

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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UPDATED CALL FOR PAPERS SEE ISCO NEWS ON PAGE 12

International news

EUROPE: INTERNATIONAL BALTIC SEA EXERCISE TAKES PLACE THIS WEEK



Photo: Balex Delta 2012. Photo: SYKE / Kati Tahvonen.

HELCOM's international response exercise 'Balex Delta' will be held on 10-12 June in Latvian territorial waters. Ten oil response vessels from eight Baltic Sea coastal countries and institutions will participate in the operation, allowing to test Baltic coordination and cooperation in a highly operational level, as well as improve skills on joint prevention of major damage from oil spills in the sea as well as on the shore.

Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden will contribute to the annual exercise along with the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) representing European Union. The general aim of the exercise is to test the alarm procedure, as well as the response capability and capacity of the HELCOM Contracting Parties, consisting of all the nine coastal Baltic States and the EU. *HELCOM Press Release* [Read more](#)

NEW REPORT FINDS NATIONS ARE WOEFULLY UNPREPARED FOR ARCTIC OIL SPILLS

June 6 - Back in January, Royal Dutch Shell announced it was abandoning plans to drill for oil in the Arctic waters near Alaska. It was the [second time](#) in two years the company was forced to postpone plans to drill in the region.

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International news (continued)

Given the difficulties the company has faced – including losses of about \$6 billion dollars – and the continuing geopolitical and environmental battles surrounding the practice, the question arises: Is it even worth the trouble?

Now, a new report from the [National Research Council](#) casts even more doubt on the wisdom of Arctic drilling. The [report](#) warns that the region is still so dangerous and isolated that the nations involved don't have the proper equipment, infrastructure or personnel in place to deal with a potential oil spill. *Pri.org* [Read more](#)

[See also under Publications on page 14 of this newsletter]

FIRST MAJOR TAR SANDS OIL SHIPMENT ARRIVES IN EUROPE AMID PROTESTS

June 6 - A cargo believed to be Europe's first major shipment of tar sands oil arrived in Spain this week, as European policymakers proposed scrapping the requirement that such oil be labeled as more polluting than other forms of crude.

570,000 barrels of Western Canada Select heavy blend crude, originally from Canada, arrived in Spain's port of Bilbao in the middle of this week, said a spokesman for Repsol.

The shipment, which he said was a first for the Spanish oil and gas company, is part of a pilot project to test the capacity of its refineries to process the heavy grade crude.

"We're trying to give a future for oil refining in Europe, where many refineries have been shutting down in recent years," he said. "We share environmental concerns but we think the solution is in efficiency and technology."

The Guardian [Read more](#)

PENGUIN SANCTUARY PLAN WOULD DOUBLE WORLD'S PROTECTED OCEANS

June 6 - About 75 percent of all penguins are threatened and a campaign to double the area of protected reserves is being considered by an international commission.

Penguins are aquatic birds. They do not fly. Instead, they soar through the ocean. Penguins are especially adapted to life in the water, and are affected by everything in it.

They suffer from pollution and overfishing, which limits their food source. They are in danger from shipping traffic and oil spills

Vanessa Strauss, who heads a high-tech tracking and monitoring program at the [South African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds](#) in Cape Town, says accidents there have accelerated the birds' sharp decline. *Voice of America* [Read more](#)

ITOPF FILMS TO PREMIERE THIS WEEK IN SINGAPORE AND HONG KONG, CHINA

The final films in ITOPF's series "Response to Marine Oil Spills" will receive their premiere at events in Singapore and Hong Kong, China this week.

Two films will be shown on Tuesday 10th June at 7pm at the Arts House, Old Parliament in Singapore with a welcome introduction from Captain Segar, Assistant Chief Executive of the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore.

The final two films will be screened the following day in Hong Kong. Mr. Michael Wong, Director of the Marine Department of Hong Kong, China will deliver an opening address.

The Hong Kong launch is on Wednesday 11th June at 5.30 pm, House 1, Palace ifc, 8 Finance Street, Central, Hong Kong.

If you would like to attend either of these events please contact [Deborah McKendrick](#).

To view the trailer click [here](#).

ENERGY INSTITUTE AWARDS COMPETITION

Now in its 15th year, the Energy Institute (EI)'s awards competition celebrates excellence and innovation demonstrated by individuals and organisations across all sectors of the global energy industry. If you think you or your company make a significant contribution to the energy industry and the wider society, why not enter this prestigious competition to get the recognition you deserve?

