



ISCO NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of the International Spill Response Community

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ISCO & THE ISCO NEWSLETTER

The ISCO Newsletter is published weekly by the International Spill Control Organisation, a not-for-profit organisation supported by members in 45 countries. ISCO has Consultative Status at IMO, Observer Status at IOPC Funds and is dedicated to raising worldwide preparedness and co-operation in response to oil and chemical spills, promoting technical development and professional competency, and to providing a focus for making the knowledge and experience of spill control professionals available to IMO, UNEP, EC and other organisations.

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International news

IMO – OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE NEW

The atmosphere at the 16th Meeting of the MEPC OPRC-HNS Technical Group (TG16) in London last week was a little subdued. Delegates were coming to terms with the fact that TG 16 was the final meeting of the Technical Group as we know it.

This circumstance has arisen following on the restructuring decision taken by IMO Council to reduce the number of sub-committees of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC). Under the revised arrangements, a new sub-committee has been formed with new terms of reference and named as the Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR).

Under the new arrangements, it is anticipated that the former OPRC-HNS Technical Group will become a Working Group of the Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR) and will report to PPR instead of directly to MEPC as before.

PPR will have quite a broad remit. While incorporating the work of the former OPRC-HNS TG relating to pollution preparedness, response and co-operation for oil and hazardous and noxious substances, it is anticipated that its work will also include prevention and control of marine and air pollution from ships and other related maritime operations; safe and environmentally sound recycling of ships; evaluation of safety and pollution hazards of liquid substances in bulk transported by ships; and control and management of harmful aquatic organisms in ships' ballast water and sediments, and biofouling.

Exactly how the arrangements for the new Working Group that replaces the OPRC-HNS TG will operate in practice have yet to be experienced but the ongoing work programme of the TG will be continued under PPR.

Over the years since it was established in 2002, the TG has had an important role in supporting the implementation of the OPRC Convention and HNS Protocol. This work has included the production of many tools, manuals and guidelines for oil and HNS incident response, and the development of relevant training programmes.

MEPC OPRC-HNS TG16 Meeting

Over the days 28-31 January 2014 the delegations of 26 nations, the EC, League of Arab States, RAC/REMPEITC/CARIB and 6 NGOs participated in the 16th Meeting of the MEPC OPRC-HNS Technical Group.

Work was carried out on –

- Updating of the IMO dispersant guidelines
- International Offers of Assistance Guidelines
- Guide on oil spill response in ice and snow conditions
- Draft Guidance on the safe operation of oil pollution combatting equipment
- Revision of Section II of the Manual on Oil Pollution – Contingency Planning
- Manuals on chemical pollution to address legal and administrative aspects of HNS incidents
- Review and update of the OPRC Model training courses.

Under the heading "Information Services and Exchange" the meeting reviewed documents submitted by the Secretariat, ISCO, ITOFF, and RAC-REMPEITC-Caribe. These included -

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International news (continued)

- Summary of incidents involving HNS and lessons learnt.
- Knowledge-based response planning for marine incidents
- Incidents attended by ITOFF and lessons learnt.
- Safe Arctic Operations – JIP work on Arctic Spill Response Technology
- GIS-based database for Maritime Traffic of the Wider Caribbean Region
- IMO support for the Triennial Oil Spill Conferences
- Review of web content and inventory of information on oil and HNS preparedness and response.

As has become customary, work on agenda items was leavened by a number of presentations by members of the delegations present –

- **Finland** reported on first experiences of the newly updated Common Situation Awareness System supporting Oil Spill Response (BORIS 2.0)
- **United States** - Mr Lundgren of the USCG gave an overview of post-Macondo research programs; Mr Mark Dix (NOAA) reported on the Global Oceanographic Data Server giving currents data for trajectory modelling, the development of the Chemical Reactivity Worksheet, and the Chemical Aquatic Fate and Effects Database (CAFÉ)
- **Spain** – Dr Marisa Fernandez and Dr Garbine Ayensa gave an update on the ARCOPOL projects and Dr Marta Espinos described national progress in integrating HNS preparedness and response.
- **New Zealand** presented the final report on the Rena incident.
- **ITOPF** – reported on recent incidents attended by ITOFF team members.
- **ISCO** – Mr David Usher presented on case studies involving submerged oil response and Mr Kerem Kemerli described the response to a port HNS incident involving a release of Silicon Tetrachloride.
- **RAC/REMPEITC–Caribe** reported on the development of a GIS-based database for the Maritime Traffic of the WCR.
- **IPIECA** – Mr Rob Self briefed the meeting on the progress being made by the Joint Industry Project (JIP) on oil spill response.

These were all interesting presentations and, subject to the interest of the presenting delegations in sharing the information with a wider audience in the spill response community, it is hoped to publish some of them in forthcoming issues of the ISCO Newsletter. Presenting delegations are invited to send content of presentations by email to the Editor.

