



# ISCO NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of the International Spill Response Community

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## News

### ANTARCTIC FUEL OIL BAN AND NORTH AMERICAN ECA MARPOL AMENDMENTS ENTERED INTO FORCE ON 1 AUGUST 2011

A new MARPOL regulation to protect the Antarctic from pollution by heavy-grade oils is added to MARPOL Annex I (Regulations for the prevention of pollution by oil), with a new chapter 9 on Special requirements for the use or carriage of oils in the Antarctic area.

Regulation 43 prohibits both the carriage in bulk as cargo and the carriage and use as fuel, of: crude oils having a density, at 15°C, higher than 900 kg/m<sup>3</sup>; oils, other than crude oils, having a density, at 15°C, higher than 900 kg/m<sup>3</sup> or a kinematic viscosity, at 50°C, higher than 180 mm<sup>2</sup>/s; or bitumen, tar and their emulsions.

This means, in effect, that ships trading to the area, whether passenger or cargo ships, would need to switch to a different fuel type when transiting the Antarctic area, defined as "the sea area south of latitude 60°S".

An exception is envisaged for vessels engaged in securing the safety of ships or in a search-and-rescue operation.

Amendments to MARPOL Annex VI (Prevention of air pollution from ships) will formally establish a North American Emission Control Area, in which emissions of sulphur oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>), nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) and particulate matter from ships will be subject to more stringent controls than the limits that apply globally. The ECA will take effect 12 months after the amendments entered into force on 1 August 2012. [Read more](#)

## REPORT: INADEQUATE COAST GUARD DATA SHARING OBSTRUCTED COMMUNICATION AFTER OIL SPILL

The failure of a beleaguered \$30 billion U.S. Coast Guard modernization program to resolve communication problems hampered the exchange of data between aircraft and vessels during last year's Deepwater Horizon oil disaster, federal auditors say.

The program, also named Deepwater, was started in 1996 to refresh nearly all the service's assets, including command-and-control operations. But the C4ISR upgrade -- which stands for command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance -- has not produced intended benefits, according to a July 28 Government Accountability Office [report](#).

Data sharing, centralized networks and information from sensors are essential to achieving the Coast Guard's mission in a tight budget environment, federal officials have said.

There is no central network for the system yet, however, a shortcoming that has created transmission problems between vehicles, GAO auditors wrote. For example, the National Security Cutter and Maritime Patrol Aircraft, or MPA, use classified systems to handle command-and-control data, while the HC-130J turboprop aircraft and the HC-130H long-range surveillance aircraft use unclassified systems. Although vessels and planes have voice communication capability, all vehicles cannot fully exchange information with each other.

"Sharing data gathered by the MPA during the Deepwater Horizon oil spill incident was difficult because all information gathered by the MPA was maintained on a classified system," the report stated. [Read more](#)

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## SHELL ACCEPTS LIABILITY FOR TWO OIL SPILLS IN NIGERIA



*The impact of an oil spill near Ikarama in the Niger delta. Photograph: Amnesty International UK*

Shell faces a bill of hundreds of millions of dollars after accepting full liability for two massive [oil](#) spills that devastated a Nigerian community of 69,000 people and may take at least 20 years to clean up.

Experts who studied video footage of the spills at Bodo in Ogoniland say they could together be as large as the 1989 Exxon Valdez disaster in Alaska, when 10m gallons of oil destroyed the remote coastline.

Until now, Shell has claimed that less than 40,000 gallons were spilt in [Nigeria](#).

Papers seen by the Guardian show that following a class action suit in London over the past four months, the company has accepted responsibility for the 2008 double rupture of the Bodo-Bonny trans-Niger pipeline that pumps 120,000 barrels of oil a day through the community. [Read more](#)

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## UN REPORT: NIGER DELTA LEFT WITH \$1BN OIL POLLUTION CLEAN-UP BILL

Oil pollution in the Niger Delta has gone further than previously thought and a clean-up will take 20 years and cost over \$1bn (£614.6m), the UN said. Half a century of oil production has had a "disastrous impact" on the swamps, mangroves and creeks of the south eastern Nigerian region of Ogoniland, forcing residents to breathe contaminated air and drink polluted water, according to a study by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).

