerald Graham of World Ocean Consulting]

January 7 - Oilsands environmental agency gets temporary reprieve

In an unexpected move, some oil companies put up enough cash in late December to temporarily avert the closure of a key environmental agency working on new policies to clean up the oilsands. On Jan. 1, the 12-year-old agency in Fort McMurray faced office closure, layoffs and terminating contracts with scientists working on a range of issues from speeding up land reclamation in the oilsands mines to improving water quality. But then companies injected \$400,000 that will keep the lights on for a couple of months in the offices of Cumulative Environmental Management Association, executive director Glen Semenchuck.

The project was managed using the Incident Command System (ICS) model, which saw representatives from the Canadian Coast Guard, the B.C. Ministry of Environment, the Gitga'at First Nation, and the Gitxaala First Nation collaborate within a Unified Command at Prince Rupert to make key decisions as the operation proceeded. *Edmonton Journal* [Read more](#)

CANADA: LATEST NEWS (Continued)

January 6 - Jack Knox: Experience main benefit in cleanup of sunken ship



Doesn't seem like much for \$30 million, but then governments could argue scooping the goop was just one reason to tackle the 67-year-old shipwreck. The real benefit of the two-month clean-up, which concluded just before Christmas, was in improving disaster-response capabilities on the B.C. coast — which, you might have noticed, is a ticklish issue as we wrestle with the Northern Gateway proposal to ship Alberta bitumen out of Kitimat by tanker. The Zalinski was a U.S. army transport ship that hit the rocks in 1946 while en route from Seattle to Alaska. It sank in Grenville Channel, 100 kilometres south of Prince Rupert, coming to rest upside down on a shelf 40 metres down.

Led by the Canadian Coast Guard, it was a massive, multi-agency effort: Transport Canada, Health Canada, Fisheries and Oceans, B.C. Parks, the federal and provincial environment ministries, First Nations, three big contractors — Western Canadian Marine Response, Global Diving, Dutch salvage specialists Mammoet — and a bunch of smaller ones. *The Times Colonist* [Read more](#) [Thanks to Gerald Graham of World Ocean Consulting]

January 12 - Federal government quietly adopts new rail-safety rules

Picture: The downtown core in Lac-Mégantic, Que., lays in ruins as firefighters continue to water smoldering rubble after a train derailed ignited tanker cars carrying crude oil in July. Transport Canada has approved new safety rules drafted by the railway industry just as an emergency directive issued in the wake of the Lac-Mégantic disaster was set to expire. Ryan Remiorz / THE CANADIAN PRESS



Transport Canada quietly approved new safety rules drafted by the railway industry on Boxing Day just as an emergency directive issued in the wake of last summer's [Lac-Mégantic disaster](#) was set to expire.

The federal department also reissued a new emergency directive on Jan. 1, again without public notification, covering those rail companies that are not part of the [Railway Association of Canada](#). Transport Minister Lisa Raitt issued the emergency directive last July to address some of the most glaring safety deficiencies exposed by the derailment and explosion of an oil-laden train that [claimed 47 lives in Lac-Mégantic, Que.](#) *The Star* [Read more](#)

USA: LATEST NEWS

January 2 - U.S. issues warning over Bakken-sourced oil

Washington has issued a warning that crude oil originating from the Bakken region is more explosive than traditional oil, marking the first time since the Lac-Mégantic rail disaster that the U.S. government has acknowledged the dangers of shipping such volatile crude on trains.

The U.S. Department of Transportation said it is conducting tests on oil from the Bakken region, which straddles North Dakota and parts of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and is preparing to make changes to the way the rail and oil industries operate. In particular, the regulator will require crude producers and shippers to “degasify” risky oil before shipping it, which would mean stripping out highly combustible gases such as hydrogen sulfide, before shipping.

The announcement, made by the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) in Washington, comes as state

USA: LATEST NEWS (Continued)

officials in North Dakota, concerned about the negative press the Bakken industry was getting, were preparing to commission a study that would show that transporting crude by rail was safe. *The Globe and Mail* [Read more](#)

January 9 - EPA looks at next steps in Michigan oil spill cleanup

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says it's looking at enforcement options after Enbridge Inc. as expected missed a deadline to finish dredging work as part of cleanup of a 2010 Michigan oil spill.