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks (proposed by the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran) to not only the TG Chairman, Mr Woo-Rack Suh (Republic of Korea) and Vice-Chairman, Mr Christophe Rousseau (France), but also to all in the IMO Secretariat who have contributed so much to the success of the OPRC-HNS Technical Group over the years.

The first meeting of the new Pollution Prevention and Response Sub-Committee (PPR1) runs from Monday 3rd February to Friday 7th February 2014. ISCO will be represented by Dr Douglas Cormack, Hon.FISCO.

Incident reports

NORWAY: STATOIL PLATFORM SUFFERS OIL LEAK



January 28 - Gas detection was reported on Staffjord C at 03.30 Sunday morning. The alarm was triggered by an oil leak. The site of the leak has been identified and the leak has been stopped.

The discharge occurred from a depressurized trap for liquids in the drainage system located below the cellar deck.

Based on preliminary calculations the discharge of stabilized oil to sea is estimated at maximum 32 cubic meters. *The Maritime Executive* [Read more](#)

Incident reports (continued)

USA: DELAWARE RIVER OIL SPILL

January 28 - Crews worked through the night to contain a crude oil spill in the Delaware River.

Officials say crews were off-loading crude oil from a boat in the river around 1 p.m. on Monday when a line ruptured.

Officials with the National Response Center say an estimated 1,000 gallons of crude oil spilled into the Delaware River in Trainer, Delaware County near Monroe Energy LLC, located about a mile south of the Commodore Barry Bridge. *CSNPhilly.com*

[Read more](#)

USA: TRAIN CARRYING FUEL OIL DERAILS, SPILLS IN MISSISSIPPI

January 31 - A [Canadian National Railway](#) Co train carrying fuel oil and other hazardous materials derailed and was leaking in southeast Mississippi on Friday, forcing the evacuation of nearby residents, officials said.

No one was injured in the incident which involved the derailment of 21 railcars, eight of which have spilled their contents, a [Canadian National Railway](#) spokesman said. Several of the cars were carrying hazardous materials including fertilizer and methanol, but there was no fire, he said. *Reuters* [Read more](#)

SOUTH KOREA RESPONDS TO PIPELINE OIL LEAK

January 31 - A small amount of crude oil leaked into the sea off the southern coast of South Korea on Friday after a pipeline operated by GS Caltex Corp was cracked, but the spillage had no impact on refinery production, the company said.

The crack and subsequent leak occurred at a quay off Yeosu, over 300 km (185 miles) south of Seoul, while the 160,000-tonne tanker Wu Yi San [pictured above] was preparing to offload crude, spokesmen for GS Caltex and the Korea Coast Guard said. *The Maritime Executive* [Read more](#)

SINGAPORE: TWO COLLISIONS, TWO SPILLS

January 30 - The Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore is coordinating the containment and clean-up of two oil spills following two separate collisions south of Jurong Island and off Marina South on January 29 and 30, respectively.

MPA reports that the first collision occurred on Wednesday between the departing Hong Kong-flagged chemical tanker, "Lime Galaxy", and the arriving Chinese-flagged containership, "Feihe", about 1.6 miles south of Jurong Island. Feihe reported that one of her bunker tanks sustained damage, resulting in some spillage. An update from the MPA said that total of 10 craft from MPA and oil spill response companies responded following the incident. The MPA said that the Port Operations Control Centre attempted to alert the two vessels of their converging courses prior to the collision.

The second collision occurred Thursday when the Panama-flagged containership, "NYK Themis", collided with a barge being towed by the tug "AZ Carnation" about 2.5 south of Marina South. NYK Themis reported that one of her bunker tanks sustained damage, resulting in some spillage of bunker fuel. The MPA said that prior to the incident, the Port Operations Control Centre informed NYK Themis of the presence of AZ Fuzhou in the fairway.

A combined total of 20 craft from MPA and oil spill response companies have been deployed for the two clean-up efforts. *gCaptain* [Read more](#) Related report in [The Maritime Executive](#)

Other news reports from around the world

NEWS STORIES FROM THE USA

January 25 - "Oil and Chemical Spills: Federal Emergency Response Framework"

For those of you wondering about the underlying authorities and response systems in place for a disaster event like the chemical spill in the Elk River in WV, this recent 25 page [report from the Congressional Research Service](#) should help you understand the system used for oil and chemical disasters. *Recovery Diva* [Read more](#)

January 26 - Yes, the BP Oil Spill was the Cause of Dolphin Deaths

It has long been suspected that the 2010 [BP oil spill](#) was the reason that [dolphins in the Gulf of Mexico died](#). For the first time, U.S. scientists from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) have [confirmed that the oil spill directly caused the](#)

Other news reports from around the world (continued)

deaths of [dolphins](#). Dolphins in Barataria Bay, Louisiana have been found to be suffering from lung disease, hormonal abnormalities and other health effects that are consistent with exposure to oil.

