



# ISCO NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of the International Spill Response Community  
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### News

#### 100 COUNTRIES BACK WORLD ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

January 31 - More than a hundred countries now support a French proposal to create a "World Environment Organisation" at the upcoming 20th anniversary conference of the Rio Summit, France's ecology minister said on Tuesday.

"More than 100 countries have now associated themselves with the proposal," Nathalie Kosciusko-Morizet said at a conference in Paris aimed at stimulating ideas for June 20-22 global gathering.

The idea is to beef up the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), which critics say lacks muscle for dealing with the world's worsening environmental crisis.

But rather than be just a branch of the UN, the proposed agency would help implement international environmental standards and include grassroots groups and business, according to the proposal.

Speaking afterwards to reporters, Kosciusko-Morizet said the United States "has yet to back" to the proposal, citing questions of sovereignty.

*Yahoo News* [Read more](#)

#### COSTA CONCORDIA 'WILL BE REFLOATED AND REMOVED WHOLE'

February 4 - The wreck of the Costa Concordia cruise ship will be re-floated and removed in its entirety rather than being cut up for scrap, a senior Italian official has said. Franco Gabrielli, the head of the Civil Protection Authority, was addressing concerns on the island of Giglio that the sight of the stricken ship could adversely affect tourism this summer.

Costa Cruises, the Italian company that owns the crippled liner, will invite 10 of the world's best known salvage firms to bid for the contract to recover the vessel. Bids must be in by early March, with the contract to be awarded by the end of that month and work to start shortly afterwards. By that time it is hoped that a Dutch company, Smit, will have been able to extract the 500,000 gallons of diesel and heavy oil in the liner's fuel tanks. *The Telegraph* [Read more](#)

## BRAZIL OIL SPILL CONTAINED; SAFETY ISSUE LINGERS

February 4 - Brazil's second major offshore oil spill in four months appears to have been contained, but the latest accident raises questions about the safety of offshore drilling as the country barrels ahead with plans to develop massive offshore reserves.

State-run energy giant Petroleo Brasileiro (PBR, PETR4.BR), or Petrobras, continued recovery operations Thursday, piloting ships armed with water cannons to slice through oil slicks scattered over a 70-square-kilometer area in the Atlantic Ocean. Petrobras estimates that 160 barrels of crude were dumped into the sea after a tube ruptured during a long-term well test at the Carioca Nordeste field.

In a written statement Thursday night, a government team evaluating the Petrobras effort reported that "the oil slick has been significantly reduced since yesterday [Wednesday]." The report said there was virtually no chance any oil would reach the Brazilian coastline. The team includes government environmental and energy experts as well as the Brazilian Navy. *The Wall Street Journal* [Read more](#)

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## CHINA: SEVEN DETAINED OVER CHINA RIVER CADMIUM SPILL



*Photo: Officials have been dumping neutralisers into the river since last week*

January 31 - Seven chemical company officials have been detained over industrial waste that polluted a river in China's Guangxi region, state media said.

Cadmium pollutants were detected in the Longjiang River on 15 January after tests were carried out on dead fish.

The level then was 80 times the official limit, regional environment protection official Feng Zhennian said.

Teams have been putting neutralising chemicals into the river to treat the contamination. *BBC News* [Read more](#)

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## USA: 26,000 GALLON NEW JERSEY DIESEL SPILL HAD A 12-HOUR HEAD START

*Picture: Cleanup continues at Grenloch Lake Thursday as the result of a diesel spill last week.*

January 20 - Dozens of concerned citizens, township Environmental Commission members and town officials gathered at the municipal building's council chambers on Thursday night to discuss the spill of 26,000 gallons of diesel fuel into Grenloch Lake, Blackwood lake and surrounding waterways.

Much of the focus was directed at the NJ Transit officials in attendance, as they explained the source, timeline and reasons for the spill.

Representatives from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection were also in attendance to explain the procedures for the cleanup and environmental impact.

NJ Transit officials attributed the spill to a burst gasket on the two 20,000-gallon fuel tanks located in front of their facility on Route 42. During the meeting, they revealed that the gasket actually burst at around 8 p.m. on Wednesday night, a full 12 hours before the Washington Township Fire Department was on the scene to contain the spills already noticeable in Grenloch lake.