The EPA last year denied the Calgary, Alberta-based company's request for a 10-month extension of its deadline from Dec. 31 for dredging sections of the Kalamazoo River. The spill sent about 843,000 gallons of crude into the river and a tributary creek.

WOOD-TV reports (<http://bit.ly/1dhRm8P>) the EPA says Enbridge finished operations at two areas it was ordered to dredge, but not a third. *Fox 19* [Read more](#)

BP / MACONDO NEWS

January 3 - Louisiana attorney general accuses federal judge of ignoring state's claims over BP oil spill

Louisiana Attorney General James "Buddy" Caldwell has accused a federal judge of ignoring the state's claims over BP's 2010 Gulf oil spill and asked an appeals court to intervene.

In a court filing this week, Caldwell's office asked the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to transfer its spill-related claims from U.S. District Judge Carl Barbier to a different judge in the Eastern District of Louisiana. *TribTown.com* [Read more](#)

January 7 - BP, claiming fraud, wants to stop oil-spill payments

The Deepwater Horizon settlement agreement is in turmoil, with BP attempting to stop the payments and saying money shouldn't have gone to an adult escort service, a global nuclear consultant and others that haven't proved the monster 2010 oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico cost them business. *SunHerald.com* [Read more](#)

January 11 - BP appeal against "fictitious" Gulf spill compensation claims fails

"In support of this allegation, BP presents us with a series of economists' declarations that had not been provided to the district court when the class [settlement] was certified."

The decision is a major blow to BP, which spent \$14bn to cap and clean up the Deepwater Horizon well following an explosion in July 2010 that resulted in five million gallons of crude oil spilling into the Gulf of Mexico. It has already paid out more than \$11bn to businesses and individuals and has earmarked more than \$17bn for further compensation claims and fines.

The uncapped total bill could reach \$90bn, the company has admitted. *BayouBuzz.com* [Read more](#)

People in the news

SAMINA MAHMOOD APPOINTED MANAGER FOR MARINE RESPONSE ALLIANCE

Samina Mahmood Appointed Manager for Marine Response Alliance

January 2 – Samina Mahmood, former commercial manager for [TITAN Salvage](#), has been appointed manager for [Marine Response Alliance](#), an association of the top U.S. emergency responders providing OPA 90 Salvage Marine Firefighting (SMFF).

Mahmood will lead the MRA administrative team and work closely with the alliance's emergency response center and the U.S.-based emergency response and salvage team.

Prior to joining TITAN and the MRA, Mahmood worked for [Crowley Maritime Corp.](#), TITAN's parent company, servicing oil and gas projects around the world. Recently she accepted on behalf of TITAN and MRA the Defense Logistics Agency's "Hurricane Sandy Award" at the Business Alliance Awards in Virginia, for the team's "unprecedented support" following the storm that devastated much of the Northeastern coast in late October 2012.

MRA, founded in 1994, combines experts in all facets of emergency response with salvage, firefighting and lightering equipment in all Captain of the Port Zones. Alliance members include TITAN, Crowley, Marine Pollution Control and McAllister Towing & Transportation. To learn more about MRA, please visit www.marineresponsealliance.com

PRESS RELEASE: INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON GROUP V OILS**Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority Building – Detroit, Michigan USA September 9 and 10, 2014**

January 7 - The International Spill Control Organization (ISCO), which celebrates its 30th anniversary this year, is pleased to announce an International Forum on Group V oils (sinking and submerged oils) to be held on September 9-10, 2014, at the Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority Building. Sinking oils (Group V and Class C/D), including oil sands, Dilbit and bitumens, are being increasingly utilized and transported around the world, increasing the risks of spills.

This forum will present expert analysis of the fates and behaviors of these oils when released, and strategies, tactics and specialized equipment associated with their clean up. Confirmed forum participants include members of the oil and gas industry, the shipping community (OSG Shipping, Inc.), oil spill responders and the regulatory community (including the U.S.C.G. and N.O.A.A.). In addition to speakers presentations and panel discussions, a table-top exhibition hall will be included as part of the event.