"Since average life expectancy in Nigeria is less than 50 years," the study concludes, "it is a fair assumption that most members of the current Ogoniland community have lived with chronic oil pollution throughout their lives."

The report was funded by Royal Dutch Shell and released only 24 hours after it admitted responsibility for two oil spills in Ogoniland that could cost it hundreds of millions of dollars.

UNEP, which insists its findings were unrelated to Shell's admission, called for Nigeria's government to work with the oil industry to conduct a full assessment and clean-up of the damage.

One community in western Ogoniland was found to be drinking water from wells contaminated with 900 times the safe amount of known carcinogen benzene, while other areas were still facing pollution from spills 40 years ago.

The Nairobi-based Environment Programme call for a "restoration fund" to be set up with an initial \$1bn to be put up by the government and Shell to cover the first five years of an estimated 25 to 30-year rehabilitation. [Read more](#)

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## UN LEADER TO VISIT JAPAN NUCLEAR ZONE



August 5 - UN leader Ban Ki-moon sets out Saturday on a trip to Japan, where he will become one of the most senior foreign leaders to enter the Fukushima nuclear disaster zone.

The tour, which will also take him to his native South Korea, is intended as a tribute to Japan after a magnitude 9.0 earthquake and tsunami on March 11 triggered the world's worst nuclear disaster since Chernobyl 25 years ago.

On Monday, Ban will visit Haragama beach at Soma, about 25 miles (40 kilometers) north of the Fukushima Daiichi plant that continues to gush radiation five months on. A 12-mile (20-kilometer) no-go zone surrounds the nuclear plant. [Read more](#)

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## UK: MOD INVESTIGATES FORMER CHEMICAL WEAPONS FACTORIES FOR CONTAMINATION

The [Ministry of Defence](#) has investigated 14 former chemical weapons factories and stores across the UK for contamination, according to an [official briefing](#) seen by the Guardian.

Tens of thousands of tonnes of [mustard gas](#), phosgene and other lethal chemicals have been made, stored, burned and dumped at sites in England, Wales and Scotland since the [first world war](#). Some areas are still fenced off to protect the public today.

After a four-year investigation of the sites considered potentially hazardous – named Project Cleansweep – it has concluded that there is "no indication of significant risk to public health or environment" from the sites.

That has been questioned, however, by one expert, who pointed out that there was still no scientific proof that all harmful traces of the weapons have been removed, particularly after they were burnt.

[Prof Alastair Hay](#), an expert on chemical weapons and who is a professor of environmental toxicology at the University of Leeds and an official adviser to the [health and safety executive](#), argued that more sampling might still be needed at the sites. Some areas should be kept secure as a failsafe because mustard gas can be very persistent in the environment, he warned. [Read more](#)

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## USA: KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE - HOW SC MEMBERS OF CONGRESS VOTED

U.S.-Canada Pipeline: Members voted, 279-147, to set a Nov. 1 deadline for President Obama to act on a Canadian firm's application to build the Keystone XL pipeline for shipping crude oil from tar sands in Alberta to Texas refineries. A yes vote was to pass the non-binding bill (HR 1938).

Oil-Spill Scenarios: Members refused, 168-260, to delay permits for a new U.S.-Canada pipeline until the applicant, TransCanada Corp., shows how it would prevent oil spills or respond if they occur. A yes vote backed the amendment over arguments that the company already has met that test. (HR 1938) [Read more](#)

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## SOUTH AFRICA: STRANDED TANKER SET TO BE SOLD



The South African Maritime Safety Authority (Samsa) says its attempts to communicate with the Indian owners of the tanker that ran aground in Salt Rock, north of Durban, on Monday have been fruitless.

Samsa had initially been in touch with the owners of the Phoenix about getting it removed from the South African Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The owners promised to provide a salvage tug to take over from Smit Amandla and continue the voyage to the scrapyard in India, Samsa said.

