



ISCO NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of the International Spill Response Community
Issue 350, 3 September 2012

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News

INDONESIA RATIFIES SEVERAL IMO INSTRUMENTS



IMO Secretary-General, Koji Sekimizu (left) receives the Instruments of Accession to MARPOL Annexes III, IV, V and VI and the SAR Convention, from His Excellency Mr. T. M. Hamzah Thayeb, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Permanent Representative to IMO.

The Republic of Indonesia has formally acceded to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL Convention), Annexes III,

IV, V and VI, and the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR Convention).

His Excellency Mr. T. M. Hamzah Thayeb, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the United Kingdom and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Indonesia to IMO, handed over the two Instruments of Accession to IMO Secretary-General Mr. Koji Sekimizu during a visit to IMO Headquarters on Friday (24 August) *IMO Press Release* [Read more](#)

BALTIC SEA: BALEX DELTA 2012



Finland leads major counter-pollution drill in Baltic Sea

August 27 - Finland on Monday led one of the biggest counter-pollution drills on the Baltic Sea, involving 70 vessels in the exercise.

The drill simulates a collision between two vessels in Finnish waters at 21 nautical miles (39 kilometres) off Helsinki, with wind and currents moving 15,000 tonnes of crude oil towards Finland's southern coast.

The exercise is primarily aimed at testing the ability of 10 oil response vessels in dealing with the crisis. Other participating vessels contributed by putting in place a floating barrier against the spill. *TerraDaily* [Read more](#)

August 31 - The 2012 Balex Delta oil spill response exercise was conducted in the sea region outside Helsinki, Finland, which included dozens of Finnish organizations, over 20 oil pollution response vessels, over 50 other vessels, and over 500 people from European Union Member States and Baltic Sea states, including Finland.

This exercise is conducted every year under the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area. The Finnish Environment Institute SYKE is the coordinator of this year's event. The Finnish Defence Forces, the Finnish Border Guard, and Meritaito took part in the event with their aircraft recovery vessels and personnel. Moreover, equipment and staff from Kymenlaakso, Länsi- and Itä-Uusimaa, and Helsinki rescue authorities participated in the exercise.

The exercise involved recreation of a major oil tanker accident which occurred in the Gulf of Finland, whereupon 15,000 tons of crude oil spilled into the sea. For this purpose, peat is employed to simulate the oil. The objective of the exercise is to ensure the cooperation between national and international oil spill response agencies and vessels. During the exercise, all features of the oil spill response operations, ranging from sending alarms to recovered waste disposal, were tested. Crews at ashore and sea practiced the implementation of oil containment booms, oil spill mapping, oil recovery, preparedness for shoreline cleanup, shoreline protection, logistics and oiled wildlife response. *AzoMining.com* [Read more](#)



ARCTIC DRILLING UPDATE

Shell seeks more time to drill exploratory well in Chukchi Sea



Shell says the Arctic Challenger will probably complete renovations in Bellingham, Wash., this week and set sail for Alaska. (August 26, 2012)

August 26 - With its bid to launch offshore drilling in the Arctic Ocean running up against a deadline to protect against sea ice, Shell Alaska has requested an extension in its window for drilling in the Chukchi Sea.

Peter E. Slaiby, vice president of the Alaska venture, said Sunday that the company has proposed extending the time allowed for drilling in the Chukchi by slightly less than two weeks beyond the Sept. 24 deadline set by the U.S. Department of Interior to allow time for cleanup of any oil spill before the onset of winter sea ice.

Meeting with reporters at an Arctic Imperative Summit here, Slaiby said the

company's latest models for forecasting the onset of winter sea ice now

show the first freeze-up occurring somewhat later than originally envisioned when federal officials imposed their initial deadline for ending operations in the Chukchi Sea. *Los Angeles Times* [Read more](#)

Shell can start drill prep in Alaska's Chukchi Sea

August 30 - Royal Dutch Shell PLC has been given a permit to begin preparation work at exploratory drilling sites in the Chukchi Sea off Alaska's northwest coast while it awaits certification for its oil spill response barge, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar announced Thursday.