Barataria Bay was subjected to “heavy and prolonged oiling” after BP’s drilling platform exploded, killing 11 workers and spewing millions of barrels of crude oil into the Gulf. In the months after the spill, a [pronounced spike in dolphin strandings and deaths](#) was noted.

For a study published in the journal [Environmental Science and Technology](#), NOAA scientists compared dolphins in Barataria Bay to those in Sarasota Bay, Florida, where oil was not observed. 29 dolphins from Barataria Bay were evaluated and showed signs of “uncommon” diseases that are “consistent with petroleum hydrocarbon exposure and toxicity,” [say the scientists](#). In particular, the dolphins showed signs of hypoadrenocorticism (low adrenal levels — adrenal hormones are critical to respond to [stress](#)) that are “consistent with adrenal toxicity as previously reported for laboratory mammals exposed to oil.” They were also found to be five times more likely to have moderate to severe lung disease, such that their ability to breathe has been impaired. *Care2* [Read more](#) [Thanks to ISCO Member of Council for Canada, Dr Merv Fingas, and SAC News]

January 26 - Gulf of Mexico oil spill conference discusses debunking myths and misconceptions

The Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill & Ecosystem Science Conference kicked off on Sunday (Jan. 26) in Mobile, Ala., where more than 800 oil spill-related experts are discussing their scientific research, the status of research and problems communicating that research from impacts on fisheries to the fate oil-spill residues as the fourth anniversary of the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill approaches in April.

The conference, which will last through Wednesday (Jan. 29), is examining the impacts of the spill and its effect on the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem and on the people who live and work in the Gulf.

It consists of 10 scientific sessions, with the first on Sunday afternoon entitled “Setting the Record Straight: Debunking Myths and Misconceptions about the Oil in the Gulf and Promoting Ocean Literacy.” *The Times Picayune* [Read more](#)

January 28 - Senators Introduce Chemical Safety And Drinking Water Protection Act In Response To West Virginia Spill

Three U.S. senators introduced legislation on Tuesday aimed at preventing chemical spills like the one that left 300,000 West Virginians without drinking water this month.

The bill streamlines oversight of chemical facilities and is designed to make sure factories are properly inspected by state officials and that proper response procedures are in place for accidents.

“No West Virginian or American should have to worry about the contamination of their water supply from a chemical spill,” said Senator Barbara Boxer, the Democratic chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. *Huffington Post* [Read more](#)

January 29 - Ramp-Up of NTV Oil Spill Resources in Alaskan Waters

The Marine Spill Response Corporation (MSRC) and Alaska Maritime Prevention and Response Network (Network) have formed a “Strategic Alliance” to support Non-Tank Vessels (NTVs) in meeting new Federal regulations and enhance oil spill response in Western Alaska and Prince William Sound.

The announcement was made at the recent Alaska Regional Response Team meeting in Anchorage. As a part of this Alliance, the Network will join the Marine Preservation Association (MPA), the funding organization for MSRC. Through its membership in MPA, the Network and its Participants will have access to MSRC’s large and dedicated resources of personnel and equipment located in the continental U.S., including resources for potential cascading to Alaska. *MarineLink.com* [Read more](#)

January 30 - Shell won’t drill offshore in Alaska Arctic this year

Royal Dutch Shell is abandoning hopes of drilling in the Arctic waters off Alaska this year, the latest blow to the company’s effort to exploit huge potential in the petroleum-rich but sensitive region.

The decision came as Shell reported a steep drop in earnings and its new CEO announced plans to restructure operations to improve the company’s cash flow.

CEO Ben van Beurden cited last week’s court ruling that threw offshore Arctic oil leases into question. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals agreed with environmental and Alaska Native groups that the federal government had underestimated how much oil drilling would happen when it sold the leases in 2008. *Anchorage Daily News* [Read more](#)

Other news reports from around the world (continued)

January 31 - Factbox: Major findings of the U.S. Keystone XL environment study

The Obama administration's environmental review of the Keystone XL pipeline issued on Friday said the project would not likely speed the development of Canada's oil sands, essentially discounting one of the major concerns of the duct's opponents.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry is expected to make the final decision on TransCanada Corp's 830,000 barrels per day pipeline later this year after eight federal agencies weigh whether Keystone is in the country's national security interest.

Below are major findings of the State Department's 11-volume final environmental review it issued on Friday. *Chicago Tribune*
[Read more](#)

NEWS STORIES FROM CANADA

January 27 - Oilsands and water: report calls for more research on effects of spill



Photo: A oil tanker is guided by tug boats as it goes under the Lions Gate Bridge at the mouth of Vancouver Harbour. Photograph by: JONATHAN HAYWARD, THE CANADIAN PRESS

Too little is known about products from Alberta's oilsands to assess whether spills in rivers or coastal areas could be effectively cleaned up, according to a recent report for a U.S. government agency.

The scientists writing for the emergency response division of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration say it is unclear whether diluted bitumen will float in water and for how long the molasses-like mixture will remain at the surface.

"Little research is currently available regarding the behaviour of oilsands products spilled into water, and how they weather in the environment," the report said.