The tanker is still aground and Samsa approached the KwaZulu-Natal High Court to get permission to seize and sell the Phoenix, in order to recoup the expenditure incurred in preserving the vessel, safeguarding the lives of the crew and removing the pollution threat.

The order has been granted and potential buyers have already been identified for the tanker, which is to be auctioned on August 4. Salvage engineers are currently on board the Phoenix, attempting to pump out 400 cubic metres of marine gas oil and assessing what will need to be done to strengthen parts of the derelict vessel that will bear the load when it is to be refloated. [Read more](#)

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## CHINA: CONCOCO: OIL LEAK COULD GET WORSE

ConocoPhillips, the operator of two leaking oil platforms in Northeast China's Bohai Bay, said they had discovered more oil-based mud on the seabed around Platform C earlier today which may push the total leak to surpass 1,500 barrels.

The news comes just a day after the State Oceanic Administration blasted the company for failing to stop the leak and clean up the contamination quickly enough.

The company said it has yet to conclude how much oil has leaked. "We're hoping to get the amount in the next day or two," ConocoPhillips spokesman John McLemore told China Daily Wednesday via telephone.

McLemore said the new discovery will cause more oil sheen to be seen on the surface, and may affect its cleanup process to meet the deadlines set by the State Oceanic Administration.

"We're striving to meet the deadline, but it will depend on the sea current and weather conditions. We don't want to put our divers at risk," McLemore said. [Read more](#)

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## SRI LANKA: ISCO MEMBER, RESOLVE SALVAGE & FIRE, BEGINS REMOVAL OF WRECKS AT KANKESANTHURAI HARBOR

Following an agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Sri Lanka, RESOLVE Salvage and Fire (Asia) Pte Ltd.(RESOLVE), a subsidiary of U.S. - based RESOLVE Marine Group, Inc., has commenced the removal of six vessel wrecks that were sunk in Kankesanthurai Harbor (KKS) between 1994 and 1996 during the LTTE conflict. Situated on the northern coast of Sri Lanka, the Harbour was badly damaged in the conflict and has since been closed for commercial activity. The Government of India (GOI) has taken responsibility for rehabilitation of the KKS Harbour and has provided grant funding for the initial stages.

RESOLVE, a global marine salvage and emergency response company, was awarded the contract for the wreck removal work by Shipping Corporation of India, the administrator of the project on behalf of the GOI. The six wrecks range in size from 17m to 99.5m and are either fully or partially submerged, obstructing safe access to, and transit within the harbor. The operation will require not only the removal of wrecks but use of state-of-the-art, 3-D image scanning equipment which will identify all obstructions within a 500-meter radius of each wreck, thus ensuring removal of wreck debris in preparation for dredging of the Harbour and channel. Two wrecks are outside the Harbour, four are within the Harbour. [Read more](#)

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## Special Feature

### THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE CELEBRATES 15 YEARS



IPIECA, the global oil and gas industry association for environmental and social issues and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), representing the interests of the oil and gas industry and government respectively, are working with other partners to enhance oil spill preparedness and response capacity for marine spills at priority locations around the world. This partnership is called the Global Initiative (GI), and aims to:

- assist countries in preparing for major oil spills, and
- encourage and enable ratification and implementation of oil spill related international conventions.

The prevention of oil spills is of vital importance to the oil and shipping industries and national governments, but accidents can still take place. Therefore, while industry works to prevent spills, it also remains prepared for any event by developing comprehensive contingency plans. These ensure a rapid response to anticipate, mitigate and minimize the impacts of oil spills.

Such plans need flexibility to cover different operations, spill sizes and types of oil, as well as variations in local geography, climate and environmental sensitivities. They should also complement natural forces to the fullest extent practicable.

Over the past few decades several factors have coincided that have changed the global risk profile of oil spills, these include:

- a fall in major oil spills resulting from shipping accidents;
- a shift away from corporate-led oil spill arrangements to more divergent business units or regional led arrangements, and
- significant growth in exploration and production (E&P) in ever more remote and socio-economically sensitive areas.

It is clear that extensive contingency plans are as important as ever.

