



ISCO NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of the International Spill Response Community
Issue 432 28 April 2014

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



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.

ISCO COMMITTEE & COUNCIL

ISCO is managed by an elected executive committee members of which are **Mr David Usher** (President, USA), **Mr John McMurtrie** (Secretary, UK), **Mr Marc Shaye** (USA), **Mr Dan Sheehan** (USA), **M. Jean Claude Sainlos** (France), **Mr Kerem Kemerli** (Turkey), **Mr Paul Pisani** (Malta), **Mr Simon Rickaby** (UK), **Mr Li Guobin** (China), **Captain Bill Boyle** (UK) and **Mr Dennis van der Veem** (Co-opted Member, The Netherlands)

The Register of ISCO Members is maintained by **Ms Mary Ann Dalgleish** (Membership Director) and the list of members is on the website at <http://www.spillcontrol.org>

The Executive Committee is assisted by the non-executive ISCO Council composed of the following national representatives – **Mr John Wardrop** (Australia), **Mr Namig Gandilov** (Azerbaijan), **Mr John Cantlie** (Brazil), **Dr Merv Fingas** (Canada), **Captain Davy T. S. Lau** (China, Hong Kong), **Mr Li Guobin** (China, Mainland), **Mr Darko Domovic** (Croatia), **Eng. Ashraf Sabet** (Egypt), **Mr Torbjorn Hedrenius** (Estonia), **Mr Pauli Einarsson** (Faroe Islands), **Prof. Harilaous Psarftis** (Greece), **Captain D. C. Sekhar** (India), **Mr Dan Arbel** (Israel), **Mr Sanjay Gandhi** (Kenya), **Mr Joe Braun** (Luxembourg), **Chief Kola Agboke** (Nigeria), **Mr Jan Allers** (Norway), **Capt. Chris Richards** (Singapore), **Mr Anton Moldan** (South Africa), **Dr Ali Saeed Al Ameri** (UAE), **Mr Kevin Miller** (UK) and **Dr Manik Sardessai** (USA).

For more info on Executive Committee and Council Members go to www.spillcontrol.org

FIND THE HELP YOU NEED

Click on these links to view websites

[CONSULTANTS](#)

[EQUIPMENT & MATERIALS](#)

[RESPONSE ORGANISATIONS](#)

[TRAINING PROVIDERS](#)

For more information on the events featured below, click on the banners

REGISTER NOW FOR IOISC 2014!
International Oil Spill Conference
Savannah, Georgia | May 5-8 | www.ioisc.org

Premium Conference : June 4th. Book Now

Forum on Group V (Non-buoyant) Oils
9-10 September 2014
Detroit, USA

International news

ISCO AGM TO BE HELD DURING IOISC 2014 AT SAVANNAH

ISCO'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF ISCO WILL BE HELD FROM 4.30 PM UNTIL 6.00 PM ON TUESDAY 6th MAY, 2014, IN SHOW OFFICE "A" AT THE INTERNATIONAL OIL SPILL CONFERENCE, SAVANNAH, GEORGIA, USA.

THE ISCO BOOTH AT IOISC 2014 IS No 151

Be sure to make a visit. David Usher, John McMurtrie and Mary Ann Dalgleish are looking forward to seeing you.

ITOPF TO LAUNCH RESPONSE TO MARINE OIL SPILLS FILM SERIES

ITOPF is to launch a new series of seven films on oil spills, their impacts, effective response and compensation. The films are designed to promote good practice and raise awareness of some of the issues involved in oil spill response. They incorporate footage shot on location at oil spills worldwide since 2007, combined with interviews and archive film from the major incidents of the last 45 years.

The series will be showcased at a special reception at the International Oil Spill Conference in Savannah, Georgia in the week commencing Monday 5th May. [More info](#) At IOISC ITOPF is at Booth 642

A MUST-SEE CLOSING PLENARY AT IOISC

Don't miss an amazing line-up of speakers at IOISC 2014's Closing Plenary on Thursday, May 8th, from 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Speakers include PHMSA's Cynthia L. Quarterman and API's Jack N. Gerard.

BECOME A MEMBER OF ISCO

Enjoy all the benefits of membership of this worldwide organization and support the continuing publication of the ISCO Newsletter [Application Form](#)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Advance your career by gaining Professional Recognition

Professional recognition is a visible mark of quality, competence and commitment, and can give you a significant advantage in today's competitive environment.

All who have the relevant qualifications and the required level of experience can apply for Professional Membership of ISCO. The organization offers independent validation and integrity. Each grade of membership reflects an individual's professional training, experience and qualifications.

You can apply for Student Membership, Associate Membership (AMISCO), Membership (MISCO) or Fellowship (FISCO).

[All about Professional Membership Application Form](#)

To receive the ISCO Newsletter

Go to <http://www.spillcontrol.org> and enter your name and email address in the Registration Form (located on the top right hand side of the home page) then click on "SUBSCRIBE"

International news (continued)

Cynthia L. Quarterman was sworn in November 16, 2009 by Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood as the third Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA). As the PHMSA Administrator, Ms. Quarterman's primary responsibilities are to advise the Secretary of the Department of Transportation on all matters pertaining to PHMSA and to direct PHMSA's national program to protect against the risks to life and property inherent in the transportation of hazardous materials in commerce and of liquid, natural gas, petroleum, and other hazardous energy products by pipeline.

Jack N. Gerard is president and CEO of the American Petroleum Institute, the national trade association that represents all aspects of America's oil and natural gas industry. Mr. Gerard has led API since November 2008, expanding its membership and influence in all 50 states and globally, with offices in Dubai, Singapore, Beijing, and Rio de Janeiro. API's Washington presence is the foundation for the oil and natural gas industry's advocacy and outreach at state, federal and global levels on public policy, standards and certification programs, and as the source for information on industry best practices.

