



ISCO NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of the International Spill Response Community

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info@spillcontrol.org <http://www.spillcontrol.org>

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NORTH AMERICA'S LARGEST OIL SPILL TRAINING EVENT & EXHIBITION

November 30 - December 1, 2011
Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center
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Register Today

News

IMO ASSEMBLY TO MEET FOR 27TH SESSION

The 27th Assembly of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) will meet in London at IMO Headquarters from 21 to 30 November 2011.

All 170 Member States and three Associate Members are entitled to attend the Assembly, which is IMO's highest governing body. The intergovernmental organizations with which agreements of co-operation have been concluded and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with IMO are also invited to attend.

The Assembly normally meets once every two years in regular session. It is responsible for approving the work programme, voting the budget and determining the financial arrangements of the Organization. It also elects the Organization's 40-Member Council.



The Assembly will be invited to endorse the decision of the IMO Council in June to elect Mr. Koji Sekimizu (Japan) as IMO Secretary-General, to start his four-year term on 1 January 2012. The current Secretary-General, Mr. Efthimios E. Mitropoulos (Greece) ends his term on 31 December 2011.



Pictured above: Mr. Koji Sekimizu (left) and Mr. Efthimios E. Mitropoulos (right)

The Assembly will review the work carried out by the Organization during the biennium 2010 2011, through the Council, the five IMO Committees and the Secretariat.

Highlights include the adoption, in May 2010, of the Manila amendments to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (the STCW Convention), and its associated Code – the pinnacle of a year dedicated to the seafarer under the World Maritime Day 2010 theme of "2010: Year of the Seafarer"; the adoption, in April 2010, of the 2010 Protocol to the International Convention on Liability and Compensation for Damage in Connection with the Carriage of Hazardous and Noxious Substances by Sea, 1996 (HNS Convention); and the breakthrough adoption, in July 2011, of amendments to the International Convention on the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), Annex VI Regulations for the prevention of air pollution from ships, to add a new chapter on Regulations on energy efficiency for ships, representing the first-ever mandatory greenhouse gas reduction regime for an international industry sector.

The Organization's updated strategic and high-level action plans and the related results-based budget for 2012-2013 will be presented to the Assembly for adoption. [Read more](#)

CHINA: ITOPF HOLDS SEMINAR ON NEW POLLUTION REGULATIONS IN PR CHINA



ITOPF held an afternoon seminar on shipping and the new pollution regulations in PR China in Beijing on Wednesday 16th November. The seminar offered a packed programme of speakers and attracted over 100 attendees, comprising a mixture of Chinese government representatives, Chinese and international shipowners, shipping industry bodies, Chinese oil spill clean-up contractors, P&I Club representatives, lawyers and others.

The seminar provided an excellent opportunity for those involved in all aspects of marine spill response to familiarise themselves with the practicalities of implementing the new regulations, in particular the requirements placed on shipowners to enter into agreements with oil spill clean-up contractors prior to entering Chinese ports. The Chinese government requires these agreements to be in place by 1st January 2012. Amongst the presenters were representatives from the Chinese Maritime Safety Administration (MSA) who provided an update on the current situation. ITOPF held a drinks reception after the seminar, where

shipowners and their insurers were able to meet with a number of oil spill contractors to exchange ideas and to understand each others' requirements under the new legislation. [Read the seminar presentations](#)

BRAZIL: OIL LEAK PROMPTS CHEVRON TO HALT WELL- DRILLING OFF BRAZIL'S COAST

November 15 - An [underwater oil leak](#) has prompted Chevron and its rig contractor Transocean to halt drilling a deep-water appraisal well about 75 miles off the coast of Brazil, the companies said Tuesday.

Satellite images show oil spreading about 100 miles south and southeast of Chevron's Frade project, a field that is producing 79,000 barrels a day of crude oil. Chevron estimated the size of the spill at 400 to 650 barrels, but an environmental Web site called Sky Truth said satellite images suggest that nearly 15,000 barrels have spread on the ocean surface.