"We are allowing certain limited preparatory activities that we know can be done in a safe manner," he said in a teleconference with reporters.

The company was granted permission to starting digging with its drill ship, but only into the layer of ocean bottom that's above oil reserves. Shell can dig 20-by-40-foot mud-line cellars, which will eventually hold and protect a well's blowout preventer 40 feet below the seabed. The company also is authorized to drill narrow pilot holes, which reveal obstructions or gas pockets, down another 1,500 feet. That's about 4,000 feet above where petroleum is expected. *Bloomberg Business Week* [Read more](#)
[Read another report in the LA Times](#)

NIGERIA: FRESH OIL SPILL HITS ATLANTIC COASTLINE IN AKWA-IBOM

August 29 - Ten days after the oil spill at Qua Iboe fields operated by Mobil Producing Nigeria Unlimited, MPN, more spills have been sighted on the Atlantic coastline at Ibeno, Akwa Ibom State.

Fishermen and residents of coastal communities at Ibeno and Esit Eket Local Government Areas of the state, who noticed oil spills on the shoreline, reported the development to the oil spill agency.

An official of National Oil Spills Detection and Response Agency, NOSDRA, said the agency got the report of fresh oil spill on the shores. *Vanguard* [Read more](#)

NIGERIA: OIL SPILL STRETCHES FOR MILES BY EXXON NIGERIA FIELD

August 31 - An oil spill near an ExxonMobil oilfield off the southeast coast of Nigeria has spread along the shore for about 15 miles, and locals said it was killing fish they depend on to live.

Mobil Producing Nigeria, a joint venture between ExxonMobil and the state oil firm, said this month it was helping clean up an oil spill near its Ibeno field in Akwa Ibom state, though it did not know the source of the oil.

This Reuters reporter saw that water along the coast was covered with a rainbow-tinted film of oil for miles. *Reuters* [Read more](#)

SOUTH AFRICA: TURKISH BULK CARRIER SPILLS OIL INTO CAPE PENINSULA COASTLINE

September 1 - The Turkish bulk carrier which ran aground off the coast of Bloubergstrand in the Cape Peninsula three years ago has broken up, spilling oil into the coastline. Cape Town Disaster Management says the vessel succumbed to strong winds and rough seas.

Spokesperson Wilfred Solomons-Johannes says a 300 metre oil slick is covering the coastline.

"The entire coastline between Dolphin Beach hotel right up to the north of Tableview beach has been affected. A heavy container bunker oil has been washed ashore. There are also large volumes of quantities of oil in the water and we are awaiting on a tide to wash the oil to shore." *SABC News* [Read more](#)

CURACAO: OIL SPILL UPDATE

Oil spill fouls Curacao shore, threatens flamingos

August 28 - An extensive fuel spill has fouled a stretch of shoreline and oiled pink flamingos and other wildlife in a nature preserve in Curacao, conservationists and residents of the tiny Dutch Caribbean island said Monday.

The leader of a local environmental group asserted Monday that the spill of crude oil at Curacao's Jan Kok preserve was from at

News (continued)

least one storage tank owned by the Isla oil refinery, the largest business and employer on the southern Caribbean island best known for its diving opportunities and colorful capital of Willemstad. The island's refinery is run by the state-owned oil company of Venezuela, only about 40 miles away.

"This is probably the biggest (environmental) disaster in Curacao," said Peter van Leeuwen of the Stichting SMOC group. "The whole area of Jan Kok is black. The birds are black. The crabs are black. The plants are black. Everything is draped in oil." *CBS News* [Read more](#)

PDVSA confirms oil spill at Curacao refinery

August 30 - An oil spill occurred recently at the refinery on the Caribbean island of Curacao and clean-up operations are nearly complete, state-owned Petroleos de Venezuela, or PDVSA, said.

PDVSA did not say how the spill happened or how much crude seeped out.