Incident reports

USA: FUEL LEAK INTO CHARLESTON HARBOR CAUSED BY MALFUNCTIONING FUEL PUMP

April 21 - Officials at the Medical University of South Carolina say a diesel fuel leak into Charleston Harbor during the weekend was caused by a malfunctioning fuel generator atop the Institute of Psychiatry. *Live 5 News* [Read more](#) [Thanks to Don Johnston of ISCO Industry Partner, DG & Hazmat Group]

MALAYSIA: PIRATES RAID JAPANESE OIL TANKER

April 23 - Armed pirates raided an oil tanker off the coast of Malaysia and took three crew members with them, Malaysian maritime officials said on Wednesday, underscoring increasing threats to shipping in one of the world's busiest waterways. *The Maritime Executive* [Read more](#)

Incident reports (continued)

UK: 1,000 FISH KILLED IN RIVER OONA: INVESTIGATORS PROBE 'HIGH SEVERITY' POLLUTION AS TROUT AND ROACH POPULATIONS DEVASTATED

April 24 - More 1,000 fish have been found dead in a river in what is being described by investigators as a "major fish-kill incident", prompting a criminal investigation.

The Northern Ireland Environment Agency said pollution in the water was being classified as "high severity" and samples have been taken. *Belfast Telegraph* [Read more](#)

UK: SHORELINE PALM OIL WARNING CONTINUES

April 24 - The warning over washed-up palm oil on Galloway's beaches has been heightened after several more lumps were found this week.

Monreith, St Ninian's Cave, Carrick Shore and Southernness have all had confirmed sightings, as well as scores of other beaches in England. *The Galloway Gazette* [Read more](#)

Other news reports from around the world

NEWS REPORTS FROM USA

April 18 - BP Oil spill four years later: Return to Baratavia Bay and Cat Island

When a crew of journalists and environmental groups studying the effects of the BP Deepwater Macondo oil spill disembarked on Cat Island in Baratavia Bay last week, there was a collective gasp.

"It looks like the Arizona desert," said Eileen Fleming, who's reported for WWNO spring after spring since the April 20, 2010 spill.

NEWS REPORTS FROM USA (Continued)

"It looks like there was a fire here," said Doug Meffert, vice president of the National Audubon Society and president of the Louisiana chapter, "but there wasn't a fire."

The bones of black mangrove stumps are all that remain of what was a thriving bird rookery here in Plaquemines Parish Four years ago, footage of oiled brown pelicans and the thousands of shorebirds nesting here went around the world in the aftermath of the 200 million gallons of thick crude that spilled into the Gulf of Mexico. *The Maritime Executive* [Read more and watch video](#)

April 19 - Vancouver seeks oil spill risk assessment

The city of Vancouver is seeking an independent assessment of the region's readiness for possible oil spills, explosions or other accidents that may result from the Northwest's largest proposed oil-by-train terminal.

"We don't have experience with this kind of crude or volume," Deputy Fire Chief Dan Olson said.

Tesoro Corp. and Savage Companies want to build an oil terminal at the Port of Vancouver to handle as much as 380,000 barrels of crude a day. The state's Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council is weighing the proposal. The council will make a recommendation to Gov. Jay Inslee, who has the final say. *The Columbian* [Read more](#)

April 19 - Oil transport draws cry for disaster training help

Trains have traveled through this part of Minnesota for just under 150 years, and as the small town of Staples grew around their tracks, railroads were virtually the only source of jobs for decades. *Houston Chronicle* [Read more](#) (Subscription Required)

April 21 - NOAA Releases Arctic Action Plan



Earlier this year, President Obama released a plan for moving forward on his national strategy to advance U.S. security and stewardship interests in the Arctic. In keeping with the goals and tenets of his strategy, NOAA has unveiled its Arctic Action Plan—a document that provides NOAA scientists, stakeholders and partners a roadmap to make shared progress in monitoring, understanding, and protecting this vast, valuable, and vulnerable region.

The document provides an integrated overview of NOAA's diverse Arctic programs and how these missions, products, and services support the goals set forth in the President's National Strategy for the Arctic Region. The plan also provides linkages to other agency and interagency plans crafted with constituent input, to include the National Ocean Policy, the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee Five Year Research Plan, NOAA's Arctic Vision and Strategy, and more. *The Maritime Executive* [Read more](#)

April 21 - U.S. Supreme Court Declines Exxon Mobil Appeal

The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday declined to review a ruling against Exxon Mobil Corp that ordered the company to pay \$105 million in damages for polluting New York City's groundwater with a toxic gasoline additive.

The decision not to hear the case leaves intact a July 2 U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that upheld the judgment. *MarineLink.com* [Read more](#) [Thanks to Don Johnston of ISCO Industry Partner, DG & Hazmat Group]

April 22 - Damages phase of BP Gulf spill trial set for January

The high-stakes penalty phase of BP's trial over its role in the 2010 U.S. Gulf of Mexico oil spill will start next January, court officials said on Tuesday, and billions of dollars could be on the line.

Fines under the Clean Water Act could top \$17 billion, an amount more than BP's profit in 2013, which after items was \$13.4 billion.

U.S. District Judge Carl Barbier in New Orleans has considerable leeway and could assess a much smaller fine after the third and likely final stage of the trial, which will assess the environmental impact of the largest offshore spill in U.S. history. The third phase will run from January 20 to February 5 of 2015. *WTAQ* [Read more](#)

April 23 - NTSB head: Action needed now on oil train safety

The Obama administration needs to take steps immediately to protect the public from potentially catastrophic oil train accidents even if it means using emergency authority, National Transportation Safety Board Chairman Deborah Hersman said Wednesday.