One of the EI Awards Categories is for excellence in the environmental field.

How do I enter?

Click [here](#) to submit your entry online.
The deadline for submitting entries is **27 June 2014**.

[More info about the EI Environmental Awards Competition](#)

Incident reports from around the world

THAILAND: THAI OIL TANKER RECOVERED, CARGO TAKEN



June 2 - A Thai oil tanker reported missing two days ago has been recovered with all of its crew members safe but pirates who hijacked the tanker took its cargo and damaged communications gear, the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) said on Monday.

The MT Orapin 4 lost contact with authorities after departing for Indonesia from a terminal in Singapore on Friday, prompting the IMB to send an alert shortly after.

The tanker arrived in Thailand's Sri Racha port on Sunday evening and Thai authorities will be investigating the incident, Noel Choong, the head of IMB's Kuala Lumpur-based Piracy Reporting Center, told Reuters. *Maritime Executive* [Read more](#) Related report in [gCaptain](#)

USA: OIL SPILL IN DELTA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE, LOUISIANA

June 4 - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Coast Guard said Tuesday that an estimated 50 barrels of oil spilled in the Delta National Wildlife Refuge, affecting 10 acres of freshwater marsh. The Times-Picayune reported that officials first identified the spill on May 28 and are now working to clean it up.

According to the newspaper, the agencies said that the Texas Petroleum Investment Company was responsible for the incident and that the cause was a leaking pipeline under the surface of the marsh. They planned to start a controlled burn to help along the cleanup process. *The Huffington Post* [Read more](#)

GHANA: ANOTHER OIL TANKER MISSING, FEARED HIJACKED

June 6 - A Greek oil tanker with 24 crewmembers has lost contact with its owners in the Gulf of Guinea, sparking fears that the ship may have been hijacked by pirates.

According to the ICC's International Maritime Bureau, the Liberian-flagged Fair Artemis lost contact with its owners on Wednesday while off the coast of Ghana's capital city of Accra.

The Gulf of Guinea is home to one of the world's most piracy prone areas, with most incidents occurring along or off the coast of Nigeria where gangs hijack vessels mostly to steal cargo.

Pirates however have been known to attack ships off the Ivory Coast to the west and south as far as Angola. *gCaptain* [Read more](#)
Related report in [The Maritime Executive](#)



CYPRUS: AFTER FIRE, 'HAZARDOUS' CARGO WAITING TO DOCK OUTSIDE LIMASSOL PORT

June 8 - A container ship carrying a number of hazardous goods is anchored outside Limassol port awaiting permission to unload, after it was damaged by fire while crossing the Suez Canal.

Incident reports from around the world

The Hanjin Athens, 6,6278 gross tonnage container ship caught fire while south of the Suez Canal on May 6, according to a report by Dolphin Maritime & Aviation Services Limited, a cargo claims company.

According to the report, the fire was in the second hold and caused substantial damage to the cargo in that hold. *Cyprus Mail*
[Read more](#) [Thanks to Don Johnston of ISCO Industry Partner, DG & Hazmat Group]

Other news reports from around the world

NEWS REPORTS FROM USA

June 2 - Louisiana's regulation and inspection of oil and gas wells, including 'orphaned' wells, is inadequate, Legislative Auditor finds



Equipment at a Department of Natural Resources orphan well clean-up job site in St. Mary Parish in 2010. (Louisiana Department of Natural Resources)

The state [Department of Natural Resources](#)' Office of Conservation is doing an inadequate job of regulating and inspecting the state's **oil and gas wells**, and is not properly overseeing a growing number of **"orphaned" wells** abandoned by private operators, according to a report released Monday by [Legislative Auditor Daryl Purpera](#).

The result is an increasing state financial burden for cleaning up environmental problems caused by improperly operated wells and for plugging wells that have been abandoned by oil and gas companies, the report concluded.

A PDF version of the report is available [here](#). *The Times Picayune*
[Read more](#)

June 2 - One month after Lynchburg derailment, questions and calls for change along rail lines

Flames and a large plume of black smoke are shown after a train derailment in this handout photo provided by the City of Lynchburg, Virginia April 30, 2014. No reports of injuries at this time according to local media reports. (Photo courtesy City of Lynchburg, Reuters / April 30, 2014)

U.S. Sen. Mark Warner signaled Monday that changes are coming for the nation's rail industry now that the country's energy supply depends so much on volatile domestic crude oil shipped by train.