Chevron blamed the sheen on "oil seeps," but it acknowledged that its well "was suspected to be contributing to oil being expressed through seep lines located on the ocean floor." [Read more](#)

Update: November 19 - A mistake in calculating the oil pressure caused a spill off the coast of Rio de Janeiro state, Chevron said Saturday, amid uncertainties over the extent of the slick. "The pressure of the deposits was underestimated," Chevron Brazil president George Buck told local media.

Based on the incorrect calculation, the company used a type of material that lacked the sufficient weight needed to contain the oil, which then leaked and reached the surface, Folha de Sao Paulo newspaper explained. Buck insisted the leak was fully contained on November 13, but noted that the incident was still being investigated. According to Chevron, the slick reached a volume of 882 barrels of oil at its worst, on Monday, and dropped to 18 barrels on Friday. [Read more](#)

NEW ZEALAND: FIRST 40 CONTAINERS REMOVED FROM THE RENA

November 20 – Update from Maritime New Zealand: As at 7.30am today, a total of 40 containers have been removed from the *Rena* and taken ashore.

The weather conditions are very similar to yesterday, and reasonably good for ongoing container recovery. However, the salvors advise they expect the rate of recovery to slow today as the next containers for removal are damaged, and will take longer to lift off. [Read more](#)

USA: TRANSCANADA, NEBRASKA AGREE TO RE-ROUTE PIPELINE

November 14 - TransCanada Corp. and Nebraska agreed Monday to re-route the controversial Keystone XL oil pipeline away from a vast underground water source in the state.

The move is sure to re-ignite the fierce debate over environmental concerns about the 2,700-kilometre pipeline versus the appeal of millions dollars in taxes and thousands of jobs for the stagnant U.S. economy.

The massive pipeline, if built, would deliver 700,000 barrels a day of crude from Alberta's oil sands to refineries in Texas.

The proposed route would have crossed six states, including Nebraska's ecologically sensitive Sandhills region and the Ogallala aquifer, which provides water for millions in the area.

The change does not come as a surprise. Late last week, the U.S. State Department announced it would delay its decision on Keystone until early 2013 to give TransCanada time to come up with a new route. [Read more](#)

JAPAN'S RADIOACTIVE FARMLAND MAPPED

November 14 - Nuclear fallout in farmland in eastern Japan is worse than expected. Now officials have a map of exactly where they should concentrate regulatory and clean-up efforts.

In July the Japanese government expanded its Fukushima Evacuation Zone and banned shipments of beef that consumed radioactive hay from the area.

But until now, officials have had to rely almost exclusively on sporadic soil samples to make such decisions.

A study released Monday in the [Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences \(PNAS\)](#) modeled the spread of cesium-137, a radionuclide that can persist in soils for 30 years, across much of the country. The new map defines the highest risk areas beyond Fukushima and neighboring prefectures, which were already known from soil samples to far exceed contamination limits set by Japanese law. [Read more](#)



USA: FEDERAL INSPECTORS FIND PIPELINES IN MONTANA, WYOMING AT RISK OF FAILURE ALONG RIVER CROSSINGS

November 15 - Federal safety regulators disclosed problems Tuesday with oil and other hazardous liquid pipelines at seven major river crossings and hundreds of smaller crossings in Montana and northern Wyoming — problems that could put the lines at increased risk of failure.

Problems found at the major river crossings must be fixed by spring or the companies that own them will face enforcement actions, said Chris Hoidal with the U.S. Department of Transportation.

That includes pipelines crossing the Missouri, Musselshell, Gallatin, Tongue and other rivers that are owned by three companies: Exxon Mobil, CHS and ConocoPhillips.

Some repairs already are under way, according to company representatives.

Many of the pipelines were installed decades ago in shallow trenches just a few feet beneath riverbottoms. Erosion caused in part by record flooding has since exposed the lines or left them buried under minimal cover. The consequences of a line failing was highlighted by an Exxon Mobil pipeline break in July that spilled 1,000 barrels of crude into the Yellowstone River, fouling dozens of miles of riverbank. [Read more](#)

CHINA: OIL SPILL EXERCISE HELD IN HONG KONG



Hong Kong, China, emergency response groups took to the land, sea and sky on Tuesday, to test the city's response to combat a possible large-scale oil spill.