"The event at Refineria Isla, in Curacao, happened more than 10 days ago" and was "quickly dealt with" by company management and the island's government, PDVSA said in a statement released on Wednesday. *Fox News* [Read more](#)

CHINA: TYPHOON KAK-TAK CAUSES OIL SPILL

August 18 - Typhoon Kai-Tak has caused heavy damage in China's two provinces killing one person and causing economic loss running into \$315 million, besides triggering an oil spill.

The typhoon, the 13th tropical storm to hit China this year, has left one person dead and two missing in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region so far and about 110,000 residents there remain threatened, state-run Xinhua news agency said.

An oil ship anchored near Beihai, a coastal city in Guangxi, drifted and collided into the bank, spilling five tonnes of oil. The local government initiated an emergency response plan and sent a work team to clean up the spill and cordon off the contaminated area to prevent the pool from expanding. *IBN Live* [Read more](#)

UK: 800 BARRELS OF OIL IN MYSTERY NORTH SEA LEAK

August 30 - An urgent government-level investigation has been launched to identify the source of an oil spill in the North Sea off Aberdeenshire.

A sheen of oil, estimated to contain up to 132 tonnes of oil – equivalent to almost 800 barrels – was spotted from the air 100 miles north-east of the St Fergus terminal on the Buchan coast. The sheen is only two-and-a-half miles from a subsea pipeline, operated by Talisman Energy, where an estimated 13 tonnes of oil are believed to have leaked through a crack in the pipeline over the past week.

But detailed analysis has now ruled out any link between the two spills. *The Scotsman* [Read more](#)

USA: HURRICANE ISAAC UPDATE

Response Teams Monitor Oil, Gas Activities

August 29 - Offshore oil and gas operators in the Gulf of Mexico have evacuated platforms and rigs in the path of Hurricane Isaac. The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) Hurricane Response Team is activated and monitoring the operators' activities. The team will continue to work with offshore operators and other state and federal agencies until operations return to normal and the storm is no longer a threat to Gulf of Mexico oil and gas activities. *The Maritime Executive* [Read more](#)

As Isaac moves on, energy companies stir

September 2 - Energy companies prepared to restart production in the Gulf of Mexico Thursday, even as the remnants of Hurricane Isaac continued to rumble across Louisiana, leaving floodwaters, downed trees and power outages in its soggy wake.

Along the coast, refinery crews also began to assess the damage in preparation for resuming operations. *Chron* [Read more](#)

SRI LANKA: OIL SPILL “CONTAINED”



Tourists and residents enjoy the waters off Mount Lavinia beach on the outskirts of Colombo on Aug 26, 2012. Sri Lanka's coastguard and volunteers have cleaned up an oil spill from a sunken cargo vessel clearing the way for swimmers and foreign tourists to return to the beaches, officials said. -- PHOTO: AFP

August 28 - An oil slick from a sunken cargo vessel has been contained and is no longer a threat to beach resorts popular with foreign tourists, Sri Lankan authorities declared on Sunday.

The rusting ship went down in bad weather on Thursday night outside a Colombo harbour and had threatened a 50km stretch of coastline including resorts at Mount Lavinia and Negombo. *The Straits Times* [Read more](#)

CANADA: MEMO HINTS ENBRIDGE IS ILL-PREPARED FOR OIL SPILL IN OCEAN

August 27 - DFO scientist says planning based on crude rather than bitumen - Enbridge Inc.'s response plan for a potential spill of Northern Gateway oil into the pristine waters off B.C.'s central coast doesn't take into account the unique oil mixture the pipeline would carry, documents show.

Enbridge officials confirm the spill response plan they have filed with the federal review panel studying Northern Gateway deals with conventional crude oil and not the diluted bitumen the pipeline will carry.

Enbridge says the two react the same way once spilled, but documents obtained under access to information show a scientist at the Department of Fisheries and Oceans argued vigorously for a chance to do more research.

Kenneth Lee submitted a research proposal in December saying the matter requires further study because Enbridge's plan had "strong limitations due to inaccurate inputs."