Local emergency officials and others Warner, D-VA, invited to **Richmond** Monday to discuss the issue said that there are a range of questions to be answered in the wake of last month's derailment in **Lynchburg**

Emergency officials from across Virginia said they don't always have the information, equipment or training they need to respond to a derailment, despite significant cooperation from the rail industry. *Daily Press* [Read more](#)



June 3 - L.A. Spill Case Has Exposed Flaw in Pipeline Safety Oversight

Company responsible for the spill didn't know its dormant pipeline was full of oil before it leaked across a Los Angeles neighborhood. - Angeles-area oil pipeline spilled between 1,500 and 3,000 gallons of crude onto a neighborhood street, surprising residents and creating a noxious mess that took weeks to fully rectify.

The pipeline's owner, Phillips 66, must have been plenty shocked, too. It thought the pipe was empty. *Inside Climate News*
[Read more](#)

June 3 - No sanctions or cleanup in Utah monument oil mess

The oil coating a desert wash outside Escalante came from three distinct spills over four decades, according to a [report released Tuesday](#) by the Bureau of Land Management. Because the hundreds of barrels of oil appear to be degrading in place and are no longer shedding chemical residues downstream, the agency has no immediate plans to clean it up. *Salt Lake Tribune* [Read more](#)

NEWS REPORTS FROM THE USA (Continued)

June 4 - Large Minnesota crude oil spill of 1979 still produces significant discoveries for scientists

The site of one of the largest crude oil pipeline spills in Minnesota is still producing significant discoveries for researchers three decades later.

A Lakehead Co. pipeline northwest of Bemidji split on Aug. 20, 1979, and released about 440,000 gallons of crude oil. Today, the site attracts scientists from around the world who are collecting data from sensors that sample soil, water and air. *Daily Reporter* [Read more](#)

June 4 - Report: No long-term harm from swimming, eating fish in Enbridge spill area

Those swimming, wading or canoeing on a stretch of the Kalamazoo River affected by a massive 2010 oil spill should experience no long-term harm, the Michigan Department of Community Health concluded.

Likewise, eating fish from the river is not riskier as a result of the spill, the department said.

The findings, from a final department report announced today, correspond with earlier state health department studies on sediment risks and impacts to wells and drinking water that also found no long-term health effects from the July 2010 spill.

But not all are convinced. *Detroit Free Press* [Read more](#) [Thanks to Mike Rancilio of ISCO]

June 4 – Grand County oil spill clean-up continues

Crews will work the rest of the week to continue clean up efforts on an oil spill in the Salt Wash area of Grand County that happened on Wednesday, May 21, but Bureau of Land Management officials say reclamation on the area will be an on-going effort.

The 45-year-old well, operated by S.W. Energy Corp. of Salt Lake City, was reported leaking on Wednesday, May 21 at a site about 12 miles southeast of the town of Green River. *Moab Sun News* [Read more](#)

June 5 - Oil train classroom-on-rails trains responders



A rolling classroom on rails, complete with four tanker cars and a flatbed rigged with a variety of valves and fittings, made a whistle stop Thursday at the Port of Albany as part of a multi-state tour providing enhanced safety training to first responders in light of increased shipments of North Dakota crude oil.

The railroad is conducting a three-day training program at Albany's Hudson River port before taking its Safety Train to other cities along a route through Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois.

"We train thousands of emergency responders each year, but in this tour we've augmented the training to discuss crude by rail," said Carla Groleau, spokeswoman for CSX Transportation.

The Washington Post [Read more](#)

June 6 - Report Finds Higher Risks if Oil Line Is Not Built

If the Keystone XL pipeline is not built — and more oil from the Canadian oil sands is moved by rail — there could be hundreds more deaths and thousands more injuries than expected over the course of a decade, according to an updated State Department analysis of the contested project that was released Friday.