Although Hong Kong, China, rarely encounters such disasters, authorities said they must always be prepared.

There was plenty of action on a beach on Hong Kong's outlying Lamma Island, as an anti-oil pollution exercise, code-named Oilex 2011, went into full damage-control mode. Headed by Hong Kong China's Marine Department, the exercise simulated the response to a mock oil spill from a beached product tanker.

The scenario was that 5,200 tonnes of leaking fuel oil posed a threat to the cooling water system of the main power station on Lamma Island, which supplies energy to Hong Kong, China. [Read more](#)

News (continued)

NETHERLANDS: TRAFIGURA APPEAL OPENS IN DUTCH COURT

November 14 - An appeal against a million-[euro](#) fine on multinational oil trader Trafigura for the illegal export of toxic waste later dumped in Ivory Coast after a stopover in the Netherlands, started Monday.

Trafigura was fined one million euros by a Dutch court in July last year for breaking European waste export laws when the toxic cargo arrived in Amsterdam on board the ship Probo Koala, before being redirected to Abidjan.

The hearing's opening day was mainly devoted to practical issues, including judges rejecting a request by Trafigura's [lawyers](#) who wanted the Probo Koala's Ukrainian captain at the time to testify. [Read more](#)

PAKISTAN: EXPERTS FOR IDENTIFICATION, CLEAN-UP OF POLLUTED SITES

Environmental protection experts here at a seminar stressed the need for identification and cleaning of chemically polluted sites in the country. The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in collaboration with Blacksmith Institute-USA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Environmental Protection Agency (EPA-KPK) held a joint two-day national workshop on "Assessment of chemically polluted sites in Pakistan."

The national and international experts, and representatives of national and provincial Environmental Protection Agencies (EPAs) also resolved to accelerate the process of identification of such sites and concerted efforts for their cleaning up through various activities and initiatives.

The purpose of the workshop was familiarization with contaminated site assessment protocols, identification and risk assessment of contaminated sites, sites prioritization, development of National Inventory Project for contaminated sites in the country, provision of data to government, international organizations and other stakeholder, and spearhead technical and financial support.

Blacksmith Institute and SDPI have been working jointly to inventorise and assess contaminated sites in Pakistan since 2009. [Read more](#)

People in the news

USA: SECRETARY SALAZAR NAMES REAR ADMIRAL JAMES A. WATSON AS NEW DIRECTOR OF THE BUREAU OF SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT



Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar today named Rear Admiral James A. Watson IV as the Director of the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE). BSEE was one of the two agencies to succeed the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE) on Oct. 1, 2011. Admiral Watson will begin as BSEE Director on December 1, 2011, and will succeed Michael R. Bromwich.

Admiral Watson is currently the U.S. Coast Guard's Director of Prevention Policy for Marine Safety, Security and Stewardship in Washington, D.C. He served as the Deputy Commander of the Coast Guard Atlantic Area Command in April 2010, and, on June 1, 2010, was designated as the Federal On-Scene Coordinator for the all-of-government response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

"Admiral Watson has the experience, leadership, and vision that BSEE needs to be successful in establishing and enforcing safety and environmental protections for offshore oil and gas operations," said Secretary Salazar. "Admiral Watson will bring to the job a distinguished record, a commitment to tough and fair-minded enforcement, and the determination to advance our reform agenda for the benefit of the American people and industry." [Read more](#)

Contributed article

U.S. COAST GUARD SEEKS COMMENTS REGARDING OPA 90 CLAIMS PROCEDURES

New Development

The Coast Guard issued a Notice of Inquiry ("NOI") on November 1, 2011 inviting the public to comment on the current Oil Pollution Act of 1990 ("OPA 90") claims procedures and whether certain pre-OPA 90 regulations should be removed. In addition, the Coast Guard is requesting background information and cost data as it is developing a supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking ("SNPRM") that will propose amendments to a 1992 Interim Rule setting forth OPA 90 claims procedures. The NOI includes 37 specific questions that the Coast Guard considers inadequately answered in 1992 or not addressed at all at the time.