NEWS REPORTS FROM USA (Continued)

The Transportation Department is in the midst of drafting regulations to toughen standards for tank cars used to transport oil and ethanol, as well as other steps prevent or mitigate accidents. But there isn't time to wait for the cumbersome federal rulemaking process — which often takes many years to complete — to run its normal course, Hersman said. AP [Read more](#) [Thanks to Marc K. Shaye Hon.FISCO, Member of the Executive Committee]

April 23 - Full set of tools needed for US Arctic spill response, NRC finds

A full slate of response tools will be needed to address crude oil spills in the US Arctic, but not all of those tools are readily available, the National Research Council said in a new report.

While much is known already about both the behavior of oil and response technologies in Arctic environments, there are areas where additional research would enable more informed decisions about the most effective responses for different Arctic spill situations, the Apr. 23 report added.

"The Arctic system serves as an integrator for the Earth's physical, biological, oceanic, and atmospheric processes, with impacts beyond the Arctic itself," it stated. "The risk of an oil spill in the Arctic presents hazards for Arctic nations and their neighbors."

The council, one of the federal government's independent national academies, was asked to prepare the report by the American Petroleum Institute, US Arctic Research Commission, US Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, US Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, US Coast Guard, Marine Mammal Commission, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Oil Spill Recovery Institute. *Oil & Gas Journal* [Read more](#)

April 23 - Ability to respond to oil spill in the Arctic called 'sorely lacking'

Before anyone can adequately respond to oil spills in the U.S. Arctic, people need to know much more about what exists in the Arctic, according to a report issued Wednesday by the National Research Council, the operating arm of the National Academy of Sciences, and the National Academy of Engineering. The 183-page report on oil spill responses in Alaska's Arctic outlines a wide range of deficiencies in knowledge about natural resources, ice conditions, weather patterns and even basic geography in the region.

Adequate infrastructure to respond to an oil spill in Alaska's Arctic waters is also sorely lacking, the report said.

"The lack of infrastructure in the Arctic would be a significant liability in the event of a large oil spill," it said. "It is unlikely that responders could quickly react to an oil spill unless there were improved port and air access, stronger supply chains, and increased capacity to handle equipment, supplies, and personnel."

The report, requested by the U.S. Arctic Commission, the American Petroleum Institute, and numerous federal agencies, makes 13 recommendations for improved spill readiness in the Arctic waters off Alaska. *Alaska Dispatch* [Read more](#)

April 23 - BOEM Proposes to Increase the OPA 90 Liability Cap by Nearly 80% for Offshore Facilities

On February 24, 2014, the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management ("BOEM") published a notice in the Federal Register proposing to increase the limit of liability for damages applicable to offshore facilities under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 ("OPA 90"). 79 Fed. Reg. 10056 (February 24, 2014).

BOEM's proposal would increase the liability limit from \$75 million to \$133.65 million, and would establish a methodology for BOEM to periodically adjust the liability limits for inflation. A copy of the proposed rule is available at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-02-24/pdf/2014-03738.pdf>. Although the initial notice required comments to be submitted by March 26, 2014 the comment period has been extended until April 25, 2014.

A copy of the notice extending the deadline to April 25th is available at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-03-19/pdf/2014-06047.pdf> *Blank Rome* [Read more](#)

April 24 - Judge suspends Arctic drilling, orders new environmental report

Photo: Salvage teams conduct an assessment of Shell's Kulluk drill barge in January 2013 in Kodiak Island's Kiliuda Bay in Alaska. A federal judge in Alaska told regulators April 24, 2014, to redo an environmental impact study that underestimated the amount of recoverable oil and, potentially, the risks of offshore drilling to delicate Arctic habitat. (Tim Aubry / AFP/Getty Images / January 9, 2013)

In the ongoing battle over offshore drilling, a federal judge in Alaska told regulators Thursday to redo an environmental impact study that underestimated the amount of recoverable oil and, potentially, the risks to delicate Arctic habitat.



NEWS REPORTS FROM USA (Continued)

The decision by U.S. District Judge Ralph Beistline stopped short of scrapping the \$2.6 billion in leases, however. His ruling followed an appeals court decision in January that federal officials had arbitrarily decided drilling companies could extract 1 billion barrels of oil from the shallow waters off the northwest coast of Alaska. That figure led to a misguided environmental study, the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals said.

Now, the U.S. Department of the Interior must redo the supplemental analysis using what's expected to be a much higher estimate for the amount of oil extractable. In the meantime, no drilling for oil or natural gas can take place. *Los Angeles Times* [Read more](#)

NEWS REPORTS FROM CANADA

April 16 - Thaw stirs up oil spilled in Lac-Mégantic derailment

The spring thaw has stirred up crude oil in the Chaudière River that spilled in the Lac-Mégantic derailment last summer, prompting two towns along the river to use alternate sources of drinking water.

Residents and teams from Quebec's environment department have seen oil sheens on the surface of the river in the past week, as warm weather and rain have melted ice and raised the level of the river, which starts at Lac-Mégantic and travels 185 kilometres downstream to the St. Lawrence River. *Montreal Gazette* [Read more](#) [Thanks to Don Johnston of ISCO Industry Partner, DG & Hazmat Group]

April 16 - Nunavut fuel spills are down, but accidents still happen



Photo: In 2011, 87,000 litres of gasoline spilled from the tank farm in Resolute, Nunavut. Over a million litres of fuel have been spilled in the territory since its creation in 1999. (Government of Nunavut photo)

Reports show that about 100,000 litres of oil spill every year in Nunavut, with the highest number of spills in Iqaluit.

Since the territory was created in 1999, more than one million litres of oil and gas have been spilled in Nunavut, according to the Hazardous Materials Spill Database.