The report is the latest twist in the long fight over the proposed 1,700-mile pipeline, which would carry crude oil from Alberta to Gulf Coast refineries. The findings are significant: The State Department has the authority to approve the pipeline because it would cross international borders, although President Obama is expected to make the ultimate call. *New York Times* [Read more](#) [Thanks to Mike Rancilio of ISCO]

Other news reports from around the world (continued)

NEWS REPORTS FROM THE USA (Continued)

June 7 - "Chemical Spill Response" at the Wisconsin Council of Safety annual state safety conference

Environmental and safety experts Jason Christopherson and Ken Lassa, REI Environmental and Safety team members of Wausau, were chosen to educate participants on "Chemical Spill Response" at the Wisconsin Council of Safety annual state safety conference in Wisconsin Dells.

The presentation included OSHA and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources requirements for spill response, any associated environmental remediation and reporting requirements to governmental agencies and real world examples of common spill scenarios involving manufacturing and transportation. *Central Wisconsin Business* [Read more](#)

NEWS REPORTS FROM CANADA

May 31 - Monique Keiran: Large gap remains in oil-spill regulations

The B.C. government is seeking public comment on a proposed preparation and response system to protect the environment from land-based hazardous spills. It's all part of Premier Christy Clark's five conditions for blessing any new pipeline development through the province.

As such, the initiative focuses on industrial-scale transportation of heavy oil via pipeline or rail. However, if fully implemented, the system will benefit B.C. even if the Enbridge and Kinder Morgan pipeline projects do not proceed. The system applies to spills of any hazardous material that could affect any terrestrial environments, including lakes, wetlands, creeks and coastal shorelines. *Times Colonist* [Read more](#)

June 1 - National Energy Board announces companies must set aside money to abandon pipelines

Pipeline companies under federal jurisdiction such as Enbridge and Kinder Morgan, which have plans for major oil projects to the west coast of B.C., must create funds to pay for abandoning pipelines by the start of next year.

The National Energy board announced that starting Jan. 1, 2015 pipeline companies must create a mechanism to start setting aside money to pay for abandoning pipelines, through measures such as a trust or a letter of credit from a major bank or a surety bond. *The Vancouver Sun* [Read more](#)

June 3 - Plains Midstream pleads guilty in two oil spills, fined \$1.3 million

A pipeline company has been fined after pleading guilty in two spills that sent a total of nearly five million litres of oil into Alberta rivers and wetlands.

Plains Midstream Canada faced three environmental charges in a courtroom in Red Deer, Alta., on Tuesday and was ordered to pay a total of \$1.3 million for the spills, one of which was the second largest in Alberta history. *Beacon News* [Read more](#)

June 3 - Scientists urge PM to reject Northern Gateway report

The federal government must announce the final decision by June 17 on the 1,200-kilometre pipeline that would link the Alberta oil sands with a tanker port on the B.C. coast.

The letter sent this week to Harper and several key cabinet ministers said the report by the joint review panel is "indefensible as a basis to judge in favour of the project." It was signed by 300 scientists from universities from Newfoundland to Vancouver Island, along with colleagues from international institutions including Stanford, Cornell and Oxford. *The Telegram* [Read more](#)

NEWS REPORTS FROM UK

June 6 - Scotland's Environment Website goes live

On 5 June 2014, the new Scotland's Environment Website goes live. Go online and get informed about the State of Scotland's Environment and search the data that underpins the assessment. Interact with different data sets through mapping, analysis and visualisation tools and recommended resources and games that will improve your understanding.

Get involved in discussion, monitoring and action and get communicating to be clued up on the latest environmental news and share information through social media on environmental topics of interest. This relaunch includes the latest State of the Environment Report for Scotland which involves a multi-agency collaborative approach to assessing and reporting on the State of Scotland's Environment. *Press Release from Scottish Environment Protection Agency* <http://www.sepa.org.uk>

NIGERIA: SHELL CHIEF TO VISIT NIGERIA IN EFFORT TO CLEAN UP OIL SPILLS

June 1 - Ben van Beurden, the chief executive of Shell, will go to Nigeria this week to try to restore his firm's tarnished reputation by winning local support for a clean-up strategy to tackle old oil spills in the Delta.

The Dutchman, who took over at the company at the start of this year, said he was determined to make progress where his predecessors had failed, after a damning report on pollution by the UN environment programme (Unep) nearly three years ago *The Guardian* [Read more](#)

NIGERIA: ASSESSMENT OF AGIP OIL SPILL DAMAGE IN FINAL STAGE – NOSDRA

June 1 - The National Oil Spills Detection and Response Agency, NOSDRA, has said the assessment of damages caused by oil spill from Agip's Brass Oil Export Terminal is in its final stage.