Contributed article (continued)

Comments are due by January 30, 2012. The NOI can be accessed at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2011-11-01/pdf/2011-28189.pdf>.

Background

Under OPA 90, responsible parties for a vessel or facility from which oil is discharged, or which poses a substantial threat of discharge, into the waters of the United States, adjoining shorelines, or the exclusive economic zone are strictly liable, jointly and severally, for the resulting oil removal costs and damages up to their limits to liability, absent certain exceptions. The responsible party is the owner or operator of a vessel, pipeline or onshore facility, the lessee of an offshore facility, or the licensee of a deepwater port. Any individual or entity that sustains damages due to the discharge of oil prohibited under OPA 90 or has uncompensated costs related to removal actions may file a claim for such damages and removal costs. OPA 90 sets forth the procedures claimants must follow in order to receive compensation for removal costs and damages.

Generally, claims for OPA 90 removal costs and damages must first be presented to the responsible party of the designated source. If the claim is denied or is not settled within 90 days by the responsible party, then the claimant may commence an action in court or present a claim for the uncompensated removal costs and damages to the Coast Guard's National Pollution Funds Center for payment by the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund (the "Fund"). OPA 90 requires that the procedures for advertising source designations and for presenting, filing, processing, settling, and adjudicating claims against the Fund for removal costs and damages be established by regulation, which the Coast Guard began through an Interim Rule published on August 12, 1992.

The Interim Rule

The Interim Rule established the OPA 90 Claims Procedures and amended the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act ("OCSLA") regulations. OCSLA established an oil spill liability, compensation, and financial responsibility regime for the Outer Continental Shelf that was mirrored by OPA 90. Among other things, the Interim Rule set forth the requirements concerning designation of the source of a discharge, procedures for responsible parties to deny a source designation or advertise a source designation, and procedures for presenting and processing claims directed towards a responsible party and the Fund. The Interim Rule also removed oil source designation and claims advertising regulations from the OCSLA regulations, which established an oil spill liability, compensation, and financial responsibility regime for the Outer Continental Shelf, because they conflicted with OPA 90. OPA 90 repealed this portion of OCSLA (Title III), but expressly provided that certain regulations created under Title III should remain in place until repealed, amended, or superseded.

An opportunity for public comment on the Interim Rule provided in 1992 did not lead to a final rule and the Interim Rule has remained in effect for over 19 years. The Coast Guard is now developing an SNPRM to finalize the Interim Rule and remove all remaining OCSLA regulations it considers to have been superseded by other regulations. Some of the superseded OCSLA regulations include those addressing financial responsibility for a vessel, requirements of persons in charge of a vessel or facility to report pollution incidents, and access to vessels, denial of entry, and detention. The Interim Rule can be accessed at: <http://www.regulations.gov/#!documentDetail;D=USCG-2004-17697-0001>

The Notice of Inquiry

Now that the OPA 90 Claims Procedures have been in effect for 19 years, the Coast Guard recognizes that they should be amended to address gaps and clarify various provisions. Before publishing an SNPRM, however, the Coast Guard would like the public's views based on its experience over the years.

To assist with providing comments, the Coast Guard has provided two Excel format matrix documents available for download—the 1992 Comments Matrix and the NOI Questions Matrix. As noted, there are 37 specific questions categorized as follows: 1) questions concerning the interest in the rulemaking; 2) questions concerning the 1992 comments on the interim rule; 3) questions concerning the claims procedures; 4) questions concerning removing of the OCSLA rule; 5) questions concerning the regulatory analysis for the rulemaking; and 6) other issues.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The OPA 90 claims procedures affect anyone who could potentially suffer damages or uncompensated removal costs as the result of a discharge of oil in U.S. waters. Comments received by the Coast Guard in response to the NOI will likely affect the substance of the SNPRM, therefore your experience with the claims procedures, requirements, and deadlines will be important and constructive. The Coast Guard is particularly interested in the public's experience with the claims procedures arising from the 2010 *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill. Comments to the Coast Guard are due by January 30, 2012.