An alarm to notify the NJ Transit facility that there was a problem with the tanks at the time of the burst gasket went unnoticed. Joyce Gallagher, vice president of NJ Transit's bus facilities, said that the position of the alarm panel in the garage was blocked from view by the buses. It was only a visual, not audible, alarm and did not repeat. An alternate alarm is located in the foreman's office, but it also went unnoticed and it reset automatically.

It wasn't until 1 a.m., when workers at the garage were unable to get fuel from their pumps, that they realized there was an issue. *NJ.com* [Read more](#) [Thanks to Don Johnston of ISCO Industry Partner, DG & Hazmat Group, for passing on this report]

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## EUROPE: EU STUDY FINDS NO NEED FOR NEW LEGISLATION ON GAS 'FRACKING'

February 1 - A European Commission consultancy study on licensing hydraulic fracturing or "fracking" for shale gas in EU member states has said there is no need for specific new legislation governing the controversial activity.

However, the study noted that public participation in authorising mineral exploration projects generally was "problematic", as it was "often rather limited".

The study by Brussels-based legal firm Philippe and Partners analysed the legal situation governing "fracking" in four EU member states – Sweden, Poland, France and Germany.

All four had or have limited exploratory drilling for shale gas, with drilling suspended since February 2011 in France pending assessments of the environmental impact. *Irish Times* [Read more](#)

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## EUROPE: PLANS TO EXTEND EU LIST OF DANGEROUS WATER POLLUTANTS 'FALL SHORT', SAYS WWF

February 1 - Environmental group WWF has criticised plans by the European Commission to add 15 new chemicals to the current EU list of 33 dangerous water pollutants, arguing proposals "fall short".

According to WWF water policy officer Sergey Moroz, the Commission's delayed proposal, which was published yesterday (January 31), fails to specify when and how existing EU policies, such as regulation on chemicals or pesticides legislation, should be used to control water pollution.

As part of the Commission's proposals, it is planning to extend the current list to include substances ranging from industrial and household chemicals to pesticides and for the first time pharmaceuticals, which can end up in surface waters as a result of manufacturing and agricultural processes.

It also proposes phasing out and banning most hazardous chemicals from the EU market, as well as setting strict water concentration limits on other listed chemicals. *Edie Water* [Read more](#)

## USA: OIL SPILL PREPAREDNESS FOR DRILLING IN CUBA AND BAHAMAS

### Miami Congressional Hearing Targets Oil Spill Preparedness

January 31 - Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman John L. Mica (R-FL) will chair a congressional field hearing in the Miami, Florida area to examine Cuban and Bahamian plans to drill exploratory oil wells in waters off the Florida coast. The hearing will review the U.S. Coast Guard's preparedness to handle potential oil spills occurring in these waters.

Members of Congress from South Florida, including U.S. Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), U.S. Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL), U.S. Rep. David Rivera (R-FL), and U.S. Rep. Allen West (R-FL) plan to participate in the hearing.

The panel will hear testimony relating to limitations on U.S. enforcement and oversight capability of incidents in Cuban and Bahamian waters, and learn what steps the U.S. Coast Guard has taken to prepare or respond to potential spills at these new sites. Florida Coast Guard Sectors Jacksonville, Miami, Key West and St. Petersburg are updating their Area Contingency Plans, and the Service's Seventh District, headquartered in Miami, is overseeing work on an Offshore Drill Response and Regional Contingency Plan that focuses on response strategies and tactics to combat a spill at sea. *Maritime Executive* [Read more](#)

### Experts: US ill-prepared for oil spill off Cuba

January 30 - The U.S. is not ready to handle an oil spill if drilling off the Cuban coast goes awry but can be better prepared with monitoring systems and other basic steps, experts told government officials Monday.

The comments at a congressional subcommittee hearing in the Miami Beach suburb of Sunny Isles come more than a week after a huge oil rig arrived in Cuban waters to begin drilling a deepwater exploratory well.

Similar development is expected off the Bahamas next year, but decades of tense relations between the U.S. and Cuba makes cooperation in protecting the Florida Straits particularly tricky. With memories of the Deepwater Horizon spill in the Gulf of Mexico still fresh, state and federal officials fear even the perception of oil flowing toward Florida beaches could devastate an economy that claims about \$57 billion from tourism.

Florida International University Professor John Proni told officials to be proactive. He is leading a consortium of researchers on U.S. readiness to handle a spill.