"The Northern Gateway pipeline proposal lacks key information on the chemical composition of the reference oils used in the hypothetical spill models," wrote Lee, head of DFO's Centre for Offshore Oil Gas and Energy Research (COOGER). *The Vancouver Sun* [Read more](#)

TOGO: PIRATES SEIZE GREEK OIL TANKER OFF TOGO



August 28 - Pirates have seized a Greek-owned oil tanker and its 24 crew off the coast of Togo, a maritime group reports.

The attackers exchanged fire with a Togolese patrol boat but escaped on the tanker, the International Maritime Bureau says.

Piracy is said to be increasing in West Africa, with six ships seized in 2012.

Ships are usually held for several days and the cargo transferred to a waiting tanker, before the crew of the original ship is freed.

This is a different method to that used by Somali pirates, who demand a ransom for the ships they capture and often keep both vessels and crew for many months until they are paid. Source: [BBC News](#)

August 30 – Update - A Greek-owned oil tanker has been released after being seized by pirates off the coast of Togo in West Africa, according to the Manx Ship Registry.

A spokesman said all members of the crew were unharmed. He added: "The pirates stole approximately 3,100 tonnes of gas oil from the tanker's cargo as well as cash, valuables and items of equipment from the ship. *BBC News* [Read more](#)

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE RESOURCE INVENTORY (RRI)

Since last week's news item on this subject, another 7 ISCO members have said they want to join the correspondence group and be kept informed on this project. That makes 18 but you can still put your name down. Just drop an email to the Secretary – john.mcmurtrie@spillcontrol.org

The purpose of the Correspondence Group is to assist ISCO in relaying the views of members as the project develops and to help define how ISCO can most effectively ensure that the private sector within the spill response community has a role in this important development for streamlining the mobilisation of spill combat resources during major incidents.

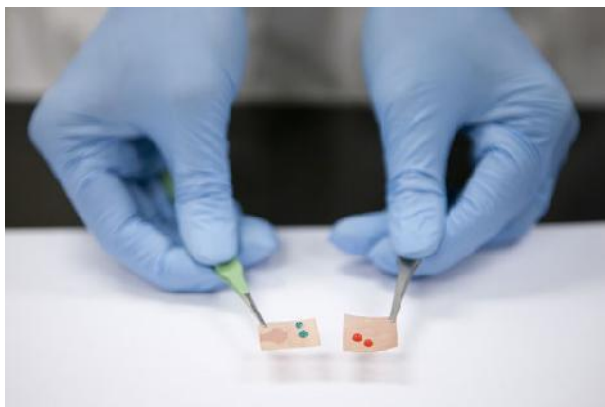
ISCO DELEGATIONS TO IMO OPRC-HNS TG14 and MEPC 64 MEETINGS.

ISCO President David Usher, Secretary John McMurtrie and Honorary Member Dr Douglas Cormack will be representing ISCO at the IMO OPRC-HNS Technical Group meeting which takes place over 24-28 September 2012.

ISCO President David Usher and Honorary Member Dr Douglas Cormack will be representing ISCO at the IMO MEPC meeting which runs from 1st to 5th October 2012.

Science and technology

OIL SPILL CLEANUP: SMART FILTER CAN STRAIN OIL OUT OF WATER



Researchers have developed a special filter coating that essentially can strain oil out of water. It works by repelling oil, but attracting water, which are unconventional properties for a material to have. On an untreated piece of window screen, water (dyed blue) beads up, but oil (dyed pink) soaks through. On the treated surface, the pink oil beads up, but water would soak through. The coating could help advance oil spill clean-up and make it more efficient. Image: Laura Rudic

August 28 - A smart filter with a shape-shifting surface can separate oil and water using gravity alone, an advancement that could be useful in cleaning up environmental oil spills, among other applications, say its University of Michigan developers.

The system could provide a more efficient way to remove crude oil from waterways without using additional chemical detergents, or even after detergents have been added, says Anish Tuteja, an assistant professor

of materials science and engineering. Tuteja is the corresponding author of a paper on the research published in *Nature Communications*.