EDITOR: The foregoing article has just been received from Blank Rome LLP. For additional information please contact -

- Jeanne M. Grasso 202.772.5927 Grasso@BlankRome.com Washington DC
- Jonathan K. Waldron 202.772.5964 Waldron@BlankRome.com Washington, DC
- Tara L. Leiter 202.772.5849 Leiter@BlankRome.com Washington, DC
- Dana S. Merkel 202.772.5973 DMerkel@BlankRome.com Washington, DC



In this issue of the ISCO Newsletter we are printing No. 52 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 DISPERSANT USE (CHAPTER 52)

Having modified the Piper Pawnee crop sprayer as reviewed in articles 50 and 51, a WSL investigator applied the collection plate method of determining droplet size at a DC-4 (Globe Air Inc) trial organised by the Southern California Petroleum Contingency Organisation in conjunction with the American Petroleum Institute (API) and the Caribbean Contingency Organisation at Mesa, Arizona, and when this aircraft subsequently arrived in Europe for possible response to the *Amoco Cadiz Incident*, *RV Seaspring* was available for a sea trial as described in article 51. However, wind speed was too high (25 - 30 knots) to do other than release oil and emulsion from a trailing hose, allow it to spread naturally and estimate thickness at 0.6 to 0.76mm for the oil and 1.3mm for its emulsion on the basis of discharge rate, ship-speed during discharge and ribbon-width of 2 metres from aerial photography. Three ribbon slicks were thus generated by releasing 400 litres of 'topped' Kuwait crude oil, 400 litres of its 50% water-in-oil emulsion and 200litres of the oil as a control.

Indeed, for these trials over a two-day period wind speeds were so high on day 1 as to prevent *RV Seaspring* from laying slicks into the wind and the aircraft had difficulty in judging cross-wind drift to the extent of most of the dispersant missing its target. On day 1, the ship was stationed parallel to the slick to facilitate direct observation as the DC-4 was directed onto each slick by a spotter aircraft flying at higher altitude and photographing the operation, while on day 2 she was positioned directly upwind of the slick so as to judge the accuracy of dispersant application, after which she returned to the slick to judge its effectiveness. On day 2, Corexit 9600 applied at the standard rate of 5-10 gallons per acre was effective on the oil when repeated treatments compensated for the higher than normal thicknesses of these particular windrows, though even with repeated treatments it was noticeably less effective on the 50% emulsion. Subsequently, WSL reported successful dispersion by a DC-6B at the *Ixtoc Blow-out* in the Gulf of Campeche, Mexico, and by the Piper Pawnee at the *Betelguese Incident* in Bantry Bay, Eire.

However, with uncertainties remaining as to whether emergency spray gear and tank storage could be designed for installation and removal from otherwise ideal aircraft, attention turned to helicopters from which these items might be under-slung thus avoiding saddle tanks or fuselage/wing modifications. To this end, WSL investigated the droplet size spectrum produced by commercial crop spraying equipment with respect to altitude of release, the viscosity range of approved dispersants, and the ease or difficulty of operating with an under-swung tank/bucket over oil slicks at sea.

The equipment supplied by the Simplex Manufacturing Company of Portland, Oregon consisted of a 180 gallon capacity fibreglass bucket, two 12 ft nozzle-fitted spray booms and a centrifugal pump driven by a Briggs and Stratton 8HP petrol engine, the bucket being attached to the helicopter by a hook and spreader bar and the spray booms having aerofoils to prevent rotation in flight. The petrol engine was started by a cockpit switch and 12 volt battery and once started a cockpit operated solenoid valve which either circulated the liquid from and to the bucket or directed it to the spray nozzles, while a pressure relief valve in the return line permitted some control over delivery rates to the nozzles. To avoid pump-damage by dry running, a float valve stopped the engine when the bucket contained < 2 gallons. The helicopters used were the single engine Hiller UH12E with a carrying capacity of 450kg and a bucket strop of 18ft and the twin engine Aerospatiale 365 with a carrying capacity of 650kg and a radio altimeter which enabled the bucket strop to be reduced to 5ft (but c.f. article 53).