For More Information Contact:

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Bill Hazel - Marine Pollution Control bhazel@marinepollutioncontrol.com – (313) 849-2681 (office)

Additional Information**ISCO's International Forum on Group V Oils – Update**

January 11 - The Forum's scope and depth continues to positively develop; we anticipate a comprehensive, dynamic and well-balanced two-day agenda for information exchange on this vital topic. The list of participating parties is growing and includes experts from the oil industry, the oil shipping and transport industry, academia, and the regulatory and spill response communities. Those expressing their commitments for participation, as speakers and/or attendees, now include:

- U.S. Coast Guard (Headquarters, D9 and various Sectors)
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)
- National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA)
- Dr. Merv Fingus, Spill Science, Edmonton, Alberta (ret. Environment Canada)
- OSG Ship Management, Inc., Tampa, Florida, USA

In addition to the speaker presentations and panel discussions, the opportunity for display tables is planned.

ADDITIONAL information AND specific details of the program, including attendance fees and hotel/travel arrangements, will be announced in the near future.

Your inquiries on all aspects of the Forum can be directed to:

- David Usher, ISCO – dusher@marinepollutioncontrol.com - (313) 849-2333 (office)
- John McMurtrie, ISCO – john.mcmurtrie@spillcontrol.org +44 1467 632282
- William Hazel, Marine Pollution Control – bhazel@marinepollutioncontrol.com

Science and technology**SOAKING UP CRUDE OIL SPILLS WITH POLYMER MESH MAGNETIC NANOPARTICLES**

January 9 - Here's how a new plastics application might assist with the ongoing cleanup: researchers at Texas A&M University have developed a non-toxic sequestering agent-iron oxide nanoparticles coated in a polymer mesh that can hold up to 10 times their weight in crude oil – a material that can safely soak up leftover oil, from both the Deepwater Horizon spill and elsewhere, that isn't captured using conventional mechanical means.

As reported in the ACS Nano scientific journal, the nanoparticles consist of an iron oxide core surrounded by a shell of polymeric material – a simple poly(acrylic acid)-block-polystyrene that possesses both hydrophilic (poly(acrylic acid)) and hydrophobic (polystyrene) groups. This amphiphilic copolymer interacts with both the aliphatic hydrocarbons and aromatic components present in crude oil. Cross-linking the polymer makes the shell more stable in aqueous environments while maintaining the crude oil loading potential.

To simulate an actual oil spill, the Texas A&M team weathered a sample of crude oil to match the conditions of the Deepwater Horizon spill. When the nanoparticles were dropped in the oil-water mixture, they immediately changed color from light tan to black as they soaked up the oil. It gets better: When the nanoparticles were full they floated to the top, making for easy recovery by a conventional magnet, not only from a test vial but also in the ocean. A magnet was held to the side of the vial, nanoparticles collected at the glass, and the water was poured off, leaving the crude oil behind inside of the particles.

Sonication in ethanol releases the oil from the swollen polymer matrix, causing the nanoparticles to return to a light tan. And although spectroscopic changes were observed after washing, the nanoparticles absorbed the same amount of oil during a second trial. In other words, the system is completely reusable. [Read more](#)



In this issue of the ISCO Newsletter we are printing No. 158 in a series of articles contributed by Dr Douglas Cormack.

Dr Douglas Cormack is an Honorary Fellow of ISCO. As the former Chief Scientist at the British Government's Marine Pollution Control Unit and head of the UK's first government agency, the Warren Spring Laboratory, Douglas is a well known and highly respected figure in the spill response community. He is the Chairman and a founder member of the [International Spill Accreditation Association](#)

CHAPTER 158: KNOWLEDGE ONLY INITIATIVES

The R&D programme of the UK's Warren Spring Laboratory into the fate and effects of oil/HNS releases and the responses appropriate to them, produced the knowledge which this Column contrasts with the belief in species-extinction/ecological disaster which, in its failure to acknowledge the natural carbon-cycle, opposes or ignores this knowledge.