Whilst the prevention of oil spills is of paramount importance to the oil and shipping industries, the Global Initiative is key to ensuring that governments and industry remain well prepared to respond to any spill that might occur.

## Special Feature (continued)

Since the 1996 launch of the IMO/IPIECA GI, results have been encouraging. Countries that had not developed national plans or response systems have made significant progress. Three strategic and sustained regional initiatives are in action. These are supported by the IMO, and financed by regional oil industry business units, to facilitate cooperation between government and industry.

### Global Initiative achievements around the world: Government and industry working together towards a common goal



#### Regional cooperation

The International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation, 1990 (OPRC), calls for national authorities to work with the oil and shipping industries to unify response efforts. The GI meets this requirement by sharing good practice between regions.

#### Caspian Sea, Black Sea and Central Eurasia

The 2003 Oil Spill Preparedness Regional Initiative (OSPRI) has built relationships between governments and international partners, leading to significant improvements in preparedness. OSPRI continues to work with governments to develop proven, credible, integrated and sustainable national and regional oil spill response capability.

#### Mediterranean

The 2004 Mediterranean Oil Industry Group (MOIG) has 24 oil company members and commercial providers in the Mediterranean region. The group serves as a regional oil industry forum on oil spill prevention, preparedness and response. MOIG engages in collaborative activities with the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC).

#### West, Central and Southern Africa

IPIECA and the IMO set up the GI WACAF Project in 2006 in Libreville, Gabon. The Project is jointly funded by IPIECA through 8 oil company members and by the IMO through their Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP). The Project is implemented in partnership with the UNEP Regional Seas programme, the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem (GCLME) Project, various bilateral cooperation initiatives and the recipient countries.

**Latin America and Caribbean** Following GI workshops in the Latin America and Caribbean region in the last decade, a mature GI-style arrangement has been formed between industry bodies Clean Caribbean and Americas (CCA), ARPEL (Regional Association of Oil and Natural Gas Companies in Latin America and the Caribbean), and the activity centre in the region, the IMO Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, Information and Training Centre for the wider Caribbean Region (REMPEITC Carib). Clean Caribbean and Americas continues active engagement in GI programme objectives in the Caribbean/Latin America region in both unilaterally and cooperative involvement with ARPEL and IMO/REMPEITC.

#### South East Asia

The South East Asian region is at high risk of oil spills due to crowded shipping routes and new E&P developments. The number of major spills (over 700 tonnes) has remained constant over the last 40 years despite the global decline. IPIECA and IMO are currently building on established national and regional arrangements to strengthen preparedness in the region.

#### North West Pacific

The Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response Regional Activity Centre (MERRAC) represents the effort of 4 governments in the East Asia region: Japan, China, Russia and host-nation the Republic of Korea, to coordinate activities under the Action Plan for the protection, management and development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Northwest Pacific (NOWPAP).

## USA: WHOI STUDY REPORTS WHAT HAPPENED TO THE OIL FROM THE DEEPWATER HORIZON SPILL

More than a year after the largest oil spill in history, perhaps the dominant lingering question about the Deepwater Horizon spill is, "What happened to the oil?" Now, in the first published study to explain the role of microbes in breaking down the oil slick on the surface of the Gulf of Mexico, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) researchers have come up with answers that represent both surprisingly good news and a head-scratching mystery.

In research scheduled to be published in the Aug. 2 online edition of *Environmental Research Letters*, the WHOI team studied samples from the surface oil slick and surrounding Gulf waters. They found that bacterial microbes inside the slick degraded the oil at a rate five times faster than microbes outside the slick—accounting in large part for the disappearance of the slick some three weeks after Deepwater Horizon's Macondo well was shut off.

At the same time, the researchers observed no increase in the number of microbes inside the slick—something that would be expected as a byproduct of increased consumption, or respiration, of the oil. In this process, respiration combines food (oil in this case) and oxygen to create carbon dioxide and energy.