Some spills happen in the summer, when oil is offloaded from boats to giant tanks where it's stored for the winter. Others happen closer to home, as fuel tanks are refilled with home heating fuel. *CBC News* [Read more](#) [Thanks to Don Johnston of ISCO Industry Partner, DG & Hazmat Group]

April 22 - Alberta regulator permits oilsands giant to resume steam injection near Primrose leaks



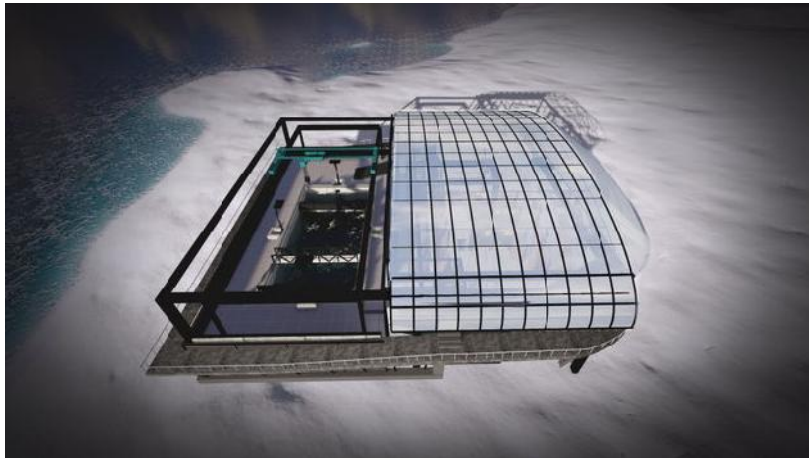
Partial view of the fissure in the upper centre of the photo, on CNRL's Primrose east site. The topsoil piled up in the centre of photo will be used to restore vegetation when the site is cleaned up. Photograph by: Alex S. MacLean, Landslides Aerial Photography Oilsands giant CNRL won approval to resume pumping high-pressure steam into wells on its Cold Lake lease near four sites where bitumen continues to leak to the surface uncontrolled.

The Alberta Energy Regulator has not yet determined the cause of the leaks, which totalled almost 12,000 barrels in the past year. Late last week, it approved the company's application to resume steam injection, with lower steam pressures, to keep its Primrose wells producing.

But environmentalists say allowing steam injection to start again on the Primrose lease is premature, especially since it is not known how to stop the leaks, and the same geological formation is involved in leaks in 2013 and in 2009. *Edmonton Journal* [Read more](#)

NEWS REPORTS FROM CANADA (Continued)

April 22 - A place to study Arctic oil spills



Picture: Conceptual drawing for the proposed Churchill Marine Observatory.

The University of Manitoba is proposing a unique research centre at Churchill that would study the potentially profound environmental effects of industrializing the Arctic. The \$28-million Churchill Marine Observatory would develop ways of detecting oil in ice-covered waters, study its impact on the ecosystem and develop technologies for cleaning up Arctic waters in case of a spill.

What's being proposed? An environmental-observatory network in which high-tech equipment will monitor the sea ice and waters in shipping lanes leading into and out of the Port of Churchill. There will be atmospheric monitoring done to provide data

on the effects of extreme weather events in the area. A facility just north of the port in which experiments can be carried out on Arctic ice and seawater. A logistics base with space for removable dock storage.

The U of M is leading the project, which -- if accepted by a key national funding agency -- would see 20 to 30 scientists from Canada and abroad in Churchill at any one time and about 100 during the course of a year. *Winnipeg Free Press* [Read more](#)

April 23 - Ottawa to strengthen rail-safety rules

Ottawa will require railways to prepare for catastrophic explosions and other disasters by making emergency response plans mandatory for all crude-oil shipments that pass through Canada, *The Globe and Mail* has learned.

The federal government will also require a rapid phase-out of the older-model tank cars that are commonly used to haul crude oil by rail, according to sources familiar with a package of major policy reforms that will be announced on Wednesday. *The Globe & Mail* [Read more](#)

April 23 - Transport Canada orders 5,000 tanker cars off the rail system

Transport Canada has announced new regulations tightening safety on Canada's railways, beginning with ordering the 5,000 most dangerous tanker cars off the rails.

The new rules also cover speed limits, route assessments, emergency response plans and the phasing over of tens of thousands of dangerous railcars.

Transport Minister Lisa Raitt announced the moves Wednesday, accepting major safety recommendations of the Transportation Safety Board following last summer's tragedy in Lac-Mégantic, Que., in which a train carrying 113,000 litres of crude oil derailed, exploded and killed 47 people. *Canada.com* [Read more and watch video](#)

April 23 - Government of Canada invests in 31 Great Lakes clean-up projects

On behalf of the Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council, Dr. Colin Carrie was in Quinte West, Ontario, today to celebrate 31 environmental clean-up projects in the Great Lakes. The projects, valued at \$1.88 million, are funded by the Government of Canada's Great Lakes Sustainability Fund.

Since 1989, the Great Lakes Sustainability Fund has supported more than 900 partnered projects to help clean up Canadian Great Lakes Areas of Concern.

This past year alone, the supported projects leveraged \$3.76 million in funding from industry, academia and other government agencies. Working together to complete these projects is an important step towards protecting this vast natural resource for generations to come. *Government Press Release* [Read more](#)

UK: EMERGENCY PLANNING SOCIETY MOVES TO NEW HOME

The Emergency Planning Society is almost fully up and running in its new home at the Emergency Planning College. Although most of our systems are now fully operational, we still have a few issues to deal with.

Telephone line: The contact number 0845 600 9587 has still not been transferred to the College, however, an answering service is

being regularly interrogated. If you need to contact the office, please still call this number, leave a message and Barbi will get back to you. Alternatively, email Barbi at info@the-eps.org.

CHINA: CONTAMINATION LIKELY CAUSED BY WASTE FROM CHEMICAL PLANT

April 12 - [See report in last week's Isco Newsletter] - An initial investigation found that the contamination was likely caused by wastewater from a chemical plant, the Lanzhou government said on its website, without naming a culprit.