Thus, since the 1970s we have known that fully spread layers of oil/HNS are too thin to produce more than a few tens per million in the top metre of the water-column; that these concentrations tend to zero by dilution and biodegradation within the column as a whole without significant toxic effects; that the numbers of heterotrophic bacteria at the base of the ecosystem/food-chain increase when released oils extend their food sources beyond the biodegradation-products which continuously arise from the deaths of more complex organisms within the carbon-cycle which is the ecosystem; that while oil slicks can coat birds and shellfish, the significance of the numbers thus dying is assessable only by comparing them with natural death and birth rates within species; that believers publish no such comparisons; that re-colonisation rates require continual clearance from slipways etc; and that no incident has thus far produced species extinction/ecological-disaster.

Nonetheless, this belief has prevented other coastal states from releasing oils/HNS for R&D purposes, thus preventing their direct acquisition of such knowledge and thus restricting their ability to learn even from their own incidents.

Indeed, this belief paradoxically inhibits the safe-haven cargo/bunker transfer which would prevent further releases from more intensely/extensively coating shorelines and organisms, while preventing dispersants from increasing the natural dispersion/biodegradation which itself does more to prevent such coating than does localised dispersant-treatment or mechanical-recovery of floating layers thin enough to be non-toxic at water column concentrations whether actively dispersed or un-recovered. Again, it prolongs response not only by preventing dispersant use, but also by preventing in situ decanting of co-collected and demulsified water in the processing of recovered emulsions.

Thus, an initiative is being taken to prepare a knowledge-accepting/belief-rejecting contingency plan which, by identifying the physicochemical parameters of oils/HNS which determine whether they float, sink, evaporate, emulsify, disperse or dissolve after release, will give general predictions of the amounts remaining for dispersant treatment, mechanical recovery and/or stranding as functions of time and wind/ tide vectors.

Further to stranding, this contingency plan will identify the shoreline parameters which, in general, determine the adhesion, penetration, dispersion, bioremediation, recovery, downstream-processing, recycling and/or final disposal of released oils/ HNS.

Thus, this contingency plan will be a comprehensive repository of response knowledge available to all who need/want to know, while substitution of incident-specific values for the parameters relating to any substance released and to any shoreline of interaction will produce the incident-specific action/inaction plan for each and every oil/HNS incident thereafter. In addition, record-keeping during implementation of incident-specific plans will facilitate compensation assessments while the contingency plan itself will remain a thus updateable counter to the frequency of staff changes and the infrequency of incidents.

The overall intention of this initiative is to bring this knowledge-accepting/belief/rejecting approach to the attention of IMO for promulgation to member states wishing to benefit from it; to response-contractors wishing to be accredited in its use by the International Spill Accreditation Association (ISAA) and wishing to be thus publicised. Thus, the intention is to commend this initiative to such contractors, to IMO member states, the IOPCF, the P&I Clubs and the general public, as the only cost-effective alternative to the resource-wasting beliefs which have thus far controlled the incident response agenda to the detriment of commercial welfare and compensation-fund conservation.

Thus, the intention is for the science and technology of the contingency and incident-specific planning approach to wrest the environment from belief-consensual pseudoscience.

Indeed, success in this particular overthrow of belief by knowledge will reveal the scope for more such overthrows wherever the knowledge needed for progress in reality is ignored by those who debate belief/counter-belief by reference to partially selected facts/counter-facts merely to adjust belief-consensus to their political advantage despite belief-consensus being definitively unsustainable in reality.

1 The *Rational Trinity: Imagination, Belief and Knowledge*, D.Cormack, Bright Pen 2010 available at www.authorsonline.co.uk

2 *Response to Oil and Chemical Marine Pollution*, D. Cormack, Applied Science Publishers, 1983.

3 *Response to Marine Oil Pollution - Review and Assessment*, Douglas Cormack, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999.