*PHOTO CAPTION: A new technique for determining the concentration of oxygen in a liquid sample uses a laser (coming from the green fiber, right) and an oxygen-sensitive sticker called an optode (pale spot) inside the sample bottle. When struck by the laser, the sticker fluoresces; the wavelength of the light it gives off indicates the concentration of oxygen in the fluid around it. WHOI chemist Ben Van Mooy used this method to monitor microbial activity in samples of water taken from within and outside the oil slick on the surface of the Gulf of Mexico after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. (Photo by Tom Kleindinst, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution)*

"What did they do with the energy they gained from this increased respiration?" asked WHOI chemist Benjamin Van Mooy, senior author of the study. "They didn't use it to multiply. It's a real mystery," he said.

Van Mooy and his team were nearly equally taken aback by the ability of the microbes to chow down on the oil in the first place. Going into the study, he said, "We thought microbe respiration was going to be minimal." This was because nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus—usually essential to

enable microbes to grow and make new cells—were scarce in the water and oil in the slick. "We thought the microbes would not be able to respond," Van Mooy said.

But the WHOI researchers found, to the contrary, that the bacteria not only responded, but did so at a very high rate. They discovered this by using a special sensor called an oxygen optode to track the changing oxygen levels in water samples taken from the slick. If the microbes were respiring slowly, then oxygen levels would decrease slowly; if they respired quickly, the oxygen would decrease quickly. [Read more](#)

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## ETHANOL-LOVING BACTERIA WORSEN PIPELINE CRACKS

Researchers from the National Institute of Standards and Technology discovered that bacteria found in [ethanol](#) hasten the deterioration and cracking of pipeline steels. Ethanol is a biofuel that is commonly used as a fuel additive because of its oxygen content and octane rating. Moreover, modified engines used ethanol solely as fuel.

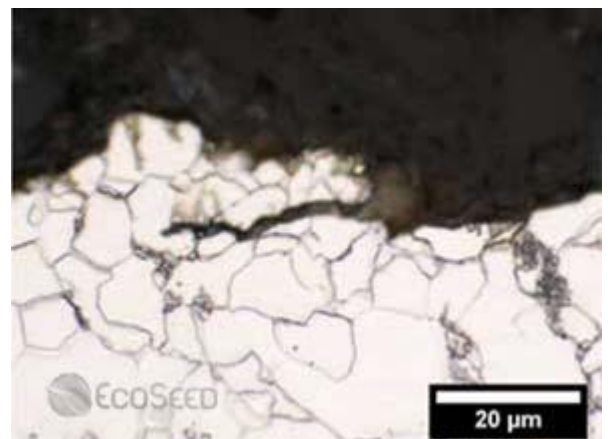
Recently there have been proposals that existing gas pipelines and other infrastructure could be used to [transport ethanol](#) and increase its deployment. However, N.I.S.T. researchers exposed common pipeline steel to ethanol and found that ethanol and the bacteria found within can have a corrosive effect. "Substantial increases in crack growth rates were caused by the microbes. These are important data for pipeline engineers who want to safely and reliably [transport ethanol fuel](#) in repurposed oil and gas pipelines," N.I.S.T. postdoctoral researcher Jeffrey Sowards said.

*In the picture - Micrograph of crack in X52 steel after the sample was subjected to mechanical forces for several days in an ethanol solution containing acid-producing bacteria, *Acetobacter acetii*. Jeffrey Sowards/N.I.S.T.*

The corrosive bacterium, *Acetobacter acetii*, is known to occur in alcoholic environments – such as ethanol – and can convert that alcohol into acetic acid. It is used safely in the fermentation industry with no known adverse health effects to humans, animals or plants.

However, the researchers found that, when *A. acetii* feeds on ethanol the acid produced can boost fatigue crack growth rates in pipeline by at least 25 times the level occurring in air alone. The team of researchers used a new biofuels test facility to assess fatigue-related cracks in two common pipeline steels dipped in ethanol mixtures, including a simulated fuel-grade ethanol and an ethanol-water solution with the bacteria.

[Read more](#)





In this issue of the ISCO Newsletter we are printing No. 37 in a series of articles contributed by Dr Douglas Cormack.