Excessive levels of benzene were noted in a 3-kilometer stretch of pipeline operated by Veolia Water, which intersects at several points with pipelines from nearby chemical plants. *ShanghaiDaily.com* [Read more](#) [Thanks to Don Johnston of ISCO Industry Partner, DG & Hazmat Group]

ETHIOPIA: NEW PETROLEUM SPILLS BILL PASSES IN PARLIAMENT

April 20 - Parliament passed a bill on petroleum spills and the licensing & conduct of petroleum operations, on Tuesday, April 15, 2014, with a unanimous vote. This was despite 242 of the members being absent

The bill, which became a law, demands that owners and custodians of petroleum notify the Ministry of Water, Irrigation & Energy (MoWIE) if more than 500lt of petroleum or petroleum products leak into the environment and take measures to clean it up. In cases where the government does the cleaning, they will be charged for the expense. *AllAfrica.com* [Read more](#)

ISCO news

ISCO AT THE INTERNATIONAL OIL SPILL CONFERENCE IN SAVANNAH – BOOTH 151

Please make a note to visit ISCO at Booth 151 at IOSC.

ISCO President, David Usher, Secretary, John McMurtrie and Membership Director, Mary Ann Dalgleish will be in attendance and we very much look forward to meeting up with Members and to welcoming other visitors at Savannah.

ISCO AGM AT IOSC IN SAVANNAH – TUESDAY 6 MAY IN SHOW OFFICE “A” AT 4.30 P.M.

The Agenda and a Proxy Voting Form have been sent out to all members. If you have not received these, please advise the secretariat immediately by email to info@spillcontrol.org

If you are attending the meeting, please bring a copy of the Agenda with you. Copies will NOT be circulated at the meeting.

Members who are unable to attend but wish to submit comments to the meeting on Agenda items are invited to do so by sending an email to the Secretary, john.mcmurtrie@spillcontrol.org or to the Chairman David Usher at dusher@marinepollutioncontrol.com by Friday 2nd May latest.

Science & Technology

PROTECTION RING OFFSHORE ENVIRONMENT: ELIMINATING THE SPREAD OF CRUDE OIL SPILLS?

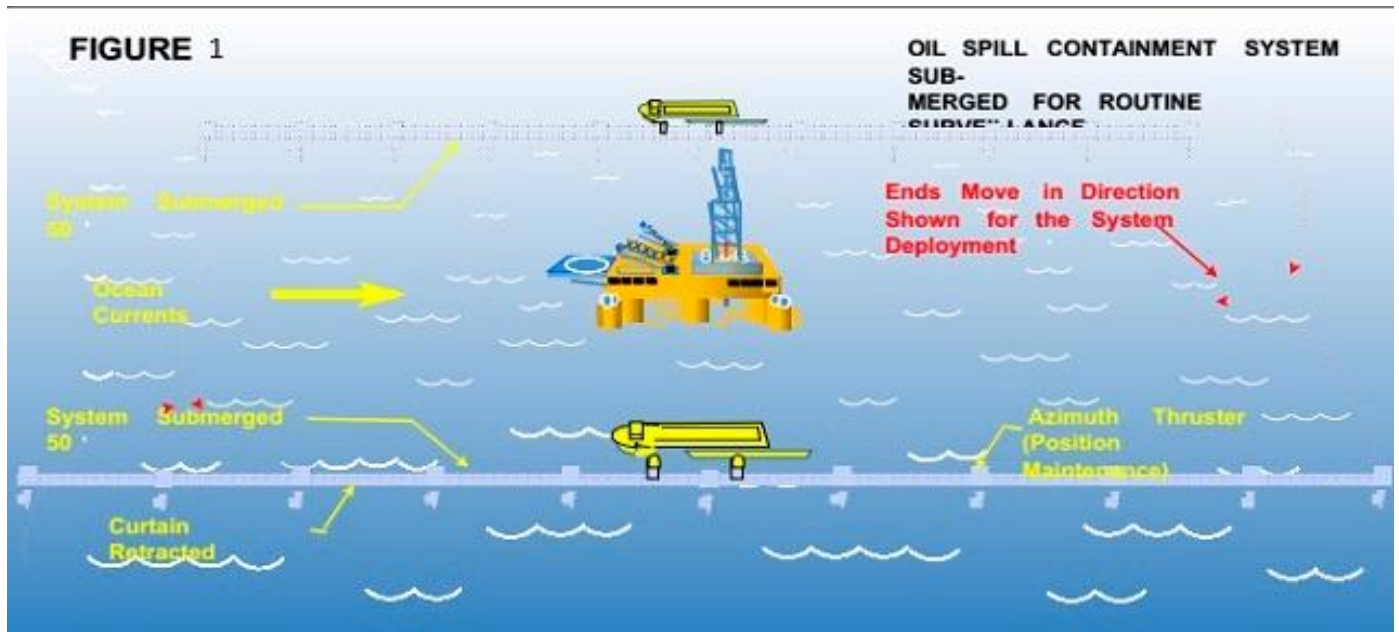


April 25 - A new method is available to stop the disastrous spread of major oil spills in offshore areas. Until now, spills of various sizes have plagued the industry for years along with widespread and often mindless destruction of marine life. The new method involves a floating ring-like device called PROE (“Protection Ring Offshore Environment”) that encircles the drilling rig. It has a curtain suspended vertically from the ring bottom that retains virtually all the spilled oil.

PROE is self-propelled and submersible so it can chase oil spills if necessary. When not in use, it can be submerged below marine surface traffic. It can also be divided into several parts in case the spill accumulates in multiple areas. Several million barrels of oil can be captured using PROE.