## News (continued)

"For the last few years, my colleagues and I have been visiting Washington to say the best time to start preparing for an oil spill is before it happens," Proni told leaders of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, in a hotel-turned-hearing room overlooking the turquoise waters the group convened to protect. Proni said he has seen little action from officials in Washington, though they responded positively. *WMBF News* [Read more](#)

### USA: HALLIBURTON WINS RULING VS BP OVER GULF OIL SPILL

January 31 - A federal judge on Tuesday said Halliburton Co is not liable for some pollution claims arising from the 2010 Gulf of [Mexico](#) oil spill, setting back BP Plc's effort to hold other companies responsible for part of the \$42 billion cleanup.

U.S. District Judge Carl Barbier in New Orleans said BP must indemnify Halliburton, which provided cementing services for the Macondo oil well, for third-party compensatory claims under their contract, even if Halliburton is found grossly negligent.

The indemnification relates to claims arising from pollution or contamination that did not originate from Halliburton property located above the land or water.

Halliburton would still be responsible for punitive damages, as well as civil fines under the federal Clean Water Act. *Reuters* [Read More](#)

### CANADA: NEW OILSANDS WATCHDOG A VICTORY FOR SCIENCE



*Photo: Suncor's tailings reduction operation (TRO) site in Fort McMurray: The oilsands industry is footing the bill for a new pollution monitoring program that has some teeth.*

February 4 - In the world of science and politics, the meeting was unprecedented. Senior representatives of the federal and Alberta environment departments met at the University of Alberta last Tuesday with a select group of scientists from all over Canada, some of whom showed up in person while others participated by teleconference.

The goal was to obtain the scientists' support for a new joint federal-provincial oilsands pollution monitoring program that the two governments hope will silence international criticism over the "dirty oil" produced by the oilsands industry....

"Usually the government doesn't care about us," Andrew Miall, a petroleum geology professor at the University of Toronto who participated in the meeting via teleconference, said in an interview. "But this is an international issue and suddenly they need us. That's why it's really important that we get this right."

At the meeting, senior environment department officials from Alberta and Ottawa proposed what they described as a new "world-class" oilsands monitoring program that will examine the full extent of industrial pollution in the Athabasca watershed and its effects on wildlife. *Montreal Gazette* [Read more](#)

## People in the news

### MEMBER OF ISCO COUNCIL FOR GREECE ELECTED AS REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT OF SNAME



At the annual meeting of the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers (SNAME) it was announced that Professor Harilaos N. Psarftis, Director of the Laboratory of Maritime Transport and SNAME Fellow, was elected International Regional Vice President of SNAME.

Harilaos N. Psarftis is Professor of Maritime Transport at the School of Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering (NA&ME) of the National Technical University of Athens (NTUA), Greece.

Professor Psarftis has served on the ISCO Council since 2006.

## People in the news (continued)

### ISCO CORPORATE MEMBER, RESOLVE MARINE GROUP, ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF MARINE FIREFIGHTING VETERAN JEFF JOHNSON AS TRAINING AND RESPONSE MANAGER & PACIFIC REGION RESPONDER

RESOLVE Marine Group, Inc. announced that Jeff Johnson has joined the company as Manager, Training and Response with responsibilities in both RESOLVE's Salvage & Fire (Americas) emergency response/OPA-90 subsidiary and at RESOLVE Maritime Academy, the training subsidiary.

Jeff focuses on continuous development of RESOLVE's U.S. and territorial waters Firefighting Response Network and serves as the company's Pacific Region Responder for marine incidents, while promoting Resolve Maritime Academy training programs. *Maritime Executive* [Read more](#)



### NEW CHAIRMAN FRANS VAN ROMPUY MEETS EMSA STAFF



The newly elected Chairman of the Administrative Board, Frans Van Rompuy, visited EMSA on 12 January.

Mr Van Rompuy is Belgium's Director General of Maritime Transport (Federal Public Service of Mobility and Transport). The visit gave him the opportunity to meet senior management and EMSA staff.

*From the February 2012 issue of the EMSA Newsletter* [Read more](#)

## Science and technology

### SANDIA CHEMISTS FIND NEW MATERIAL TO REMOVE RADIOACTIVE GAS FROM SPENT NUCLEAR FUEL

January 24 - Research by a team of Sandia chemists could impact worldwide efforts to produce clean, safe nuclear energy and reduce radioactive waste.

The Sandia researchers have used metal-organic frameworks (MOFs) to capture and remove volatile radioactive gas from spent nuclear fuel. "This is one of the first attempts to use a MOF for iodine capture," said chemist Tina Nenoff of Sandia's Surface and Interface Sciences Department.