Publications

FOR YOUR INTEREST – LINKS FOR RECENT ISSUES OF PERIODICALS

ASME EED EHS Newsletter	News and commentary on HSE issues from George Holliday	Most recent issue
Bow Wave	Sam Ignarski's Ezine on Marine & Transport Matters	Current issue
Cedre Newsletter	News from Cedre in Brittany, France	December 2013
The Essential Hazmat News	Alliance of Hazardous Materials Professionals	January 6 issue
USA EPA Tech Direct	Remediation of contaminated soil and groundwater	January 1 issue
USA EPA Tech News & Trends	Contaminated site clean-up information	May 2013 issue
Technology Innovation News Survey	From US EPA - Contaminated site decontamination	Nov 16-30 2013 issue
Intertanko Weekly News	International news for the oil tanker community	No 2 2014
CROIERG Enews	Canberra & Regions Oil Industry Emergency Response Group	January 2014 issue
IMO Publishing News	New and forthcoming IMO publications	December 2013
IMO News Magazine	News from the International Maritime Organization	No 4, 2013
Pollution Online Newsletter	News for prevention & control professionals	January 8 issue
EMSA Newsletter	News from the European Maritime Safety Agency	January 2013 issue
JOIFF "The Catalyst"	Int'l Organisation for Industrial Hazard Management	October 2013 issue
Environmental Technology Online	Environmental Monitoring, Testing & Analysis	December 2013 issue
HELCOM Newsletter	Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission	May 2013 issue
OCIMF Newsletter	News from the Oil Companies International Marine Forum	September 2013 issue
IPIECA eNews	Int'l Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Assoc'n	November 8 issue
WMU Newsletter	From the World Maritime University in Malmo, Sweden	December 2013 issue

BAKKEN CRUDE OIL - PRELIMINARY GUIDANCE FOR OPERATION CLASSIFICATION

January 2 - The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) is issuing this safety alert to notify the general public, emergency responders and shippers and carriers that recent derailments and resulting fires indicate that the type of crude oil being transported from the Bakken region may be more flammable than traditional heavy crude oil.

Based upon preliminary inspections conducted after recent rail derailments in North Dakota, Alabama and Lac Megantic, Quebec involving Bakken crude oil, PHMSA is reinforcing the requirement to properly test, characterize, classify, and where appropriate sufficiently degasify hazardous materials prior to and during transportation. This advisory is a follow up to the PHMSA and Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) joint safety advisory published November 20, 2013 [78 FR 69745].

[Download this Safety Alert](#) [Thanks to Scott Binko of US Coast Guard District Nine and Bill Hazel of Marine Pollution Control]

RESOURCES FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE: ENVIRONMENTAL INCIDENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Environmental Incident Technical Assistance Resources. University of California at Berkeley - A compilation of resources focused on chemical and environmental response.

[Note from Editor: This is a useful reference document for all who may have to deal with response to a wide spectrum of chemical incidents]

[Download the Resources Document](#) [Thanks to Gregory T. Banner, Emergency Coordinator, Region I (New England) US Dept. of Health and Human Services]

Events

USA: CHEMICAL SAFETY AND HAZARD INVESTIGATION BOARD PUBLIC MEETING

Sunshine Act Meeting, January 15, 2014, 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. PST, City Council Chambers, Civic Center Campus, 440 Civic Center Plaza, Richmond, CA 94804. Open to the public.

The Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) will convene a public meeting on January 15, 2014, starting at 6:30 p.m. at the City Council Chambers, Civic Center Campus, 440 Civic Center Plaza, Richmond, CA 94804. At the public meeting, the Board will consider and vote on the draft regulatory report of the August 6, 2012, fire at the Chevron refinery that endangered 19 workers and sent more than 15,000 residents to the hospital for medical attention.

At the meeting, CSB staff will present to the Board the results of the second of three reports in the CSB's investigation of this incident. Subject to a vote by the board at the January 15 public meeting, the draft regulatory report would recommend that California "Develop and implement a step-by-step plan to establish a more rigorous safety management regulatory framework for petroleum refineries in the state of California based on the principles of the 'safety case' framework in use in regulatory regimes such as those in the UK, Australia, and Norway." The recommendation urges specific steps to accomplish this, including ensuring that workers are formally involved in the development of a safety case report for each covered facility. The report also urges California to work with industry in gathering refinery safety indicator data to be shared with the public.

