



# ISCO NEWSLETTER

*The Newsletter of the International Spill Response Community*

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## **USA: DEEPWATER HORIZON**

After the failure of the “top kill” at the end of last month (see last week’s Newsletter) there are high hopes that the latest capping procedure will be successful in capturing most of the escaping oil. After cutting the riser just above the BOP the LMRP cap was lowered into position last Thursday. It doesn’t provide a total seal and relies on a gasket to minimise oil escape. However, it has been reported that on its first full day in operation (Friday 4<sup>th</sup> June) just over 6,000 bbl of oil was recovered to the Discoverer Enterprise drillship on the surface. Oil was continuing to escape via vents on the cap, this to prevent ingress of seawater and avoid hydrate formation, but over the next days these vents will be closed off and the volume of oil being recovered should be progressively increased. On Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> June, it was reported that the amount being recovered had increased to 10,000 bbl/day.

It is quite amazing what is being achieved using tools manipulated by ROVs some 5,000’ under the sea surface. The unsuccessful “top kill” was a sore disappointment after a brave and determined effort that involved high pressure injection of 30,000 bbl of mud over several days and repeated efforts to block oil flow paths within the BOP using the “junk shot” procedures. Nothing is easy and the work is being carried out at the very limits of current sub-sea technology. We hope that the new cap will continue to work well and that the amount being recovered can be further increased.

The ultimate solution to stopping the flow will be provided by the relief well. On Saturday June 5, Admiral Allen commented “The first relief well is currently about 7,000 feet below the sea floor. They’re going to have to achieve somewhere between 16, 000 and 18,000 feet to intercept the well. The goal is—once they intercept the well—would be to pump mud down the well. It would reduce the pressure of the oil coming up the reservoir to the point where they can actually put a cement plug in. At that point, the well will be filled”.



Meantime, pollution impacts continue to worsen. Successive restrictions on fishing activities mean that one third of the Gulf is now closed. In addition to Louisiana, the coastlines of Mississippi, Alabama and Florida are now experiencing some spill impacts. Shoreline protection measures continue to build and permission has been given to the Army Corps of Engineers to progress creation of sand barriers at several locations. Enhanced surveillance is helping to focus offshore containment-recovery operations on slicks that threaten to impact shorelines. Sub-sea dispersant application continues but surface

spraying operations have been wound down. Oiled wildlife rescue and treatment facilities are being expanded and their workload is increasing with more and more casualties being reported. Shoreline cleaning work continues to grow and large numbers of volunteers are being trained.

## **USA: NOAA INFORMATION PAPER “HURRICANES AND THE OIL SPILL”**

NOAA gives answers to “What will happen to a hurricane that runs through this oil slick? and other questions that are being asked at the start of the Hurricane Season. To access this paper, click on - [https://www.piersystem.com/posted/2931/NOAA\\_fact\\_sheet\\_on\\_hurricanes\\_and\\_oil\\_spills.572167.pdf](https://www.piersystem.com/posted/2931/NOAA_fact_sheet_on_hurricanes_and_oil_spills.572167.pdf)

## **NIGERIA: NIGERIA'S AGONY DWARFS THE GULF OIL SPILL. THE US AND EUROPE IGNORE IT**

The Deepwater Horizon disaster caused headlines around the world, yet the people who live in the Niger delta have had to live with environmental catastrophes for decades. We reached the edge of the oil spill near the Nigerian village of Otuegwe after a long hike through cassava plantations. Ahead of us lay swamp. We waded into the warm tropical water and began swimming, cameras and notebooks held above our heads. We could smell the oil long before we saw it – the stench of garage forecourts and rotting vegetation hanging thickly in the air. The farther we travelled, the more nauseous it became. Soon we were swimming in pools of light Nigerian crude, the best-quality oil in the world. One of the many hundreds of 40-year-old pipelines that crisscross the Niger delta had corroded and spewed oil for several months. Forest and farmland were now covered in ashen of greasy oil. Drinking wells were polluted and people were distraught. No one knew how much oil had leaked. "We lost our nets, huts and fishing pots," said Chief Promise, village leader of Otuegwe and our guide. "This is where we fished and farmed. We have lost our forest. We told Shell of the spill within days, but they did nothing for six months."

That was the Niger delta a few years ago, where, according to Nigerian academics, writers and environment groups, oil companies have acted with such impunity and recklessness that much of the region has been devastated by leaks.

In fact, more oil is spilled from the delta's network of terminals, pipes, pumping stations and oil platforms every year than has been lost in the Gulf of Mexico, the site of a major ecological catastrophe caused by oil that has poured from a leak triggered by the explosion that wrecked BP's Deepwater Horizon rig last month. Read more at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/may/30/oil-spills-nigeria-niger-delta-shell> [Thanks to Don Johnston of ISCO Associate Member, DG & Hazmat Group]

## **AUSTRALIA: TOBY STONE TO HEAD NEW MARINE ENVIRONMENT DIVISION AT AMSA**



In the latest edition of *AMSA Aboard Newsletter*, Graham Peachy, CEO of AMSA, writes "During the past few months we have created a new Division within AMSA, the Marine Environment Division. Major incidents during 2009 demonstrated the importance of our environmental functions and the need for consolidation of activities. I am pleased to announce that Toby Stone has been appointed as the General Manager of this Division.