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.

Events

8th INTERNATIONAL HARBOURMASTERS CONGRESS : GLOBAL PORT & MARINE OPERATIONS

14-18 May, 2012, City Hall, Cork, Ireland - The 8th IHMA Congress in Cork will explore and address the changing landscape of ports and how these changes are redefining the role of harbour masters in the future. Featuring a conference, exhibition and exciting networking program, this prestigious biennial event, will showcase technical and operational breakthroughs together with international case studies on the development and management of modern port and marine operations across the globe.

[More information](#)

Events (continued)

SPE RUSSIAN OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION TECHNICAL CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION

16th – 18th October 2012, All-Russia Exhibition Center, Moscow - The SPE Russian Oil & Gas Exhibition is recognised by the industry as the essential and industry leading technical event. The conference and exhibition bring together senior executives, engineers and industry professionals, with leading national and international E&P companies, to the Russian market.

[More information](#)

Publications

POLLUTION RESPONSE IN EMERGENCIES MARINE IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING - POST-INCIDENT MONITORING GUIDELINES

These guidelines were produced for Defra, as a deliverable within project ME5407: "PREMIAM: Pollution Response in Emergencies Marine Impact Assessment and Monitoring" as the officially supported UK national approach to post-incident monitoring and as a complementary document to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's UK National Contingency Plan for Marine Pollution from Shipping and Offshore Installations. [Download the Guidelines](#)

IMO MANUAL ON OIL POLLUTION (SECTION I), 2011 EDITION



This Section of the Manual on Oil Pollution is intended to provide practical guidance related to the prevention of pollution from ships, and describes procedures for the handling of oil cargoes, bunkering, ship-to-ship transfer operations, transfer operations involving offshore units and operations in ice-covered waters.

It also provides an overview of the various prevention practices, as a complement to the more detailed industry standards and Codes of Practice, currently available. [More information](#)

Company news

OIL MOP, LLC NOW OMI ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS

Oil Mop, LLC announced that it will operate as a d/b/a under the new name OMI Environmental Solutions. Oil Mop has a world-renowned reputation and is one of the oldest oil spill response companies in the nation with over 40 years in business. Oil Mop has assisted with the cleanup of some of the largest oil spills and disasters in our nation's history. Rebranding OMI Environmental Solutions will more appropriately convey the breadth and depth of the services available to its customers.

OMI Environmental Solutions' president and CEO, Shaw Thompson said, "With our continued expansion, we found the name Oil Mop somewhat limited the perception our customers have concerning the various services and products we provide. By offering not only oil spill response, the company will utilize its resources to respond with solutions for any type of spill or haz-mat response situation, industrial service, standby rescue, waste management and disposal service, and transportation service. With safety always first and foremost at OMI Environmental Solutions, the company also offers safety, compliance and training services on line, on site or off site. Furthermore, the products division can provide any company with environmental and safety products both nationally and internationally." More info: Connie Baer, Director of Marketing & Planning - conniebaer@omies.com

PARTNERSHIP LEVERAGES SMITHS DETECTION'S SECURITY EXPERTISE AND ANP TECHNOLOGIES' NOVEL TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE FIRST RESPONDER CAPABILITIES

Smiths Detection today announces a worldwide partnership with ANP Technologies, Inc. for its novel immunoassay technology, which is used to verify the presence of biological threats in the field. ANP's Nano-Intelligent Detection System (NIDS) complements Smiths Detection suite of biological detection technologies for defense and emergency response applications. [More info](#)

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