Events (continued)

As detailed in the CSB draft report a safety case regime which would require companies to demonstrate to refinery industry regulators – through a written “safety case report” – how major hazards are to be controlled and risks reduced to “as low as reasonably practicable,” or ALARP. The CSB report notes that the safety case is more than a written document; rather, it represents a fundamental change by shifting the responsibility for continuous reductions in major accident risks from regulators to the company. [Read more](#)

Training

JUST IN TIME DISASTER TRAINING VIDEO LIBRARY

A new subject has been added to the Just in Time Disaster Training Video Library - Ammonium Nitrate Response

Now with over 800 disaster mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery training videos the library is the most comprehensive, easy to search, FREE internet based source for training curriculum for today’s emergency responders.

The library can be accessed at the following web site: <http://www.JustInTimeDisasterTraining.org> [Thanks to Chris Floyd of Hazmat 101 Group]

UPCOMING HANDS-ON SPILL RESPONSE TRAINING COURSES AT OHMSETT FACILITY

Ohmsett, in partnership with Texas A&M National Spill Control School (NSCS) announces the 2014 Oil Spill Response Strategies and Tactics Training Schedule: June 10-13, 2014 and August 26-29, 2014 [More info](#)

Correspondence

A LETTER FROM CHRIS BISPHAM OF OIL SPILL RECOVERY EUROPE LTD

Sir - We at Oilspill Recovery Europe Ltd have developed a new concept for simultaneous recovery of marine debris and oil spills, that can be manufactured quickly for comparatively little cost. Our test vessel, the SEASKIP, works even in choppy/wavy waters. Debris and oil are ejected separately from the SEASKIP and can be deposited to barges at sea, or to a shoreline facility (debris to s. lop tanks, etc).

The SEASKIP’s oil recovery performance is both quicker and cleaner than ALL other methods. An integral component of the SEASKIP is a pair of controllable oil/debris GUIDE BOOMS. The SEASKIP innovation is a self propelled, sea-going oilspill skimmer that needs only a three man crew to operate successfully.

We at Oilspill Recovery Europe Ltd need to develop this project further to reach a manufacturing and marketing stage. We would very much appreciate the involvement of interested third parties, for example environmentally-concerned government departments worldwide. Oil companies should also welcome this innovation, not least for financial reasons as positioning SEASKIPs where spills are most likely to occur would save high cost of cleaning oil spills/coastlines etc.

A video of early testing of this technology can be seen on YouTube: <http://www.oilspillrecoveryeurope.com> Please click the link to view our video and feel free to share this link with others. Best regards, Christopher Bispham Contact: cbispham@btinternet.com

Company news

MARINE RESPONSE ALLIANCE RELOCATES TO HOUSTON

January 1 - ISCO Member, Marine Response Alliance (MRA), an association of the top U.S. emergency responders providing OPA 90 Salvage Marine Firefighting (SMFF), has relocated from Pompano, Florida, to Houston to be situated with international salvage partner TITAN Salvage.

Conveniently located near George Bush International airport, the new office boasts a 102,500 square-foot maintenance and warehousing facility with 4.61 acres of outside storage. Built to suit, the facility includes a state-of-the-art Emergency Response Center manned 24/7, the only one of its kind in the United States. This facility will act as MRA’s incident command center as needed during a casualty and be utilized for clients’ pro-active needs such as drills, exercises and training.

Although the office has left Florida, the MRA will keep strategically placed assets and personnel throughout Florida and will continue to have a strong presence in the state through MRA partners Crowley Maritime Corp. and McAllister Towing & Transportation.

MRA, founded in 1994, combines experts in all facets of emergency response with salvage, firefighting and lightering equipment in all Captain of the Port Zones. Alliance members include TITAN, Crowley, Marine Pollution Control and McAllister Towing & Transportation. *The Maritime Executive* [Read more](#)

ISCO MEMBER, CHUKAR WATERJET EXHIBITING DEEPWATER SUBSEA WATERJET SYSTEM AT OTC ASIA

Chukar Waterjet, Inc. and Gurimas Marine & Engineering Sdn Bhd (GME) announced today that Chukar Waterjet's innovative [deepwater subsea water jet](#) technology will be on exhibit at OTC Asia 25-28 March at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre in Malaysia. Look for Chukar Waterjet in the Gurimas Marine and Engineering Stand A631 in Exhibition Hall 6.