The researchers created a filter coating that repels oil, but attracts water, bucking conventional materials' properties. Most natural substances soak up oil, and the few that repel it also repel water because water has a higher surface tension.

"Our material operates in a counterintuitive way," Tuteja says. "Water spreads on its surface, while the oil beads up. It's hydrophilic, so it loves water, and oleophobic, so it hates oil."

The new coating is a blend of a rubbery, commercially available polymer and a novel nanoparticle. The polymer can readily form hydrogen bonds with water. The nanoparticle, developed by project collaborators at the Air Force Research Laboratory, is very low in surface energy and does not get wet by oil.

In their experiments, the researchers dipped postage stamp-size pieces of stainless steel window screen and polyester fabric into their solution. Then they cured the coated snippets under ultraviolet light. Meanwhile, they made four different types of oil/water mixtures, including emulsions with various ratios of water and canola oil. Emulsions, like mayonnaise, are mixtures of liquids that can be difficult to separate.

When the researchers passed the mixtures through the coated filters, they found that with 99.9% efficiency, they could separate free oil and water, oil-in-water emulsions, water-in-oil emulsions, and any combination of these blends.

"This is one of the cheapest and most energy efficient ways to separate oil and water mixtures," Tuteja says. "It has never been demonstrated before."

"We've shown that, even when you add surfactants and dispersants to the mixture, as was done in the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, we can efficiently separate the oil from the water. The important thing is that we don't need any additional chemicals or high-pressure sources. We can do it with gravity alone." *R&D Magazine* [Read more](#) See also - [Science News](#) and [Phys Org](#)

GLASS DEMONSTRATES 'SAFE' DISPOSAL FOR NUCLEAR WASTE

August 24 - Turning nuclear waste into glass could offer a cheaper and more viable disposal solution for this toxic material, researchers have found

Over 75% of nuclear waste produced in the UK is classified as intermediate level waste (ILW) - this is currently encapsulated in specially formulated cement through a mixing process and sealed in steel drums, in preparation for disposal deep underground.

However researchers at the University of Sheffield have shown that turning this kind of waste into glass through a process called vitrification could prove a better method for its long-term storage, transport and eventual disposal.

The technology is already used for storing more toxic high level nuclear waste to reduce both the reactivity and the volume of the waste produced.

Until now, this method has not been considered suitable for ILW because the technology hadn't been developed to handle large quantities of waste composed from a variety of different materials.

The research programme tested simulated radioactive waste materials - those with the same chemical and physical makeup, but with non-radioactive isotopes - to produce glass and assess its suitability for storing lower grades of nuclear waste. *Edie Waste*
[Read more](#)



Cormack's Column



In this issue of the ISCO Newsletter we are printing No. 92 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](#)

With a change in the subject matter being addressed by Dr Cormack, the new chapter heading is Knowledge of Shoreline Cleaning

CHAPTER 92: KNOWLEDGE OF SHORELINE CLEANING

When oil or emulsion strands, the pollution clearance problem ceases to be one from water to one from solid surfaces which differ as to impact, natural fate, and means of removal in a manner similar to releases of oil and HNS direct to land surfaces at inland sites. In addition all such surfaces can be continuous or particulate with a wide range of particle size. In this group of articles I will review knowledge of the above followed by knowledge of the means of direct recovery/separation of pollutant from the underlying material, mixed-collection/subsequent-processing; and emulsion-breaking, recycling and final disposal, whether collected from shorelines, inshore waters or at sea.

With respect to particle size, shorelines range from mud flats, though sand, shingle and rocks to cliffs and manmade structures all with distinct flora and fauna and including those classified as mangroves, coral, and salt marshes. As to flora and faunal, it should be decided at the outset to leave that which is already damaged to recover naturally as it will in any case, or to clean it regardless of damage to speed the natural re-colonisation which will occur anyway. With regard to oil-coated individual organisms, such as individual birds, it should be decided at the outset to adopt the triage system which would clean all in the first category, be selective as to species in the second and to wring the necks of those in the third. Further to the second, we should operate on the basis of threat to the species by comparing numbers oiled or likely to be oiled with the numbers born and dying annually in maintaining species numbers overall.