*Dr Douglas Cormack is an Honorary Member 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](#)*

### KNOWLEDGE OF THE FATE OF RELEASED OIL / HNS (CHAPTER 37)

As to the ignition of floating oil layers, it has been shown in small-scale tests that the low flashpoint Hibernia B-27 crude oil ignites more easily than the high flashpoint Hibernia C-96; that both can be ignited 12 hours after release; and that B-27 emulsion with a water-content of 80% ignites with similar ease to C-96 emulsion with a water-content of 25%. Trials with other oils of varying properties have shown in general that medium crude oils might be ignited up to 48 hours after release with water-contents up to 40%; that heavy crude oils might be ignited with water-contents up to 20% after the same time; and that if ignition can be initiated it may propagate beyond the ignition zone by thermal breakdown of the emulsion.

As to design of ignition devices, the basic requirements are for a gentle but hot flame to burn close to the oil/emulsion surface for maximum heat transfer; for a shield to prevent wind from extinguishing the initiating flame; for the initial flame to burn long enough to achieve self-sustaining combustion of the oil/emulsion; and for the initiator to be helicopter-deployable in locations where ice conditions may be unsafe for pedestrian personnel. A variety of devices have been produced to meet these requirements. For example, the Pyroid and the Dome Igniters are intended to be thrown on to the slick after activation of a timing mechanism, while the Helitorch is suspended from the helicopter and remotely controlled to deliver burning gelled gasoline or diesel oil onto the slick surface. Again, continuous lasers have been designed to bring a portion of the slick to its flashpoint temperature for vapour ignition by a pulsed laser.

In addition, fresh crude and both gelled and liquid diesel oils have been considered as localised additives to slick surfaces to assist in initial ignition and a number of wicking agents have been tested, the latter having included phenolic foam, peat derivatives and polypropylene, though none have shown significant advantages thus far. Again, while tests with diesel oil have been encouraging, the initial flame can be extinguished by wind speeds of 10ms<sup>-1</sup>.

Resistance to flame extinction being one of the design requirements for ignition devices as noted above, the Pyroid device consists of a pyrotechnic sandwiched between two flotation layers to produce a ring of fire of 2000°C and a burning time of 2 minutes. It is 25cm<sup>2</sup> by 13cm and weighs 2kg. Again, the Dome device consists of a wire basket of solid propellant and gelled kerosene slabs between two metal floats which provide 1300°C for 10 seconds followed by a less intense burning period of about 10 minutes. It is 30 x 18 x 11cm and weighs 0.5kg.

As to the products expected from burning oil slicks, carbon dioxide amounts to 90 - 95% of the total if we exclude water vapour, while the others are elemental carbon or soot; unburned hydrocarbons such as benzene, toluene and xylene; nitrogen oxides and sulphur dioxide; products of incomplete combustion such as carbon monoxide, aldehydes, ketones, acids and esters such as acetates; and the heavy metals vanadium and nickel. Dioxans and dibenzofurans have not been detected. Typical volume fractions in relation to carbon dioxide are 4% (1/25) for carbon monoxide and 0.04% (1/2500) for NO<sub>x</sub> of which 0.015% (1/6500) is NO. The sulphur dioxide fraction depends on the variable sulphur-content of the oil but may be taken as 0.0416% (1/2400) for an oil sulphur-content of 0.1% and *pro rata*. The concentrations of unburned hydrocarbons are lower than would have resulted from natural evaporation without combustion, while those arising from incomplete combustion are in the ppm range prior to natural dilution. The heavy metals are similarly in the low ppm range with most being in the unburned tarry residue and only a little in the soot which also includes some of the unburned polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons which may be present in oils themselves to the extent of 0.001 - 1%.

#### Additional note on the OPRC-HNS TG 12 and MEPC 62 Meetings at IMO

At TG 12, my paper INF 4 entitled *Templates for Information Gathering at Oil and HNS Incidents* described my intention to create knowledge-based contingency plans convertible to incident-specific action plans by insertion of incident-specific values for the fate, effect and response parameters now under review in this Column. In addition, my paper INF 8 entitled *Harmonisation of Technology and Environment* described to TG 12 my new knowledge/belief differentiation which identifies the beliefs which thwart and misdirect knowledge to the detriment of environmental welfare.