The discovery could be applied to nuclear fuel reprocessing or to clean up nuclear reactor accidents. A characteristic of nuclear energy is that used fuel can be reprocessed to recover fissile materials and provide fresh fuel for nuclear power plants. Countries such as France, Russia and India are reprocessing spent fuel.

The process also reduces the volume of high-level wastes, a key concern of the Sandia researchers. "The goal is to find a methodology for highly selective separations that result in less waste being interred," Nenoff said. *Pollution Online* [Read more](#)

### MAGNETIC SOAP COULD CLEAN UP OIL SPILLS

January 22 - Researchers at the University of Bristol, UK dissolved iron particles in water that contained chlorine and bromine ions, materials which are commonly found in household products such as mouthwash or fabric cleaner. This created a metallic centre within the soap particles that could be influenced by a nearby magnetic field.

The team tried out their new soap by placing it in a test tube beneath layers of water and an oil-like substance. Using a magnet, they were able to overcome both gravity and surface tension to lift the soap through the layers and out of the tube.

This test shows that it is much easier to remove magnetic soaps from mixtures of other liquids, suggesting they could be used in response to environmental disasters such as oil spills, where concerns have been raised about the cleaning substances in use. A magnetic soap could easily be collected after cleaning, reducing the environmental impact. *New Scientist* [Read more](#)



In this issue of the ISCO Newsletter we are printing No. 62 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](#)

## CHAPTER 62: KNOWLEDGE OF REMOTE SENSING AND IDENTIFICATION SAMPLING

It has been repeatedly noted at release incidents, that oil is difficult to observe from sea level or from the bridge of a ship even in its immediate vicinity. Though this would be relatively unimportant for response were the sea surface continuously and extensively covered with pollutant, we already know that continuous slicks are eventually broken into windrows and other isolated rafts of emulsion so that ships cannot always maximise their encounter/treatment rates for dispersant spraying or mechanical recovery. Indeed we have already referred to our knowledge-based need for aircraft in surveillance mode to make good the observational deficiencies of those in the lower altitude mode required for aerial dispersant spraying (article 55).

However, while many a cloud shadow, area of sediment disturbance, floating seaweed, submerged sandbank or similar anomaly has been reported as oil by well-meaning aerial observers in commercial transit, and while many a so-called expert has found employment in attempting to distinguish between oil and this or that anomaly, there has never been any doubt that a remote instrumental technique for identification of oil as oil would be helpful; and that it would be even more helpful were such instrumentation to differentiate bands of thickness for oil layers as this would be of immediate assistance in deploying response resources to areas of maximum encounter rate. Again, as to the policing of illegal operational discharges, it would be helpful were such instrumentation to go some way towards identifying oil and oil type without the collection of samples from the sea surface.

As to such operational discharges, however, we know that these are small in comparison with casualty-related releases; and that they or their less viscous components are likely to be in Phase III spreading mode when the oil droplets discharged from a ship-borne gravity separator re-coalesce to produce areas of coloured sheen. Indeed, it is difficult to see how such sheens could fail to evaporate or to form secondary dispersion droplets very quickly under normal wave action. However, since re-coalesced primary droplets from land-based API separator discharge points also formed coloured sheens, the API Manual on Disposal of Refinery Wastes (1969, corroborated by Hornstein (1973), tabulated their colour, thickness and volume per unit area as follows:

Colour	Approximate Thickness µm	Approximate Volume/Area m <sup>3</sup> /km <sup>2</sup>
Silver/transparent	0.02-0.05	
Grey	0.1	0.1
Rainbow	0.3	0.3
Blue	1.0	0.1
Blue/Brown	5.0	5.0
Brown	15.0	15.0
Black	20.0	20.0
Dark Brown/Black	0.1mm	100.0

Thus, while colour differentiation can indicate differing layer thicknesses, these thicknesses are too low to require active dispersion or mechanical recovery and thus provide no guidance towards maximising encounter rates for the layer thicknesses deemed to require dispersant treatment and/or mechanical recovery at sea.

Again, recognising that some operational discharges are deliberate and involve larger quantities of more viscous oil, attempts were made to collect samples from sea and shore surfaces and to subject them to comparative analysis with tank contents of suspect ships to establish the source in terms acceptable to a court. However, while it has been argued that similarity in analytical results identifies a slick sample as having come from a suspect ship, it can also be argued that it only identifies a bunkering station common to many ships.