The director of oil fields assessment in NOSDRA, Idris Musa, said this in an interview in Yenagoa, the Bayelsa State capital on Sunday. Mr. Musa said the damage evaluation would form the basis for recommending compensation for the communities impacted by the spill, which occurred on December 3, 2013. *All Africa* [Read more](#)

INDIA: PHOTOS: LIVING IN THE SHADOW OF THE BHOPAL CHEMICAL DISASTER

June 2 - Thirty years after the Union Carbide leak killed thousands, residents are still dealing with contaminated water, toxic waste, and lingering diseases.

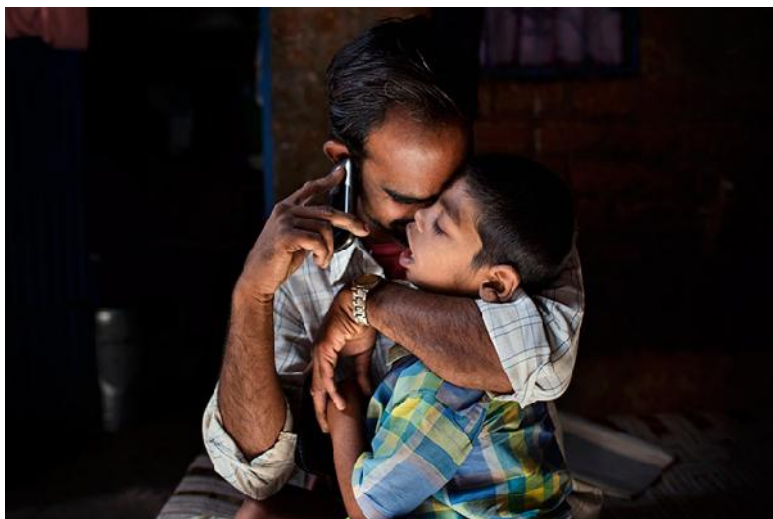


Photo: Rashid Ali hugs his seven-year-old son, Rahil, who has been diagnosed with torch infection and lissencephaly. Children with similar conditions have an average life expectancy of less than 10 years. Alex Masi

Before dawn on December 3, 1984, a pesticide plant in Bhopal, India, exploded and leaked 45 tons of methyl isocyanate. Half a million people came in contact with the toxic gas and other chemicals, and thousands died within days. As many as 25,000 people are thought to have eventually perished after exposure to the gas, which causes nerve and respiratory damage.

Sanjay Verma was orphaned by the gas leak, though he didn't know it until he was five. He doesn't remember the night of the explosion, but he lives with the nightmare of Bhopal's second disaster: The failure to fully clean up the leak and the ongoing neglect of its victims. Verma's story, excerpted below, is included in

Invisible Hands: Voices from the Global Economy, a new anthology of testimonies from laborers from around the world from the Voice of Witness book series.

London-based photographer Alex Masi spent years documenting those living in the shadow of Bhopal. "I strived to portray my subjects with intimacy, meaning, and depth," writes Masi, "in the hopes of becoming a catalyst for the promotion of awareness, action, and change for the people of Bhopal." Though Masi's photoessay does not picture Sanjay Varma, the images help answer Verma's plea: "I hope that people will find out more about Bhopal. It is not just history. We are still here, and we still need help." *Mother Jones* [Read more](#)

SEYCHELLES: Major Oil Spill Exercise

June 4 - A major exercise in implementing the national contingency plan for anti-pollution, search and rescue, and fire fighting was held in the waters off Mahé on 4 June.

This complex exercise was carried out by a range of different agencies including the Seychelles Coast Guard, Air Force, Fire Fighting Services and Port Authority.

The EUNAVFOR Atalanta Flagship Brandenburg also took part in the exercise, EUCAP Nestor experts provided support for the planning, preparations as well as its execution. The Seychelles Maritime Safety Authority and the Ministry of Environment and Energy were also involved. *MarineLink.com* [Read more](#)

AUSTRALIA: WILDLIFE VOLUNTEERS TRAIN FOR OIL SPILLS



Photo: A penguin is washed down after being coated in oil spilt from the stricken cargo ship, Rena, off New Zealand on October 8, 2011. (Getty: Bradley Ambrose)

June 6 - The International Fund for Animal Welfare is preparing volunteers for a potentially disastrous oil spill.