On the basis of these papers, I invited the environmentalist NGOs at MEPC 62 to assist in resolving any confusion on my part as to my knowledge/belief differentiation within their publicised opinions, and I clarified the need for this differentiation not only to improve incident response and to harmonise technology with environment, but also to defend *Deepwater Horizon* contractors now being sued on the basis of beliefs which currently appear counter to knowledge.

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

### ASTM OIL SPILL RESPONSE STANDARD OFFERS BOOM SELECTION GUIDE

A new ASTM International standard will be a useful document for vendors, buyers and regulators in determining the applicability of different types of booms to be used for oil spill response. ASTM F2683, Guide for Selection of Booms for Oil Spill Response, was developed by Subcommittee F20.11 on Control, part of ASTM International Committee F20 on Hazardous Substances and Oil Spill Response.

Stephen Potter, managing director, SL Ross Environmental Research Ltd., and chairman of F20.11, notes that ASTM F2683 lists the main advantages and disadvantages of different boom types in a variety of oil spill scenarios.

"On-scene response coordinators, planners, oil spill management teams, oil spill removal organizations, plan evaluators, and boom manufacturers and suppliers will be the primary users of ASTM F2683," says Potter.

All interested parties are encouraged to participate in the standards development work of F20. The committee is currently working on proposed standards for safely operating boom reel assemblies and for the towing and anchoring of booms.

To purchase ASTM standards, visit [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org) and search by the standard designation number, or contact ASTM Customer Relations (phone: 610-832-9585; [service@astm.org](mailto:service@astm.org)). ASTM International welcomes and encourages participation in the development of its standards. For more information on becoming an ASTM member, visit [www.astm.org/JOIN](http://www.astm.org/JOIN). [Read more](#)

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### US EPA: TECH DIRECT AUGUST 1, 2011

TechDirect's purpose is to identify new technical, policy and guidance resources related to the assessment and remediation of contaminated soil, sediments and ground water. [Download and read](#)

## Training

### MITAGS-PMI NEW COURSE DATES FOR INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS

MITAGS-PMI New Course Dates for "Introduction to Environmental Regulations in the Maritime Industry –EPA General Permit for Commercial Vessels"

With the introduction of the Vessel General Permit (VGP), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has captured an estimated 70,000 additional regulated units that have previously been exempt from permitting requirements in U.S. waters. In the brief time granted for implementation, this new universe of permittees; while previously subject to numerous international, national, state and local requirements; will be challenged to understand, incorporate, and manage a new set of discharge requirements that were previously unregulated by the EPA.

A Clean Water Act Permit is a unique regulatory tool with which commercial vessel operators have little to no experience. Therefore, training will be required not only on the specific requirements of the permit, but also on the environmental aspects of vessel operations, reading and interpretation of the VGP, monitoring, recordkeeping, recording, notification requirements, and Notice of Intent (NOI), as well as other aspects of the permit implementation. [More information](#)

## Company News

### SEACOR RESPONSE TO PROVIDE FIRE FIGHTING SUPPORT SERVICES TO OIL PIPELINES IN THE COUNTRY OF GEORGIA

August 2 - SEACOR Response Ltd., a global leader in emergency preparedness and response solutions, announced today that it will provide fire fighting support services to the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) and Baku-Supsa oil pipelines in the country of Georgia, which are operated by BP Exploration Caspian Sea Ltd on behalf of its oil and gas co-venturers in BTC Co. and Georgian Pipeline companies, respectively.

"SEACOR Response has been providing emergency oil spill and related services to the BTC pipeline in Georgia since 2004 and we are delighted to be able to expand our operations in the country to include fire fighting," said Neil Challis, President of SEACOR Response. The contract will involve SEACOR Response providing trained personnel to operate first response fire fighting equipment for potential incidents along the pipelines. [Read more](#)

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