As to mangroves and coral, belief in dire consequences appears to have prevented investigation as to what would be the best restorative policy other than leaving recovery to nature. Were positive means to be considered for the removal of surface coating of mangroves, the most gentle should be attempted first such as water flushing, though inaccessibility may preclude anything other than the mild flushing to which they are naturally subject. In any case, whether active dispersion is attempted or not, the low initial concentrations of removed pollutant will rapidly dilute further with the not too dissimilar decay components of the standing mass of mangrove from which the fertility of such waters ultimately depends. The same is true for coral which grows only subsurface and

as such is exposed only to subsurface droplets derived from surface slicks which themselves produce very low and rapidly diminishing concentrations.

As to salt marshes, pollutants affect only the steep-sided banks of their interspersing water courses and tidal inlets, the surface vegetation over the entire area remaining unaffected unless on exceptionally high tides. In this event, however, we know that similar to grouse-moor burning, the burning of pollutant and marsh vegetation in the late summer, autumn or winter, contributes to natural recovery. Again, we know that the damage incurred by chronic/repeated oiling from a continuous discharge from an inadequate API separator, recovers naturally without burning when separator discharge is made adequate to this purpose.

As to mud flats, their surfaces remain wet because of their high water table even at low tide, thus limiting the propensity of floating pollutants to adhere, increasing the likelihood of their re-floating on the incoming tide and departing on the next offshore wind, and re-presenting themselves to the option of treating them as floating pollutants. However, mud flats may be adjacent to shellfish beds and mussel-growing stakes which encourages belief-based opposition to dispersant use despite the low water concentrations of oil and dispersants which ensue and the available knowledge of tidal movement and time-dependent dilution of these initial concentrations prior to arrival at any such beds or stakes. In addition, we should recall the knowledge that burrowing mudflat organisms are protected from oil/emulsion by the permanently high water table of mudflats.

As to sand beaches, these are exposed to higher energy waves than are mud flats, this being the principle cause of the one being sand and the other mud, and as such enjoy much higher rates of natural cleaning by wave agitation than do mangrove swamps or salt marshes. Again, sand beaches have no burrowing organisms, and thus lend themselves to a variety of cleaning techniques should natural cleaning rates be judged too slow in the calmer summer weather when their amenity value is much valued (c.f. article 93). Yet again, shingle, pebble and rock beaches are exposed to even higher energy waves, provide fewer options for artificial cleaning, and though they are penetrated by pollutants as the water table lowers with the ebbing tide, they have no burrowing animals, and with the exception of rock pools have no other flora and fauna. Yet again, cliffs and manmade structures cannot be penetrated and have no organisms inhibitive of cleaning. Indeed, boat slipways are limed and scrubbed to interrupt re-colonisation and growth several times a season for pedestrian safety.

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.

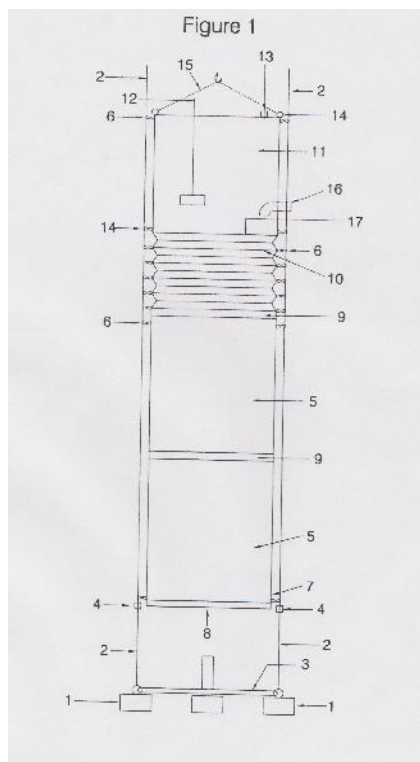
3 *Response to Marine Oil Pollution - Review and Assessment*, Douglas Cormack, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999.