"Most tests have been conducted in the laboratory, so predicting the actual behaviour for a range of spills is difficult."

The 153-page technical memorandum prepared by six researchers at the University of Washington raises the same worries as those heard recently by the Canadian government's joint review panel of the Northern Gateway project that Enbridge Inc. is proposing. *Calgary Herald* [Read more](#) [Thanks to Gerald Graham of World Ocean Consulting]

January 27 - Study warns of unknown risk in bitumen spill

U.S. scientists are warning that there are environmental risks, regulatory holes and serious unknowns regarding the shipment of Alberta oilsands products by pipeline, rail and tanker.

The findings are in a 153-page report from last September by the emergency response division of the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The unit has expertise in preparing for, evaluating and responding to oil and chemical spills in coastal environments.

Enbridge, the company behind the proposed Northern Gateway pipeline to the British Columbia coast, counters that most of the concerns raised in the report are out-of-date, overstated or being resolved.

The study examined the different ways to transport Alberta's bitumen, a molasses-like crude oil, over U.S. land and water. Those included rail, the proposed Kinder-Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline to Vancouver, the Keystone XL line to Texas from Alberta and Northern Gateway. *Leader-Post* [Read more](#)

January 28 - Alberta, B.C. promise energy partnership to smooth differences, clean oil spills

Alberta and British Columbia want to work together to deal with oil spills, promote energy awareness and bring Ottawa to the table financially as the two provinces continue to smooth over their differences relating to proposed pipeline projects to the West Coast.

Among 20 recommendations in a report from an interprovincial working group released Monday is a call for an analysis of what port, rail and road infrastructure improvements are needed in B.C. to ensure access to Asian markets for Canadian energy projects.

Other news reports from around the world (continued)

That would set the stage for B.C. and Alberta to negotiate with the federal government on the financing of those projects, in recognition of B.C. Premier Christy Clark's demand for an economic "fair share" for her province from planned pipelines such as Enbridge's Northern Gateway.

Energy Minister Diana McQueen said in an interview that Alberta recognizes that B.C. has specific infrastructure needs that must be met for pipelines to move forward. *Edmonton Journal* [Read more](#)

January 29 - B.C. coast, St. Lawrence estuary at greatest risk of major marine oil spill: report



Photo: A worker uses a small boat to move logs on the Douglas Channel at dusk in Kitimat, B.C., in this Wednesday, Jan. 11, 2012 photo. (Darryl Dyck / THE CANADIAN PRESS)

The coast of southern British Columbia and the Gulf of St. Lawrence are the Canadian areas most vulnerable to marine oil spills and among the most likely for a major spill to occur, according to a government-commissioned risk analysis.

While observing that the "risk of large spills is generally low in Canada," the 256-page study finds that small spills "can also cause significant damage and are likely to happen much more frequently than larger spills."

Getting Canadian crude oil to tidewater for export has been a major preoccupation of the Conservative government in Ottawa, and the findings will add to the debate over several pipeline proposals -- including two in B.C. that the report says will substantially increase marine risks.

The study, delivered this month to Transport Canada, looks at the risks associated with marine oil spills south of the 60th parallel under current shipping volumes.

It identifies the southern tip of Vancouver Island, the Cabot Strait off Newfoundland, the eastern coast of Cape Breton Island and the Gulf of St. Lawrence as the most probable areas for a major oil spill. *CTV News* [Read more](#)

UK: MOD SETS OUT OPTIONS FOR FIFE BEACH CONTAMINATED BY RADIATION

January 22 - Four options have been put forward by the Ministry of Defence to deal with radiation at a Fife beach.

Around 3400 particles have been detected at Dalgety Bay since 1990.

They are believed to be the result of military aircraft with radium-coated instrument panels being incinerated on the beach and buried in the bay area after the Second World War.

Part of the foreshore was closed in October 2011 after a lump of contaminated metal was discovered on the beach. Since then, investigations have been carried out by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (Sepa) and the Ministry of Defence, who have been deemed responsible for the radiation.

On Wednesday, a report was published setting out four options for the site. It says a combination of the four may have to be used to clean-up the beach. *STV News* [Read more and view telecast](#) [Thanks to Don Johnston of ISCO Industry Partner, DG & Hazmat Group]

ANGOLA: CONFLICTING STORIES ON THE "VANISHED" OIL TANKER

Follow up to report in last week's Newsletter

January 26 - Angola Says Tanker Crew Faked Pirate Attack

Angola's navy said on Sunday the crew of an oil tanker that vanished off its coast on Jan. 18 had turned off communications to fake an attack, seeking to calm energy sector fears that the vessel had been hijacked by pirates.

Unconfirmed reports that the tanker had been seized raised concern that piracy off West Africa was spreading south from the Gulf of Guinea, near Africa's biggest oil producer Nigeria, where most hijacking gangs are believed to originate.