Clearly, in the 1970s, there was scope for improvement in our ability to remotely detect areas of casualty-releases thick enough to merit dispersant treatment or mechanical recovery, and to identify and attribute to the culprit the more significant and perhaps deliberate operational discharges of oil to the sea.. Thus, progress towards these objectives will be reviewed from the 1970s onwards in the following articles 63-68 while progress in sampling will be reviewed in article 69.

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.

## OIL SPILL REMOTE SENSING: CHAPTER 4



Continuing a short series of articles on Oil Spill Remote Sensing contributed by Dr Merv Fingas of Spill Science, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6W 1J6 [fingasmerv@shaw.ca](mailto:fingasmerv@shaw.ca)

Merv Fingas MSc PhD worked for more than 35 years in the field of oil spill technology at Environment Canada's Environmental Technology Center in Ottawa, Ontario. As head of the Emergencies Science Division at the Centre, he conducted and managed research and development projects. He is currently working independently in Alberta. Dr Fingas is the Member of ISCO Council for Canada.

This is the 4th of a series of articles which will go into the remote sensing of oil spills. This series will cover oil spill remote sensing step by step and will present the latest in knowledge on the topic.

### Visible indications of oil

Under many circumstances oil is not visible to the eye on the water surface.<sup>7</sup> Other than the obvious situations of nighttime and fog, there exists many situations where oil cannot be seen. A very common situation is that of thin oil such as from ship discharges or the presence of materials such as sea weed, ice and debris that mask oil presence. Often there are conditions on the sea that may appear like oil, when there is indeed no oil. These include wind shadows from land forms, surface wind patterns on the sea, surface dampening by submerged objects or weed beds, natural oils or biogenic material and oceanic fronts. In the case of large spills, the area may be too great to be mapped visually. Several cases of confusion of oil slick appearance and other phenomena are illustrated in Figures 3 and 4. All these factors dictate that remote sensing systems be used to assist in the task of mapping and identifying oil. In many cases, aerial observation and remote sensing are necessary to direct cleanup crews to slicks.



Figure 3



Figure 4

### Optical sensors - Visible

The use of human vision alone is not considered remote sensing, however it still forms the most common technique for oil-spill surveillance. In the past, major campaigns using only human vision were mounted with varying degrees of success.<sup>3</sup> Optical techniques, using the same range of the visible spectrum detection, are the most common means of remote sensing. Cameras, both still and video, are common because of their low price and commercial availability. Systems are now available to directly map remote sensing data onto base maps.

In the visible region of the electromagnetic spectrum (approximately 400 to 700 nm), oil has a higher surface reflectance than water, but shows limited non-specific absorption/reflection tendencies as shown in Figure 2, in section 3 of this series. Oil generally manifests throughout the entire visible spectrum. Sheen shows up silvery and reflects light over a wide spectral region down to the blue. As there is no strong information in the 500 to 600 nm region, this region is often filtered out to improve contrast.<sup>8</sup> Overall, however, oil has no specific characteristics that distinguish it from the background.<sup>9</sup> A specific study of oil spectra in the laboratory and the field and observed flat spectra with no useable features distinguishing it from the background.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, techniques that separate specific spectral regions do not increase detection capability. Some researchers noted that while the oil spectra is flat, that the presence of oil may slightly alter water spectra.<sup>3</sup> It has been suggested that the water peaks are raised slightly at 570 to 590, 710 to 780 and 710 to 800 nm. At the same time there are depressions or troughs at 650 to 680 nm and 740 to 760 nm. It has been found that high contrast in visible imagery can be achieved by setting the camera at the Brewster angle (53 degrees from vertical) and using a horizontally-aligned polarizing filter which passes only that light reflected from the water surface.<sup>3</sup> This is the component that contains the information on surface oil.<sup>3</sup> It has been reported that this technique increases contrast by up to 100%. Filters with band-pass below 450 nm can be used to improve contrast. View angle is important and some researchers have noted that the thickness changes the optimal view angle.<sup>3</sup> Some researchers claim that hyperspectral data from space was useful in distinguishing oil spills.<sup>3</sup>



Figure 5

Sun glitter is a particular problem in visible remote sensing. Sun glitter can sometimes be confused for oil sheens. Some researchers removed sun glitter from visible airborne hyperspectral imagery by using the ratio of longer versus shorter wavelengths.<sup>3</sup> Images can then be 'corrected' using this ratio. The premise is that glitter is more pronounced at shorter wavelengths. Figure 5 shows the effects of sun glitter on slick photography.