In Figure 1 [seen below], PROE is pictured in the submerged surveillance position, consisting of two linear

parts pointing into the ocean current. The system is modular, self-propelled and submersible with a retractable retainer curtain. Thus, its size may be expanded or reduced; it can rapidly change location and, except for periodic testing, it remains submerged some 50 feet below marine traffic and weather. The retracted curtain during submergence substantially reduces current drag and CNG fuel usage. Most important, PROE is assigned continuously to the rig during all drilling and completion operations.



In the event of a blowout or other accident, PROE is surfaced; the two ends are locked together to encircle the rig, and the retainer curtain is deployed as shown in Figure 2 [below]. Set-up operations are estimated to require less than an hour. The azimuth thrusters provide the force necessary to move PROE into the correct position and maintain that location with the aid of GPS. Depending upon the circumference of the system and curtain height, PROE can contain on the order of 2.5 to more than 5.0 million barrels, which may be desirable despite the fact that oil and emulsion will be offloaded by tankers from PROE shortly after initiation of the blowout.



PROE was developed following the April 2010 Macondo oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, one of the largest in history.

There appears to be no end to the continuing damage claims resulting from that spill. Some 97 percent of the \$42 billion cost (to date) is due to damages from the uncontrolled spread of oil, which eventually covered about 29,000 square miles or an area twice the size of Denmark. A total of 206 million gallons of oil escaped from the damaged well at a rate of 2.5 million gallons per day.

[Read the complete text of this article in the 25 April 2014 issue of *The Maritime Executive*](#)



In this issue of the ISCO Newsletter we are printing No. 173 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 173: CONCLUDING REMARKS

The ISCO approach to incident response comprises a repository of knowledge supportive of a contingency plan based on the physicochemical parameters which control the fates and effects of oil/ HNS releases, which determine prevention and response, and which by their incident-specific values predict incident-specific fates and effects, thus enabling incident-specific prevention and response to be as cost-effective as possible. Thus, while articles 1-171 of this Column were developing this approach, it was serially reported to the OPRC-HNS/TG and is now intended for summarisation for MEPC 67.

However, this summary is contemporaneous with the growing dissension of developing countries from the belief-consensus on anthropogenic global warming and of industry NGOs from the ballast water and exhaust gas regulations being beyond known need and/or means of compliance. Of course, this is not the first time regulation has found itself in this situation. It may be recalled that the regulated limit of 100ppm for oily water discharges was beyond the known means of onboard gravity-separation as shown by WSL; and that it was the demonstration of downstream coalesce/filtration efficiency by WSL which saved the regulation which was then tightened beyond any known need to 15ppm, to 5ppm, and to zero in special areas. Nonetheless no dissent sufficient to disturb the belief-consensus in species-extinction/ecological-disaster has ever arisen from member states or from industry NGOs.

Again, it may be recalled that the regulated limits for the discharge of tank washings from HNS parcel tankers were beyond known technical means until WSL demonstrated the means by which tank residues could be reduced to less than the regulated 1 tonne per tank, and the means by which the regulated concentrations in the ships' wakes could be met, thus again saving the regulation. Yet again, whether or not such regulation is beyond known need, no dissent sufficient to disturb the belief-consensus has ever arisen, presumably because compliance costs for oil and HNS were not disproportionately high.

In contrast, the cost of compliance with the regulations in respect of ballast water management will be extremely high, thus explaining current reluctance to ratify the Convention. However, while I have no direct knowledge of the effect of organism-transfer in ballast water, the industry reports that three of the ballast water systems approved by the self-styled group of experts on the scientific aspects of marine pollution (GESAMP) on behalf of the MEPC and installed by some ship owners in advance of enforcement, have been found to be non-compliant under operating conditions. Thus, unlike with oil/ HNS discharges, the prospect of high expenditure is now coupled with the costs already incurred by those now faced with replacement costs when the regulations are in force, and with the problem of deciding which if any of the other 39 systems approved by GESAMP will be in compliance if installed.

Again, it appears that with respect to exhaust gas emissions, the developing/emerging member states of IMO are showing increasing levels of dissent from the belief-consensus in anthropogenic global warming (AGW) while the industry is showing increasing levels of dissent in respect of the means of compliance with proposed regulations on sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions, the concentrations of which have not been reality-evaluated as to their effects. As to carbon dioxide emissions, we know that anthropogenic global warming is merely a belief-consensus as confirmed by its believers denoting dissenters as non-believers, this being the language of belief/counter-belief: not of science. However, while we know that species-extinction/ecological-disaster was/is also a belief-consensus, it did prompt myself and my WSL team to reality-evaluate this belief as specific hypothesis, by releasing oil to the sea, measuring its resulting concentrations and confirming them at the scale of the Ekofisk blow-out as being three orders of magnitude less in the top metre of the water column than were needed in test-tank measurement of oil LC50 values, as being effectively reduced to zero with increasing water-column depth, and as being even less significant at the comparatively small area-scale of individual operational discharges: while, in contrast, no-one has as yet reality-evaluated the belief in AGW nor the belief in oil-coating being the cause of species-extinction/ecological-disaster.

Accordingly, our summarising paper for MEPC 67 will invite member states to accept our knowledge-only approach to casualty-response in principle, to reject reality-refuted counter-beliefs, and to suspend all beliefs not yet reality-evaluated. Again, our paper will recommend reconsideration of the belief-only regulations which are causing dissention resolvable only by knowledge-acquisition. Thus, while acceptance of our knowledge-only approach to casualty-response is our first objective, our second could also be attained by general recognition of the need for belief to be replaced with knowledge when problems are being identified and when technical solutions are being sought.

References

- 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.