Other news reports from around the world (continued)

Pirate attacks jumped by a third last year off West Africa. Any attack off Angola, which is the continent's No. 2 crude producer, would be the most southerly to date.

Captain Augusto Alfredo, spokesman for the Angolan navy, said the missing Liberian-flagged MT Kerala has been located in Nigeria and that reports of a hijacking were false. *The Maritime Executive* [Read more](#)

January 27 - Owners Insist Tanker Was Hijacked by Pirates, Not Faked

The Greek owners of an oil tanker that vanished off the Angolan coast on Jan. 18 said on Sunday that pirates had hijacked the vessel and stolen a large quantity of cargo, contradicting the Angolan navy's denial that such an assault took place.

Greece-based Dynacom, owners of the 75,000 deadweight ton Liberian-flagged tanker MT Kerala, said it had managed to contact crew on the vessel who reported the pirates had left.

"Pirates hijacked the vessel offshore Angola and stole a large quantity of cargo by ship-to-ship transfer. The pirates have now disembarked," the company said in a statement.

It did not provide any further details on the attack or the ship's current location but added that all crew were safe.

Dynacom's version of the events contradicted an account from the Angolan navy, which alleged the crew had turned off the ship's communications to fake a pirate attack. *The Maritime Executive* [Read more](#)

AZERBAIJAN STUDIES PRACTICE OF STATOIL AGAINST OIL SPILL IN CASPIAN SEA

January 28 - Today, two-day seminar on struggle against oil spill has kicked off in Qafqaz Point Hotel under the organization of Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES) and Statoil Azerbaijan Company.

APA reports that the seminar was attended by representatives of relevant state bodies and international oil companies operating in Azerbaijan.

Experts of Statoil and Norwegian Clean Seas Association for Operating Companies have made speeches about management structure on struggle against oil spills in Norway based on the real researches in the North Sea.

Deputy Minister of Emergency Situations Etibar Mirzeyev noted that Caspian Basin Accident-Rescue Service has established cooperation with BP against oil spills. *APA – Az* [Read more](#)

SYRIA: WEAPONS DESTRUCTION UPDATES

January 27 - Ships continue to move out Syrian Chemical Arms Toxins

More Syrian chemical weapons materials were loaded onto ships and transferred out of Syria on Monday, a joint inspection mission run by the United Nations and the global chemical arms watchdog said.

The chemical weapons components will eventually be destroyed aboard a specially equipped U.S. ship.

"Today, a further shipment of chemical weapons materials took place from the Syrian Arab Republic," the joint mission of the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) said in a statement. *The Maritime Executive* [Read more](#)

January 28 - A look inside the Ship and Systems tasked with Destroying Syria's Chemical Weapons

The U.S. Department of Defense has confirmed that the M/V Cape Ray (T-AKR 9679) was deployed from Portsmouth, Virginia on Monday for its mission to the Mediterranean Sea where it will be used to destroy Syrian chemical weapons at sea.

M/V Cape Ray, which is part of the Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration Ready Reserve Force (RRF) program, is the primary contribution of the Department of Defense toward international efforts to eliminate Syria's chemical weapons material.

Over the last several months, hundreds of government and contract personnel have worked to prepare the vessel to neutralize Syrian chemical materials and precursors using proven hydrolysis technology according to procedures and standards set forth by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

Officials have described what they called a field-deployable hydrolysis system, or a system that uses heat, water and bleach-like chemicals to turn some chemical weapon components into low-level hazardous waste that can be commercially stored in accordance with environmental laws.

Other news reports from around the world (continued)



Photo: MV Cape Ray (T-AKR 9679)

The nearly 650-foot-long ship is travel to a yet-to-be specified location in the Mediterranean, where it will take on about 700 metric tons of both mustard gas and “DF compound,” a component of the nerve agent sarin gas. Specialists will then use two new, recently installed “field deployable hydrolysis systems” to neutralize the chemicals. *gCaptain* [Read more](#)

[Editor: An excellent article and some great photographs - well worth having a look]

People in the news

CHRIS REDDY RECEIVES AWARD FOR OIL SPILL RESEARCH



Chris Reddy, a marine geochemist at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (Massachusetts, USA), has been selected to receive the 2014 Clair C. Patterson Award from the Geochemical Society. The award recognizes one scientist a year who has made an innovative breakthrough in environmental geochemistry in service to society.

Reddy was nominated for the award because of his work on developing and applying advanced chromatographic and spectrometric techniques to identify the source, transport, and fate of petroleum hydrocarbons in the coastal and open ocean. The award will be presented at Goldschmidt2014 (California, USA) in June 2014.

Chris Reddy said: “One of my overarching interests in studying oil spills is that there are compounds in oil that seem to persist a very long time while there are others that can disappear quickly. I find it fascinating that a spectrum like this exists.” He added: “Clair C. Patterson was a tenacious trailblazer in studying lead and lead pollution. For me to be associated with him is, quite frankly, humbling.”