Video cameras are often used in conjunction with filters to improve the contrast in a manner similar to that noted for still cameras. This technique has had limited success for oil spill remote sensing because of poor contrast and lack of positive discrimination. Despite this, video systems have been proposed as remote sensing systems.<sup>3</sup> With new light-enhancement technology (low lux), video cameras can be operated even in darkness. Tests of a generation III night vision camera shows that this technology is capable of providing imagery in very dark night conditions.<sup>3</sup>

Scanners were used in the past as sensors in the visible region of the spectrum. A rotating mirror or prism swept the field-of-view (FOV) and directed the light towards a detector. Before the advent of CCD (charge-coupled device) detectors, this sensor provided much more sensitivity and selectivity than video cameras. Another advantage of scanners were that signals were digitized and processed before display. Recently, newer technology has evolved and similar digitization can be achieved without scanning by using a CCD imager and continually recording all elements, each of which is directed to a different field-of-view on the ground. This type of sensor, known as a push-broom scanner, has many advantages over the older scanning types. It can overcome several types of aberrations and errors, the units are more reliable than mechanical ones, and all data are collected simultaneously for a given line perpendicular to the direction of the aircraft's flight. Several types of scanners were developed.

The detection or measurement of oil-in-water has never been successfully accomplished using visible remote sensing technology. There may be potential for light scattering technology.

The use of visible techniques in oil spill remote sensing is largely restricted to documentation of the spill because there is no mechanism for positive oil detection. Furthermore, there are many interferences or false alarms. Sun glint and wind sheens can be mistaken for oil sheens. Biogenic material such as surface seaweeds or sunken kelp beds can be mistaken for oil. Oil on shorelines is difficult to identify positively because seaweeds look similar to oil and oil cannot be detected on darker shorelines. In summary, the usefulness of the visible spectrum for oil detection is limited. It is an economical way to document spills and provide baseline data on shorelines or relative positions.

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## Training

### CERTIFICATE IN MARITIME ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

A course from Lloyds Maritime Academy delivered by distance learning over 12 weeks – Commencing 13 March, 2012.

This unique course by distance learning is designed to provide you with the knowledge, skills and insights to fully understand the major environmental issues impacting the maritime sector.

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### PREPAREDNESS FOR AND RESPONSE TO CHEMICAL (HNS) POLLUTION INCIDENTS

A training course being given at the Interspill Conference and Exhibition in London by instructors from IMO, ITOPF and Braemar Howells.

The course will provide an overview of the unique issues and consideration to be made in preparing for and responding to pollution incidents involving hazardous and noxious, i.e. chemical substances. This will include an introduction to the identification of HNS, their fate and behaviour in the environment and the associated hazards and the implications of these for responders. This will also include a review of how dangerous goods are transported at sea and the regulatory framework that governs their movement.

A series of practical tools and exercises will be introduced to guide participants through exercises and scenarios that aim to provide basic knowledge and skills in undertaking a preliminary assessment in the event of a HNS pollution incident.

As a follow-on to this, the course will provide an overview of the decision-making process for response operations, in particular identification of response objectives and strategies, the particular health and safety considerations that need to be made in the event of an HNS incident to protect the population and response personnel, an overview of personal protective equipment and decontamination procedures.

These practical aspects will be placed into context through the review of a case study, giving an overview of types of issues and decision-making requirements arising from a real incident. [More info](#)

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### POLITICAL POSTURING AND MEDIA MACHINATIONS: MORE DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH THAN A SPILL?



*In the picture: Robin Perry*

A seminar taking place at the forthcoming Interspill Conference and Exhibition in London. The instructors are Robin Perry and Steve Panton.

Robin Perry's 32 years experience includes response to major spills, spill training and consultancy worldwide.

Steve Panton's journalistic career has spread over six decades includes 30 years at the BBC and as specialist media lecturer for Oil Spill Response.

If there was an Olympic gold medal for "The Greatest Public Relations Disaster Ever", Exxon Valdez and Deepwater Horizon would surely be finalists. Both Exxon and BP were rubbished by grandstanding politicians, outraged victims and appalled conservationists who all helped to stoke the media feeding frenzy. Intriguingly, these PR debacles developed from diametrically opposed starting points. Exxon tried to ignore the media, yet BP was very open with journalists. So, why did it all go so wrong and how would you perform faced with the same level of hostilities?