The last major spill to occur in the region was from the Rena Cargo ship, off the coast of the Bay of Plenty in New Zealand, in 2011.

Wildlife organisations are concerned another spill may be on the horizon.

Australia has four different types of penguin species all commonly affected during oil spills.

Valarie Ruoppolo, a veterinarian with the IFAW, says volunteers need to have the skills, to cope with dangerous oil spills.

"You can have effects like chemical burns, the birds will be cold and dehydrated, or you can have chronic effects that lead to birds having reproductive problems." You need to have specific training and know how to deal with chemicals." she said. [ABC.net.au Read more](#)

GREECE: HELMEPA AWARDS HONORARY MEMBERSHIPS



June 6 - On June 4, the Hellenic Marine Environment Protection Association (HELMEPA) inducted four individuals significant to the history of HELMEPA to the title of Honorary Member at a special ceremony during the Posidonia International Shipping Conference. The four individuals are:

1. Captain Panagiotis Tsakos, the owner of Tsakos Shipping and Trading and a founding member of HELMEPA
2. Mr. Efthimios Mitropoulos, former Secretary General of IMO
3. Mr. Nikolaos Tsavlis, Tsavlis Salvage
4. Mr. Joseph Angelo, Deputy Managing Director of INTERTANKO

Mr. Angelo is the first American to become an Honorary Member of HELMEPA, was an award given in light of his almost 30 years of contribution to the US Coast Guard/HELMEPA partnership to eliminate pollution of the seas from ships.
Source - Intertanko (ISCO Industry Partner)

NEW ZEALAND: INCIDENT 'RENA-LIKE' - FEARS OF OIL SPILL IN SHIP SCRAPE

June 7 - Questions have been raised over Taranaki's ability to deal with a major maritime disaster in the wake of a boat becoming badly damaged off the coast of New Plymouth. The Singaporean cargo ship Lake Triview dragged its anchor in heavy seas two weeks ago and suffered extensive damage to its hull when it hit the Waiwhakaiho reef.

The incident has been described as having the potential to have been a Rena-like disaster. Though no fuel or cargo was lost in the incident, environmentalists, ocean users and politicians say it was a lucky escape. [Stuff.co.nz Read more](#)

CSB BOARD APPROVES FINAL REPORT FINDING DEEPWATER HORIZON BLOWOUT PREVENTER FAILED DUE TO UNRECOGNIZED PIPE BUCKLING PHENOMENON DURING EMERGENCY WELL-CONTROL EFFORTS ON APRIL 20, 2010, LEADING TO ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER IN GULF OF MEXICO



Report Says Similar Accident Could Still Occur, Calls for Better Management of Safety-Critical Elements by Offshore Industry, Regulators

Houston, Texas, June 5, 2014— The blowout preventer (BOP) that was intended to shut off the flow of high-pressure oil and gas from the Macondo well in the Gulf of Mexico during the disaster on the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig on April 20, 2010, failed to seal the well because drill pipe buckled for reasons the offshore drilling industry remains largely unaware of, according to a new two-volume draft investigation report released today by the U.S. Chemical Safety Board (CSB).

[CLICK HERE to access Overview](#)

[CLICK HERE to access Volume 1](#)

[CLICK HERE to access Volume 2](#)

The blowout caused explosions and a fire on the Deepwater Horizon rig, leading to the deaths of 11 personnel onboard and serious injuries to 17 others. Nearly 100 others escaped from the burning rig, which sank two days later, leaving the Macondo well spewing oil and gas into Gulf waters for a total of 87 days. By that time the resulting oil spill was the largest in offshore history. The failure of the BOP directly led to the oil spill and contributed to the severity of the incident on the rig.

The draft report will be considered for approval by the Board at a public meeting scheduled for 4 p.m. CDT at the Hilton Americas Hotel, 1600 Lamar St., Houston, TX 77010. The meeting will include a detailed staff presentation, Board questions, and public comments, and will be webcast: <http://www.csb.gov/investigations/webcast/>.

The CSB report concluded that the pipe buckling likely occurred during the first minutes of the blowout, as crews desperately sought to regain control of oil and gas surging up from the Macondo well. Although other investigations had previously noted that the Macondo drill pipe was found in a bent or buckled state, this was assumed to have occurred days later, after the blowout was well underway.