Jeff Seewald, chair of WHOI’s Department of Marine Chemistry and Geochemistry said: “His application and development of innovative analytical approaches have resulted in a quantum leap in our ability to predict the persistence of anthropogenic and naturally occurring petroleum in the marine environment.” Seewald added: “Chris is motivated by a strong desire to understand the consequences of human activity on the environment and has a special gift for communicating relevant information to the scientific community, policy makers, and the general public.” *Chromatography Online* [Thanks to ISCO Member of Council for Canada, Dr Merv Fingas, and SAC News]

ISCO news

ISCO’S INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON GROUP V OILS – DETROIT, USA, 9-10 SEPTEMBER 2014

The International Spill Control Organization (ISCO), which celebrates its 30th anniversary this year, is organising an International Forum on Group V oils (sinking and submerged oils) to be held on September 9-10, 2014, at the Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority Building. Sinking oils (Group V and Class C/D), including oil sands, Dilbit and bitumens, are being increasingly utilized and transported around the world, increasing the risk of spills can be very difficult to clean up.

This forum will present expert analysis of the fates and behaviors of these oils when released, and strategies, tactics and specialized equipment associated with their clean up. Confirmed forum participants include members of the oil and gas industry, the shipping community (OSG Shipping, Inc.), oil spill responders and the regulatory community (including the U.S.C.G. and N.O.A.A). In addition to speakers presentations and panel discussions, a table-top exhibition hall will be included as part of the event.

ISCO President, David Usher would very much like to hear from individuals, organizations and companies interested in taking a part in this event as sponsors, session chairpersons, speakers, or exhibitors.

Early advice of interest will be of great help in progressing the detailed planning of the event. Contacts are -
David Usher, ISCO – dusher@marinepollutioncontrol.com +1 (313) 849-2333 (office)
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In this issue of the ISCO Newsletter we are printing No. 161 in a series of articles contributed by Dr Douglas Cormack.

Dr Douglas Cormack is an Honorary Fellow 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 161: KNOWLEDGE ONLY INITIATIVES

With article 160 having shown how the documents submitted by ISCO to MEPC/OPRC-HNS Technical Group meetings 10 to 15 and more recently for 16 were intended to increase TG awareness of the knowledge to be incorporated in my knowledge-only approach to contingency and incident-specific response planning and the advantages thereof, this article shows how these documents were also intended to increase MEPC/TG awareness of the disadvantages arising from continuance of the beliefs which ignore or actively oppose this knowledge.

Thus, these documents have shown that despite this knowledge having been available from WSL reports and from two subsequent books, NGOs other than ISCO continue to reject knowledge of the concentration-toxicity relationship in believing release of oils/HNS to be the toxic cause of species-extinction/ecological-disaster, despite their being merely the physical cause of short-term commercial losses for which compensation is available. Again, these documents have shown that NGOs other than ISCO believe the physical coating of organisms to be the cause of species-extinction/ecological-disaster despite no-one ever having formally compared the numbers thus killed with the annual deaths and births of viable populations, and despite no species-extinction/ecological-disaster ever having arisen from ship release or oil well blow-out, however large or prolonged. In addition, these documents have referred to a third book which has definitively differentiated the knowledge/belief dichotomy once and for all by showing that reality stimulates our imaginations to beliefs transformable to positive or negative knowledge only by evaluation of their compliance or non-compliance with reality, or to those which can only be accepted, rejected or suspended as beliefs beyond reality-evaluation in practice or in principle, but which must not be accepted as knowledge, mistaken for knowledge, or presented as knowledge.

These documents have thus made the Technical Group aware that NGOs other than ISCO continue to present belief as though it were knowledge. Thus, they believe carbon dioxide from 'fossil' fuel combustion to be the cause of global warming despite all organic releases being either biodegraded or combusted on recovery to carbon dioxide and water; despite the entire biomass of land and sea being continuously recycled from and to the atmosphere as carbon dioxide and water by photosynthesis and biodegradation; despite carbonate rock being continuously recycled tectonically from and to the atmosphere as carbon dioxide and water by the Urey synthesis and its volcanic decomposition; despite our knowledge that the former would terminate all life by removing all carbon dioxide from the atmosphere were the latter to cease; and despite 'fossil' fuels being formed from intermediate biodegradation products only when oxygen depletion causes their biodegradation to be incomplete.

Thus, these documents have made the Technical Group aware that despite reality-refutation of the belief in a toxic permanence of non-biodegraded concentrations of oils/HNS being the cause of species-extinction/ecological-disaster, this belief is cited to refuse entry of impact-damaged ships to safe havens for the cargo/bunker transfer which would avoid weather-related release subsequent to the initial damage and thus reduce release and response-need; to limit dispersant-use to arbitrary water depth or distance from shore, despite dispersants putting no more of the release into the sea than would have gone in had the release been far enough from shore for all of it to have dispersed naturally; to prohibit the in situ decanting of co-collected and demulsified water which would conserve storage and transport capacity for oil recovered from sea and shore; and to require all such processing to be undertaken at approved locations such as oil refineries, despite the additional costs of transport and storage and the restoration rate being thus limited by processing capacities scaled to internal requirements only.