The seminar is designed for personnel who might be interviewed by the media during their careers, either in unplanned encounters (door stepping), whilst supervising operations at spill sites or in formal interviews and press conferences. It will be useful both for those who have already had some media training as well for people entirely new to the subject.

Building on their standing-room-only presentation at the International Oil Spill Conference in Portland last year, Robin and Steve will prepare you to handle the pressures from national and local politicians as well as from the print, broadcast and social media. Deepwater Horizon forcefully demonstrated that these issues, especially ill chosen comments, can have a major impact upon the response, may deepen the crisis and can even cost you your job.

The course will examine the influence of US politics, the media and social media on the conduct of the Deepwater Horizon response and its aftermath. This will be followed by a comparison of political reactions and spill management in other jurisdictions. Using case history examples, it will reinforce the need for co-operative contingency planning and regular exercises to minimise the opportunities for political and media criticism. It will examine the fundamental principles of handling the media in a crisis, especially how to avoid ill-judged, off-the-cuff remarks. The role of unaccountable social media will also be examined.

Delegates will prepare for and take part in news conferences using a previously circulated scenario and will examine advanced techniques for handling tricky one-to-one interviews. These skills will be developed in simulated pre-recorded interviews, "as live" interviews and those from remote, unattended studios. Robin and Steve will be joined by an additional experienced journalist and cameraman for this session.

The seminar will conclude with a general discussion after the journalists have presented broadcast and newspaper reports, based on the information obtained in the press conferences and interviews. [More info](#)

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## Publications

### JUST PUBLISHED! POLLUTION PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE ACTIVITIES REPORT 2011

The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) submits a report to the Commission and the Administrative Board, by 31 January each year, concerning the financial execution of the detailed plan (Action Plan) for the Agency's pollution preparedness and response activities and give an update of the status of all actions funded under that plan (Regulation 2038/2006/EC1, Article 7). [More info](#)

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### OFFSHORE DRILLING IN CUBA AND THE BAHAMAS: THE U.S. COAST GUARD'S OIL SPILL READINESS & RESPONSE PLANNING

Written statement of Debbie Payton, Chief, Emergency Response Division, Office of Response and Restoration, National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, on Offshore Drilling in Cuba and the Bahamas: The U.S. Coastguard's Oil Spill Readiness & Response Planning before the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, U.S. House of Representatives, January 30, 2012. [Download](#)

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### JANUARY 2012 ISSUE OF UK SPILL'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER "SPILLALERT"

Special Interspill Edition - A preview of this multifaceted event that brings together experts and leaders of the spill industry to share ideas and debate issues of the moment. During this 3-day event, visitors will have the chance to access the international exhibition, free to attend, as well as benefit from a conference programme and educational sessions that will cover all the developments and best practices in the spill industry. [Download](#)

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### LATEST U.S. EPA PUBLICATIONS

TechDirect February 1 issue [Download](#) Technology Innovation News Survey December 16-31 issue [Download](#)

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## Events

### IMO: MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMITTEE

London, 27 February – 2 March, 2012 [More info](#)

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## New products and services

### FACTORY CALIBRATED INFRARED ANALYZERS PROVIDE ON-SITE OIL IN WATER OR SOIL MEASUREMENTS IN 10-15 MINUTES

Wilks Enterprise is pleased to announce the availability of factory-calibrated portable [infrared analyzers](#) for determining the concentration level of [oil in water](#) or soil. The InfraCal [TOG/TPH Analyzers](#) provide easy, on-site measurements in 10-15 minutes and eliminate the need to wait for off-site results. The InfraCal Analyzers are ideal for use by non-technical personnel on oil drilling platforms, in refineries or industrial manufacturing facilities and at [soil remediation](#) sites. [Read more](#)

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## Contracts and tenders

### INVITATION TO APPLY - EMSA/NEG/1/2012: SERVICE CONTRACTS FOR STAND-BY OIL SPILL RECOVERY VESSEL(S)

CONTRACT NOTICE: 2012/S 20-031452: Service contracts for standby oil spill recovery vessel(s) As published the 31/01/2012 in the Supplement to the Official Journal of the European Union. Deadline for submitting applications: 16 March 2012 [More info](#)

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