Contributed article

A SLEEVE FOR COLLECTING CONTAMINANTS

More than two years ago BP tried out a massive steel and concrete containment chamber (as high a two story building) as a means of capping the Macondo oil well. This ran into problems due to the formation of hydrate crystals at the top of the structure which obstructed the flow of oil (See report in issue 231 of the ISCO Newsletter)

In this Contributed Article, Michael Lawson describes his idea for an alternative system for collecting oil from a deep source.



“Today, offshore drilling accounts for a large proportion of oil and gas production. As these sources become scarcer, the incentive to drill in deeper water and in harsher environments (Arctic) increases. Despite significant resources invested to ensure the safety and reliability of these operations, no such process is without risk. When difficulties do arise, one consequence is often a leak from the wellhead on the sea floor .

The environmental and economic impact of an oil or gas leak of this kind can be immense. For example, during the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010 it is estimated that 205.8 million gallons of oil was spilt into the surrounding area. the economic cost is not limited to the expense of the operation to clean up a spill of this magnitude but extends to the damage to the local economies, such as fishing and tourism, that rely on the marine environment. The environmental cost is self-evident and devastating.

Today, a range of techniques are used to try to mitigate these costs while a wellhead is repaired. These include skimming oil from the waters surface, the burning of oil on the surface, and attempts to manage the spread of oil slicks across the water. All these approaches fail to address the issue at source, waiting until the oil becomes apparent at the surface and thus until the scale of the problem is too large to be effectively dealt with.

In comes “Lawsons Sleeve”, used for collecting contaminants at deep source, be it oil or gas, from blown or leaking wellheads to sunken tankers or ruptured pipes on the ocean floor. The basic components are the sump at the top, the concertina below it for wave and tidal fluctuations of over 40 ft. the main sleeve going down to just above the wellhead, the support cables going down to the anchor blocks based a distance from the wellhead to allow the robots room to repair and replace whatever is necessary. If necessary the cables are attached to a square frame below the sleeve, the frame having

Contributed article (continued)

4 parallel extensions at the ends of which are four anchor blocks.

The 4 anchor blocks are launched first, followed by the sleeve which gets attached to the cables using a double clip and lowered down with a weighted seam at the bottom just above the wellhead, in nominal sections (5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500 ft lengths). Then the concertina and tank/sump are attached last and also clipped onto the 4 support cables going down to the anchor blocks. Buoys are then attached to the tank for increased buoyancy and the absence of a ship. If the oil ships are not present, then an oil bladder (10 000 cubic metres) can be attached to the sump to buy time.

Taking into consideration all factors such as depth, pressure, buoyancy (neutral), resistance to methane crystallisation, stability against currents, ability to repair the well while containing all emissions, etc. I believe there is little that would stop or hinder it from performing efficiently. The size of certain components will be adjusted to meet the challenges in different environments. Once the repairs have been done, irrespective of how long it takes, the well can continue to be used and the oil will flow once again instead of the well being blocked and sealed up permanently with great financial loss after such a large capital injection on the drilling work.

The oil spill clean-up companies would do well to take heed of this. It will save a lot of pollution and time, both being crucial in determining how much damage is being done to the environment.

The costs are miniscule compared to damages in any oil spill scenario where the former runs into millions and the latter, at times, into billions of dollars. Spraying the oil to make it sink does too much eco damage on the seabed and I think it is based on out of sight out of mind.

It could save the Arctic too from permanent oil slicks trapped under the ice sheets since retrieving it is nearly impossible and damage permanent.

If the international cleanup companies would cover all 6 major oil drilling areas around the world with a sleeve in proximity to all ocean wells, then it shouldn't take more than a few hours at most between base and well. It can also be dropped by plane if need be, shortening the response time dramatically.

This product is for sale to interested and environmentally-conscious companies looking forward to a cleaner future and a fortune to save in both instances.