Chukar Waterjet is an industry leading manufacturer and applications consultant for subsea ultra-high pressure waterjet equipment for underwater cutting and cleaning operations. The company is represented in Malaysia by Gurimas Marine and Engineering Sdn Bhd (GME).

Chukar's subsea waterjet equipment has numerous applications for deepwater emergency response operations, salvage operations, and rapid de-mobilization operations. It can be used to blast away coatings and marine growth to inspect welds, or as a cutting tool in emergency response and salvage operations. Waterjetting equipment also may be used to provide turbulence in a stream of methanol for hydrate remediation, an application Chukar developed in emergency response to the Gulf oil spill, when the company was asked to rapidly manufacture a system to clear a clogged containment system 1500 meters underwater.

For more information about Chukar Waterjet, visit www.chukarwaterjet.com or call +1 763-497-8749 or e-mail subsea@chukarwaterjet.com For more information about Gurimas Marine and Engineering, visit www.gurimasgroup.com or call +60-03-7727 2811.

CHINA: FUJIAN PETROCHEMICAL INDUSTRIAL GROUP CO., LTD AND XIAMEN MUNICIPALITY JOINTLY LAUNCH PIPELINE SPILL INCIDENT RESCUE EXERCISE

In the afternoon of December 17, Fujian's branch company of Petrochemical Industrial Group, Xiamen Safety Production Committee and the government of Jimei district jointly carried out a pipeline safety production rescue exercise.

After the occurrence of Huangdao's pipeline explosion on 22th November 2013, Fujian Petrochemical Industrial Group Co.,Ltd has gained the lesson from this disastrous accident by developing all-dimensional and comprehensive safety potential check campaign to make proper arrangements, strengthen management and eradicate unsafe concerns. Meanwhile, the company also enhanced the protection measures on exterior pipelines and intensified the propaganda of pipeline protection through active contacts with governments, enterprises and individuals around pipeline to stipulate protective plans and measures to ensure the safety of pipelines.

Aimed at enhancing pipeline spill emergency response ability of government and enterprises, the exercise simulated a scenario of refined oil spilling from a ruptured pipeline caused by a digging machine during municipal engineering construction and the organization of emergency response for the accident.

The exercise started at 15:30 when a refined oil spill was occurred due to that a section of pipeline was damaged by an excavator during a construction work. After this accident, Fujian Petrochemical Industrial Group Co.,Ltd, Xiamen Administration of Work Safety, Police Station, Fire Department and government of Jimei district jointly acted to control and repair damaged section of pipeline and evacuate people living around the accident site. The rescue operation was proved to be quickly and effectively and eventually, the exercise came to a successful conclusion.

In the process of exercise, pipeline maintenance personnel from Fujian Petrochemical Industrial Group Co.,Ltd demonstrated the features of excellent professional skills, Tacit coordination and swift response which had been fully approved by the organizational sponsor for this exercise.

The exercise has improved awareness of the masses around the pipeline towards pipeline safety warnings and dangers, and enhanced people's self-protection capabilities. The exercise has also strengthened the communication between enterprises and local government and Improved emergency rescue response speed and ability, which will effectively promote the operational safety and protection of the pipeline. [Thanks to Michael Frank of Sunic Ocean Marine Technology and Service Co. Ltd. <http://www.sunic-ocean.com/>]

UK: ALNMARITEC, BUILDER OF ALUMINIUM OIL SPILL RESPONSE AND OTHER WORKBOATS, HAS A NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER

Alnmaritec is changing its telephone & fax numbers; to contact us in future please use :-

Telephone: +44 (0) 1670 542 640 Fax +44 (0) 1670 542 641 All our other contact details remain the same. Email: sales@alnmaritec.co.uk Website: <http://www.alnmaritec.co.uk/>

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