RECENT OIL SPILL RESPONSE EVALUATION PROJECTS CARRIED OUT AT OHMSETT

Cold-water Comparison of Dispersant Effectiveness

Cleaning up oil spills using dispersant technology can be a challenge in Arctic conditions since oils and dispersants, varying in properties and chemical make-up, can react differently in cold water and ice. As some oil products become more viscous in cold water they are less likely to be dispersed. Dispersants also may behave quite differently in cold water as opposed to warm water. To investigate this, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) conducted important research at the Ohmsett facility in February to determine if various dispersants would be appropriate for Arctic use. [Read more>>](#)



Maximizing Storage Capacity for Recovered Oil

While exploring new advancing containment and recovery systems, the Norwegian Clean Seas Association for Operating Companies (NOFO) wanted to determine ways to maximize the storage capacity of recovered oil. Due to potentially long pumping distances and high sea states encountered during response operations, some systems might have to recover large amounts of water within the discharge stream to help lower the viscosity of recovered fluid and increase pumping rates. Focusing on possible solutions to the reduced storage capacity concern, NOFO conducted a performance test on the Voraxial® 4000 Separator at Ohmsett during the week of March 10 to determine the separator's effectiveness to separate free water from an oil/water fluid stream. [Read more>>](#)



The Challenge of Tracking Underwater Plumes

Underwater oil plumes are very elusive spill formations. Even with some of the recent technology advances, determining their location and tracking them is very difficult. Currently, an efficient strategy and a detection system for sampling the water to determine the extent of the plume, doesn't exist. In an effort to explore the capability of easily deployed prototype systems to detect submerged oil plumes, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) funded a U.S. Coast Guard research and development (R&D) program at Ohmsett in December 2013. This was the first step in developing an entire mitigation system to identify and abate oil within the water column. [Read more>>](#)



Performance Testing of Boom and Skimmer System

Ocean Systems LLC, a spill response organization based in McLean, Virginia, has taken the skimmer and boom technology originally developed after the Santa Barbara spill through a U.S. Coast Guard-funded oil containment boom and skimmer technology development program, and brought it into the high tech world of the 21st Century. "These [advancements] include the development of the Global Positioning System, remote sensing of oil spills, and the development of Dynamic Positioning for offshore supply vessels," explained Frank March, founder of Ocean Systems LLC. "The widespread use of Dynamic Positioning has been one of the most important developments for the current system, since it allows the boom and skimmer to be precisely located to maximize intake in heavier pools of oil." [Read more>>](#)



Low Dose Aerial Application of Dispersant

As lessons learned emerged from the BP Deep Water Horizon (DWH) spill, it became clear that while conducting aerial spray operations of dispersant on the surface of the water, operators found it difficult to verify that the airborne application was effective. In response to dosage concerns, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) funded a one-week testing program in August 2013 to study the effect of aerial low dose applications of chemical dispersant to outer continental shelf crude oils. The testing, conducted by SL Ross Environmental Research, Ltd. of Ottawa Canada, took place at Ohmsett to simulate an aerial-like low-dose application of chemical dispersant under near-at sea conditions. [Read more>>](#)



Subsea Dispersant Injection Studies

The BP Macondo subsea blowout (Deepwater Horizon) in the Gulf of Mexico was the first oil spill response that included the injection of chemical dispersant into a subsea oil and gas plume. The effect of this countermeasure on the ultimate fate of the oil was difficult to quantify during the spill event. This prompted the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) to fund subsurface discharge and dispersant injection studies at the Ohmsett facility during the two week period from August 26-September 6, 2013. The purpose of the research program, led by SL Ross Environmental, Ltd. of Ottawa, Canada, was to advance state-of-the-art chemical dispersant use when injected into a subsea oil or oil and gas release. [Read more>>](#)



With acknowledgement to the Oil Spill Response Research & Renewable Energy Facility - Ohmsett | P.O. Box 473 | Atlantic Highlands, NJ 07716 | 732-866-7183 www.ohmsett.com

Events

NORWAY: NOSCA SEMINAR 2014 – BERGEN, JUNE 16-20, 2014



This year's programme includes presentations by eminent speakers from Norway, Nigeria, Australia and Brazil plus observation of The Frigg Field Exercise "OPV 2014" (Oil on Water) by NOFO (Norwegian Clean Seas Association for Operating Companies) from the observation vessel "Nordstjernen".

You can download the Provisional Programme and Registration Form at

<http://www.nosca.no/index.php/nosca-seminar/2014>

UK: GROUNDWATER 2014 – LONDON, 15TH MAY 2014

This successful annual event will provide a comprehensive overview of the regulatory environment affecting the risk assessment and remediation of groundwater, as well as practical solutions to ensure its quality and sustainability. Programme highlights: The practical implications of achieving targets set by the Water Framework & Groundwater Daughter Directives New advances in groundwater risk assessment to meet new regulatory quality objectives Details of new and emerging groundwater pollutants and their potential risk Techniques for more accurately predicting, mapping and modelling groundwater flooding and the risk of contamination The implications of unconventional gas exploitation ("fracking") for groundwater quality Speakers: Marianne Stuart, BGS Ian Davey, Environment Agency Duncan Cartwright, Parsons Brinkerhoff Judith Nathan, Land Quality Management Dr Paul Ellis, ESI Hugh Mallett, Buro Happold Ltd. [More information and Registration](#)

AFRICA – UPCOMING GI WACAF EVENTS

7 April 2014 – Liberia - [National workshop to finalize the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan and develop an atlas of sensitivity maps](#)

21 April 2014 - Sao Tome and Principe - [National workshop to update the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan and develop an atlas of sensitivity maps](#)

19 May 2014 – Ghana - [National workshop to update the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan](#)

16 June 2014 - Côte d'Ivoire - [Sub-Regional workshop on Incident Management System](#)

15 September 2014 – Angola - [National exercise to test and update the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan](#)

20 October 2014 – Cameroon - [Bilateral exercise](#)

10 November 2014 - South Africa - [Sub-regional workshop on Shoreline Cleanup and Assessment Techniques \(SCAT\) and waste management](#)

8 December 2014 - Sierra Leone - [National workshop on sensitivity mapping](#)

More info: <http://www.giwacaf.org/index.aspx?id=1&langue=1>

BELGIUM: REMPEC “INFODAY” - BRUSSELS, 4TH JUNE, 2014

The Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) and the European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Directorate-General (ECHO) are organizing jointly an Information Day (“INFO DAY”) which will be held in Brussels on 4 June 2014.