Patents pending (EPO and WIPO)". Michael Lawson is contactable by Phone 0031 618 619 927 or by E-mail at lawsonmb_2000@yahoo.com

[Note from editor – This article is printed here as received without comment. Readers should form their own opinion on claims made, the practicability of the system described and whether it may have application in some situations]

Training

GLOBAL SPILL CONTROL CHEMICAL SPILL RESPONSE COURSE

Global Spill Control has recently added a nationally accredited chemical spill response course, designed for employees that work in stores, factories, hospitals, workshops and mine sites.

Chemicals are used extensively throughout industry, so there is always an ongoing spill or contamination risk when handling, storing or using chemicals.

The 3½ h course is designed specifically for personnel that may be required to respond to small workplace emergencies including an actual release of a chemical liquid. Participants are taught how to: understand chemical labelling and material safety data sheets; assess the spill; select suitable personal protective equipment (PPE); and control and clean up the spill using appropriate spill equipment. [More info](#)

Events

SOCIETY OF MARINE INDUSTRIES : OPEN MEETING ON RISK AND INSURANCE

Wednesday 26 September at Watson, Farley & Williams 15 Appold Street, London EC2A 2HB

Experts from lawyers, Watson, Farley & Williams; specialist insurance brokers and risk managers, JLT Specialty and consulting forensic engineers, RTI Ltd will look to address the wide range of issues currently facing the shipping and ports industry in terms of risk mitigation and its effect on insurance premiums. [More info](#)

Events (continued)

ISAA INLAND SPILL TRAINING COURSE AT CASTLE ARCHDALE, NORTHERN IRELAND

At the ISAA All-Ireland Accreditation Scheme Steering Group Meeting held in Lisburn last week the dates for the Training Days were agreed as **Monday and Tuesday, 15-16 October 2012**.

Provisional programme –

DAY 1 (Classroom and Practical – Inland and Surface Waters)

- Inland and surface waters – booms, skimmers, sorbents and ancillary equipment
- Guidance on waste disposal and consignment notes procedures
- Underpass dam building (practical)
- Drain tracing – practical application and demonstration
- Small stream boom deployment (practical)

DAY 2 (Classroom and Practical) • Risk assessment

- Oil storage regulations update
- Introduction to shoreline spill response
- Deployment of booms and skimmers in Lough Erne
- Shoreline assessment procedures
- Shoreline sealing boom deployment (practical)
- Oil storage tank assessment (practical)

The detailed programme and booking form will shortly be sent out to all stakeholders on the mailing list. If you are not on the mailing list and would like to receive more information, please send an email to john.mcmurtrie@spillcontrol.org

AUSTRALIA: AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF DANGEROUS GOODS CONSULTANTS [AIDGC] - ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN SYDNEY ON OCTOBER 14 2012.

This is an opportunity to catch up on the latest information on dangerous goods and hazardous materials, but will be a great opportunity to liaise with practising industry personnel, regulators and potential customers.

Expert Speakers will cover UPSS, Warehouse fires, WHS Regulations and Dangerous Goods, Benzene and Cancer, Hazardous Materials, MHF Security and Water Treatment Processes. This is a time to ask those questions from those who know....

For further information contact Robyn Hogan - robhogan@tpg.com.au

Publications

US EPA: NEW PUBLICATIONS

August issue of Technology News & Trends [Download](#)

September issue of TechDirect [Download](#)

ITOPF: ANNUAL REVIEW

ITOPF has just published its Annual Review for the year ending 20 February 2012. In this year's Review, ITOPF's Chairman, Bjorn Moller, reflects on a turbulent year for shipowners.

ITOPF attended several new incidents in 2011/12, some of which gained a high profile and gave rise to a complex response and substantial claims. Using its first-hand experience of the issues associated with oil and chemical spills, ITOPF assisted with numerous training courses and seminars last year on behalf of its Members, Associates and the wider maritime industry.

Download the [Annual Review](#) in PDF format (749Kb) or browse through the pages using our interactive page turner [here](#).

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