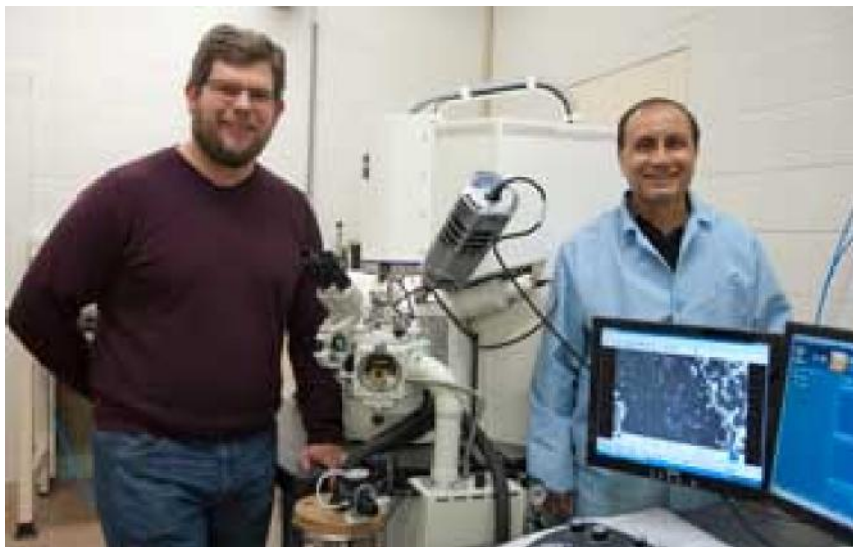
As to the stage now reached in this knowledge-acceptance/belief-rejection initiative, the Technical Group is aware that belief-promulgating NGOs were invited by ISCO on 15 November 2012 to answer the following questions. Why should we believe in species-extinction/ecological-disaster when we know that the exposure concentrations are low enough to account for their absence thus far, and that no believer has yet reality-validated any such hypothesis by comparing incident deaths with the annual birth and deaths in species populations? Again, why should we believe in anthropogenic global warming when we know that we combust only part of a 'fossilisation' but for which all of its carbon dioxide equivalent would already be recycling through the atmosphere and biomass just as initially photosynthesised and now 'fossilised' oils and their organic HNS derivatives biodegrade and recycle after release? Yet again, why should we believe in combustive global warming when no believer has yet reality-evaluated any hypothesis as to the rate at which increased release of carbon dioxide in one of the above cycles would cause increased abstraction in the other or both, and when investigation of vegetative-mass variation with carbon dioxide concentrations in controlled atmospheres would be an obvious place to start the reality-evaluation of such hypotheses?

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.

URI RESEARCHERS DEVELOPING TINY WEAPONS TO COMBAT BIG OIL SPILLS



Picture: URI engineering professors Geoff Bothun and Arijit Bose pose in the lab where they are developing new technologies for cleaning up oil spills. Credit: Chris Barrett

A team of University of Rhode Island engineering and chemistry professors is demonstrating novel approaches that could change the way oil spills are battled.

The approach the scientists are using relies on nanoparticles, each about 100 times thinner than a human hair. To study how these tiny particles can clean up oil, the Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative has awarded grants totaling nearly \$1.4 million to engineering professors Arijit Bose, Geoffrey Bothun and Vinka Oyanedel-Craver, along with chemistry professor Mindy Levine and Metcalf Institute Executive Director Sunshine Menezes.

The researchers are taking complementary approaches to stop oil from forming globs that threaten wildlife and wash up on beaches. To emulsify the oil (break it into small droplets) and make it attractive to oil-eating microorganisms, Bothun has turned to silica, and Bose and Levine to carbon black.

Bothun's research seeks to turn off-the-shelf products into oil spill cleaners. He and his team of students turned to nanoparticles of benign silica (sand) and government-approved surfactants, which force oil to emulsify.

Teaming up with researchers at the University of Maryland and Texas A&M International University, Bothun's group found that some nanoparticles and surfactants work well alone or in combination with traditional dispersants. The team hopes that when loaded with nutrients, the compounds stop oil from forming slicks on the surface of the ocean and attract microorganisms that eat oil.

Bose and Levine want to turn carbon black – a material created by the incomplete combustion of petroleum products -- into the go-to dispersant. Generally considered safe, the particles emulsify oil, absorb toxic polycyclic-aromatic hydrocarbons, and are widely available and inexpensive.

Bose started researching the potential of carbon black to clean up oil while on sabbatical at Cabot Corp., one of the world's largest producers of carbon black. In partnership with researchers there and at Tulane University, Bose discovered carbon black is a powerful oil emulsifier.

"Nobody has used carbon black in this way," Bose says. "It seemed like a cool idea because it's so widely available."