This “INFODAY” is being convened pursuant to the recommendations issued from the discussion on “Sub-regional, Regional, European, International, Industry Mechanisms and Databases” of the Workshop on the Regional Response Capacity and Coordination to Major Oil Spill in the Mediterranean Sea (MEDEXPOL 2013, Athens, Greece, 10-12 December 2013). [More info](#)

MALTA: 3RD OFFSHORE PROTOCOL WORKING GROUP MEETING, ATTARD, MALTA, 17-18 JUNE 2014

The 3rd Offshore Protocol Working Group Meeting is being organized by the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) in co-ordination with the United Nations Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) within the framework of the Ecosystem Approach in the Mediterranean Project (EcAp MED).

The Meeting is being convened pursuant to the Decision IG.20/12 of the 17th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (Paris, France, 8-10 February 2012). [More info](#)

Events (continued)

GREECE: HELMEPA - GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MEMBERS

On Wednesday 14 May, 2014 at 4pm, the 32nd annual General Assembly of HELMEPA members will take place. It is to be hosted in the CERES Company building (69 Akti Miaouli, Piraeus). [More info](#)

Publications

FOR YOUR INTEREST – LINKS FOR RECENT ISSUES OF PERIODICALS

ASME EED EHS Newsletter	News and commentary on HSE issues from George Holliday	Most recent issue
Bow Wave	Sam Ignarski's Ezine on Marine & Transport Matters	Current issue
Cedre Newsletter	News from Cedre in Brittany, France	March 2014
The Essential Hazmat News	Alliance of Hazardous Materials Professionals	March 18 issue
USA EPA Tech Direct	Remediation of contaminated soil and groundwater	April 1 issue
USA EPA Tech News & Trends	Contaminated site clean-up information	May 2013 issue
Technology Innovation News Survey	From US EPA - Contaminated site decontamination	March 1-15 2014
Intertanko Weekly News	International news for the oil tanker community	No 17 2014
CROIERG Enews	Canberra & Regions Oil Industry Emergency Response Group	April 2014 issue
IMO Publishing News	New and forthcoming IMO publications	March 2014
IMO News Magazine	News from the International Maritime Organization	No 1, 2014
Pollution Online Newsletter	News for prevention & control professionals	April 23 issue
EMSA Newsletter	News from the European Maritime Safety Agency	April 2014 issue
JOIFF "The Catalyst"	Int'l Organisation for Industrial Hazard Management	January 2014 issue
Environmental Technology Online	Environmental Monitoring, Testing & Analysis	April 2014 issue
OCIMF Newsletter	News from the Oil Companies International Marine Forum	March 2014 issue
IPIECA eNews	Int'l Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Assoc'n	February 2014 issue
WMU Newsletter	From the World Maritime University in Malmo, Sweden	February 2014 issue

IPIECA: ANNUAL REVIEW 2013

IPIECA has released its 2013 Annual Review with the theme The Power of Partnerships.

In its 40th anniversary year, the theme reflects the work of the association since 1974 in bringing industry peers together, and engaging with the UN and other global institutions, NGOs, business and academia to develop practical solutions that help oil and gas companies meet the world's energy needs through responsible production. [More info](#)

Training

UK: MCA LEVEL 5 ENDORSEMENT COURSE

Received from Briggs Environmental Services – "We are looking to possibly run an MCA Level 5 Endorsement Course in July 2014. This course is designed for delegates who already have an in date MCA Level 4 certificate, or instead of completing a refresher they can go through this 2 day course to gain themselves an MCA Level 5 Incident Controller status. Please see attached descriptor for more information on the course. The cost per delegate for an NOPPC member is £580.00 + VAT and for NON-NOPCC members the costs is £775.00 + VAT. If you are interested in this course and wish to book a space, please let me know asap. We usually look to have a minimum of 7 delegates on this course, and a maximum of 12". Robertson, Hayley hrobertson@briggsevenvironmental.com

FRANCE: OIL SPILL RESPONSE TRAINING COURSE – BREST, 6-10 OCTOBER 2014

This course aims to provide a concrete understanding and practical knowledge of response strategies, techniques and equipment in case of accidental oil pollution at sea, on the shoreline or in rivers. [More info](#)

USA: OILED WILDLIFE RESPONSE VOLUNTEER TRAINING NEWARK, DELAWARE, OCTOBER 26, 2014

Tri-State Bird Rescue & Research will be holding an oiled wildlife training workshop on Saturday, October 26, from 9 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Frink Center for Wildlife, located at 110 Possum Hollow Rd. [More info](#)

Because your Editor will be at Enniskillen, N. Ireland next week (ISAA Training Days) and attending IOSC in Savannah the following week the next issue of the Newsletter will appear on Monday 19th May, 2014.

Legal disclaimer: Whilst ISCO takes every care to ensure that information published in this Newsletter is accurate unintentional mistakes can occur. If an error is brought to our attention, a correction will be printed in the next issue of this Newsletter. Products and services featured in the ISCO Newsletter and/or the ISCO website, including the International Directory of Spill Response Supplies and Services, have not been tested, approved or endorsed by ISCO. Any claims made by suppliers of products or services are solely those of the suppliers and ISCO does not accept any liability for their accuracy. Subscription is subject to acceptance of ISCO's Terms and Conditions as published on the website www.spillcontrol.org