Toby is well known to many of you who are involved in marine pollution response and has been the Head of Counter Pollution and Salvage within the UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency for the last six years. He has been involved in and attended the majority of maritime shipping casualties in the UK pollution zone since 1997, including the *Sea Empress* and *Ever Decent*. In addition, he attended the *Erika* and *Prestige* disasters in France. Most recently, he was involved in the *MSC Napoli* incident. Toby will commence with AMSA in July and we look forward to welcoming him to Australia."

<http://www.amsa.gov.au/Publications/amsa aboard/2010-Autumn/index.html#1>

## **USA: REAR ADM. LANDRY TO RESUME HER ROLE AS COAST GUARD EIGHTH DISTRICT COMMANDER TO FOCUS ON HURRICANE READINESS**

Rear Admiral Mary Landry, Federal On-Scene Coordinator for the BP oil spill response, will rotate back to her role as Commander of the Eighth Coast Guard District, June 1, to ensure continuity of leadership during the 2010 Hurricane Season.

Rear Admiral James Watson, who has been her deputy since April 23, will assume the role of Federal On-Scene Coordinator. Rear Admiral Ray Nash will assume duties as Deputy Federal On-Scene Coordinator.

"The plan for Rear Adm. Landry to return to her command of the Eighth District at the beginning of the hurricane season has been the strategy since the beginning of this response," said Admiral Robert Papp, commandant, U.S. Coast Guard. "It is critically important that she make sure the

Eighth Coast Guard District forces are ready for a potentially busy hurricane season in the midst of this environmental disaster.”

Landry has been the Federal On-Scene Coordinator for the BP oil spill response since the oil rig exploded on April 20 [From announcement made June 1 by Deepwater Horizon Incident Joint Information Center]

## TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION NEWS SURVEY

The April 16-30, 2010 *Technology Innovation News Survey* has been posted to the CLU-IN web site. The *Survey* contains market/commercialization information; reports on demonstrations, feasibility studies and research; and other news relevant to the hazardous waste community interested in technology development. The latest survey is available at: <http://www.clu-in.org/products/tins/>

## 25 YEARS OF OIL SPILL RESPONSE



*Oil Spill Response is the world's largest organisation of its kind, operating from bases in the United Kingdom, Singapore and Bahrain and from offices in London, Aberdeen, Libya, Jakarta and West Africa. It is an industry-funded co-operative employing some 140 specialist personnel, and with extensive spill response equipment stockpiles that include aerial dispersant delivery systems.*

For a quarter of a century **Oil Spill Response** has been charged with providing a global oil spill response capability to the oil industry. Established in 1985, the Company has transformed from a single site operation with a handful of staff - to become now the international industry leader in oil spill preparedness and response, employing the largest number of qualified spill response specialists.

With an unparalleled track record **Oil Spill Response** has responded to over 300 spill incidents worldwide since its formation in 1985, operating often in very challenging conditions to help protect and preserve the environment. Now boasting a membership of over 100 companies accounting for over 60% of global oil production, this not-for-profit co-operative is active today not only in responding to oil spill incidents such as (currently) Deepwater Horizon in the Gulf of Mexico, but very importantly in training and education to mitigate the impact of these tragic though thankfully infrequent incidents.

Marking its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year at the Annual General Meeting in London, the Company is holding on 15<sup>th</sup> June a special seminar on oil spill response issues and future challenges, as well as hosting a commemorative dinner.

During his 15 years with **Oil Spill Response**, CEO Archie Smith has witnessed significant change within both industry and Company alike, but what endures is the Company's pursuit of excellence in providing a world class service to its customers. *"In adjusting to this ever changing world we need a multi-disciplined approach to deliver a wide range of preparedness services that complement the ongoing importance of response as our core business."*

According to Archie, the success of **Oil Spill Response** is due to dedicated people working together towards a common goal. *"Effective response depends upon trained people working to a well-developed contingency plan that has been properly resourced and regularly exercised."*

With a clear strategy for 2010 and beyond, Archie is keen to emphasize the Company's sustained commitment and constancy of purpose. *"We are justifiably proud of our heritage and honoured to have this responsibility. In 25 years we have never let our customers down, and that is the certain assurance we continue to give."* More at: <http://www.oilspillresponse.com>

Legal disclaimer: Whilst ISCO takes every care to ensure that information published in this Newsletter is accurate unintentional mistakes can occur. If an error is brought to our attention, a correction will be printed in the next issue of this Newsletter.