While Bose studies the engineering side of carbon black, Levine and her students are working to identify the most efficient method to manipulate molecules to attract oil and break down its toxicants.

"We're using organic chemistry reactions to change the toxic molecules in the oil to nontoxic molecules," Levine says.

Using oil samples from real oil spills, Levine has tested her concept and found success. And she's excited about the interdisciplinary collaboration that began through the Rhode Island Consortium for Nanoscience and Nanotechnology.

Publications

FOR YOUR INTEREST – LINKS FOR RECENT ISSUES OF PERIODICALS

[ASME EED EHS Newsletter](#)

[Bow Wave](#)

[Cedre Newsletter](#)

[The Essential Hazmat News](#)

[USA EPA Tech Direct](#)

[USA EPA Tech News & Trends](#)

[Technology Innovation News Survey](#)

[Intertanko Weekly News](#)

[CROIERG Enews](#)

[IMO Publishing News](#)

[IMO News Magazine](#)

News and commentary on HSE issues from George Holliday

Sam Ignarski's Ezine on Marine & Transport Matters

News from Cedre in Brittany, France

Alliance of Hazardous Materials Professionals

Remediation of contaminated soil and groundwater

Contaminated site clean-up information

From US EPA - Contaminated site decontamination

International news for the oil tanker community

Canberra & Regions Oil Industry Emergency Response Group

New and forthcoming IMO publications

News from the International Maritime Organization

Most recent issue

Current issue

December 2013

January 6 issue

February 1 issue

May 2013 issue

Dec 1-15 2013 issue

No 5 2014

January 2014 issue

January 2014

No 4, 2013

Publications (continued)

Pollution Online Newsletter	News for prevention & control professionals	January 29 issue
EMSA Newsletter	News from the European Maritime Safety Agency	January 2013 issue
JOIFF "The Catalyst"	Int'l Organisation for Industrial Hazard Management	January 2014 issue
Environmental Technology Online	Environmental Monitoring, Testing & Analysis	January 2014 issue
OCIMF Newsletter	News from the Oil Companies International Marine Forum	September 2013 issue
IPIECA eNews	Int'l Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Assoc'n	November 8 issue
WMU Newsletter	From the World Maritime University in Malmo, Sweden	December 2013 issue

UPDATED PUBLICATIONS CATALOGUE FROM IMO

The updated Publications Catalogue is now available for [download](#).

NEW ASTM GUIDE FOR GREENER CLEAN-UPS

ASTM Standard Guide for Greener Cleanups (E2893-13). EPA representatives worked with ASTM International, a standard developing organization, to develop a standard guide intended to encourage property owners, regulatory agencies, responsible parties, developers, and communities to voluntarily use greener practices for contaminated site cleanup. In November 2013, ASTM released the resulting consensus-based "Standard Guide for Greener Cleanups." The guide describes a process for identifying, evaluating, and incorporating best management practices and, when appropriate, integrating a quantitative evaluation of the environmental footprint of cleanup activities. A December memorandum from EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) Assistant Administrator to regional administrators and OSWER office directors recognizes the standard as a tool that, when implemented appropriately, can reduce the environmental footprint of cleanup activities while still meeting site-specific regulatory requirements and objectives.

For more information about and to purchase the standard, visit <http://www.astm.org/Standards/E2893.htm>

To view or download the OSWER memorandum, visit http://www.epa.gov/oswer/greenercleanups/pdfs/oswer-aa-gc-memo_december-2013.pdf. [Thanks to USA EPA TechDirect]

Events

USA: IOSC FILM FESTIVAL AND PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

As part of its week-long program of activities, the IOSC will host a Film Festival and a Photography Contest. Interested agencies, organizations, companies, and individuals are invited to submit films or photographs that relate to the entry categories. Are you a photographer or videographer? Then put your talent to the test and consider entering the IOSC 2014 contests and receive the recognition you deserve. No professional experience is required to enter.

Film Festival - Submit a short film to be presented during the IOSC's three-day Film Festival. The films will be presented in the IOSC theater/gallery. Awards will be presented to the best film(s) during the IOSC Awards Luncheon on Wednesday, May 7th, 2014. Topics include, but are not limited to: oil spill related training, education, restoration, and response and operations activities.

Photography Contest - Submit up to three photographs (per individual submitter) for consideration in the IOSC's Photography Contest. Selected photographs will be displayed throughout the event and then displayed in the IOSC photography gallery onsite. Awards will be presented to the best images during the IOSC Awards Luncheon on Wednesday, May 7th, 2014. Entry categories include: clean water/wildlife in and around water resources, oil spills in the abstract, oil spill response, oil spills general/photojournalism, and wildlife rehabilitation.

More information on the contest rules, submission process and deadlines will soon be posted on the IOSC website. To view the conference program, or for more information on other IOSC events and sponsorships, visit www.iosc.org

Questions? - Email the chair of the IOSC Film Festival and Photography Contest, Mark W. Howard at howard.markw@epa.gov or call (+1) 202-564-1964.

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