After testing individual components of the blowout preventer (BOP) and analyzing all the data from post-accident examinations, the CSB draft report concluded that the BOP's blind shear ram – an emergency hydraulic device with two sharp cutting blades, intended to seal an out-of-control well – likely did activate on the night of the accident, days earlier than other investigations found. However, the pipe buckling that likely occurred on the night of April 20 prevented the blind shear ram from functioning properly. Instead of cleanly cutting and sealing the well's drill pipe, the shear ram actually punctured the buckled, off-center pipe, sending huge additional volumes of oil and gas surging toward the surface and initiating the 87-day-long oil and gas release into the Gulf that defied multiple efforts to bring it under control.

The identification of the new buckling mechanism for the drill pipe – called “effective compression” – was a central technical finding of the draft report. The report concludes that under certain conditions, the “effective compression” phenomenon could compromise the proper functioning of other blowout preventers still deployed around the world at offshore wells. The complete BOP failure scenario is detailed in a [new 11-minute computer video animation](#) the CSB developed and released along with the draft report.

The CSB draft report also revealed for the first time that there were two instances of miswiring and two backup battery failures affecting the electronic and hydraulic controls for the BOP's blind shear ram. One miswiring, which led to a battery failure, disabled the BOP's “blue pod” – a control system designed to activate the blind shear ram in an emergency. The BOP's “yellow pod” – an identical, redundant system that could also activate the blind shear ram – had a different miswiring and a different battery failure. In the case of the yellow pod, however, the two failures fortuitously cancelled each other out, and the pod was likely able to operate the blind shear ram on the night of April 20.

“Although both regulators and the industry itself have made significant progress since the 2010 calamity, more must be done to ensure the correct functioning of blowout preventers and other safety-critical elements that protect workers and the environment from major offshore accidents,” said Dr. Rafael Moure-Eraso, the CSB chairperson. “The two-volume report we are releasing today makes clear why the current offshore safety framework needs to be further strengthened.”

“Our investigation has produced several important findings that were not identified in earlier examinations of the blowout preventer failure,” said CSB Investigator Cheryl MacKenzie, who led the investigative team. “The CSB team performed a comprehensive examination of the full set of BOP testing data, which were not available to other investigative organizations when their various reports were completed. From this analysis, we were able to draw new conclusions about how the drill pipe buckled and moved off-center within the BOP, preventing the well from being sealed in an emergency.”

Special News Item – US CSB Report on Deepwater Horizon and Computer Animation (Continued)

The April 2010 blowout in the Gulf of Mexico occurred during operations to “temporarily abandon” the Macondo oil well, located in approximately 5,000-foot-deep waters some 50 miles off the coast of Louisiana. Mineral rights to the area were leased to oil major BP, which contracted with Transocean and other companies to drill the exploratory Macondo well under BP’s oversight, using Transocean’s football-field-size Deepwater Horizon drilling rig.

The blowout followed a failure of the cementing job to temporarily seal the well, while a series of pressure tests were misinterpreted to indicate that the well was in fact properly sealed. The final set of failures on April 20 involved the Deepwater Horizon’s blowout preventer (BOP), a large and complex device on the sea floor that was connected to the rig nearly a mile above on the sea surface.

Effective compression, as described in the draft report, occurs when there is a large pressure difference between the inside and outside of a pipe. That condition likely occurred during emergency response actions by the Deepwater Horizon crew to the blowout occurring on the night of April 20, when operators closed BOP pipe rams at the wellhead, temporarily sealing the well. This unfortunately established a large pressure differential that buckled the steel drill pipe inside the BOP, bending it outside the effective reach of the BOP’s last-resort safety device, the blind shear ram.

“The CSB’s model differs from other buckling theories that have been presented over the years but for which insufficient supporting evidence has been produced,” according to CSB Investigator Dr. Mary Beth Mulcahy, who oversaw the technical analysis. “The CSB’s conclusions are based on real-time pressure data from the Deepwater Horizon and calculations about the behavior of the drill pipe under extreme conditions. The findings reveal that pipe buckling could occur even when a well is shut-in and apparently in a safe and stable condition. The pipe buckling – unlikely to be detected by the drilling crew – could render the BOP inoperable in an emergency. This hazard could impact even the best offshore companies, those who are maintaining their blowout preventers and other equipment to a high standard. However, there are straightforward methods to avoid pipe buckling if you recognize it as a hazard.”

The CSB investigation found that while Deepwater Horizon personnel performed regular tests and inspections of those BOP components that were necessary for day-to-day drilling operations, neither Transocean nor BP had performed regular inspections or testing to identify latent failures of the BOP’s emergency systems. As a result, the safety-critical BOP systems responsible for shearing drill pipe in emergency situations – and safely sealing an out-of-control well – were compromised before the BOP was even deployed to the Macondo wellhead. The CSB report pointed to the multiple miswirings and battery failures within the BOP’s subsea control equipment as evidence of the need for more rigorous identification, testing, and management of critical safety devices. The report also noted that the BOP lacked the capacity to reliably cut and seal the 6-5/8 inch drill pipe that was used during most of the drilling at the Macondo well prior to April 20 – even if the pipe had been properly centered in the blind shear ram’s blades.

Despite the multiple maintenance problems found in the Deepwater Horizon BOP, which could have been detected prior to the accident, CSB investigators ultimately concluded the blind shear ram likely did close on the night of April 20, and the drill pipe could have been successfully sealed but for the buckling of the pipe.

“Although there have been regulatory improvements since the accident, the effective management of safety critical elements has yet to be established,” Investigator MacKenzie said. “This results in potential safety gaps in U.S. offshore operations and leaves open the possibility of another similar catastrophic accident.”

The draft report, subject to Board approval, makes a number of recommendations to the U.S. Department of Interior’s Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE), the federal organization established following the Macondo accident to oversee U.S. offshore safety. These recommendations call on BSEE to require drilling operators to effectively manage technical, operational, and organizational safety-critical elements in order to reduce major accident risk to an acceptably low level, known as “as low as reasonably practicable.”

“Although blowout preventers are just one of the important barriers for avoiding a major offshore accident, the specific findings from the investigation about this BOP’s unreliability illustrate how the current system of regulations and standards can be improved to make offshore operations safer,” Investigator MacKenzie said. “Ultimately the barriers against a blowout or other offshore disaster include not only equipment like the BOP, but also operational and organizational factors. And all of these need to be rigorously defined, actively monitored, and verified through an effective management system if safety is to be assured.” Companies should be required to identify these safety-critical elements in advance, define their performance requirements, and prove to the regulator and outside auditors that these elements will perform reliably when called upon, according to the draft report.

The report also proposes recommendations to the American Petroleum Institute (API), the U.S. trade association for both upstream and downstream petroleum industry. The first recommendation is to revise API Standard 53, *Blowout Prevention Equipment Systems for Drilling Wells*, calling for critical testing of the redundant control systems within BOP’s, and another for new guidance for the effective management of safety-critical elements in general.

CSB Chairperson Rafael Moure-Eraso said, “Drilling continues to extend to new depths, and operations in increasingly challenging environments, such as the Arctic, are being planned. The CSB report and its key findings and recommendations are intended to put the United States in a leading role for improving well-control procedures and practices. To maintain a leadership position, the U.S. should adopt rigorous management methods that go beyond current industry best practices.”

Two forthcoming volumes of the CSB’s Macondo investigation report are planned to address additional regulatory matters as well as organizational and human factors safety issues raised by the accident.

Special News Item – US CSB Report on Deepwater Horizon and Computer Animation (Continued)

The CSB is an independent federal agency charged with investigating industrial chemical accidents. The agency's board members are appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate. CSB investigations look into all aspects of chemical accidents, including physical causes such as equipment failure as well as inadequacies in regulations, industry standards, and safety management systems.

The Board does not issue citations or fines but does make safety recommendations to plants, industry organizations, labor groups, and regulatory agencies such as OSHA and EPA. Visit our website, www.csb.gov.

For more information, contact Communications Manager Hillary Cohen, cell 202-446-8094 or Sandy Gilmour, Public Affairs, cell 202-251-549

Links for Press Reports and Comments

June 5 - Faulty BOP Contributed to Deadly BP Spill – Report *The Maritime Executive* [Read more](#)

June 5 - Report: Flaws in Gulf Rigs Persist Four Years After Deepwater Horizon Disaster *gCaptain* [Read more](#)

June 5 - Fixes After BP Spill Not Enough, Board Says *International New York Times* [Read more](#)

People in the news

TURKEY: SAFAK OZSOY OF ISCO CORPORATE MEMBER TULIP ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



Safak Ozsoy is now General Manager at TULIP Egitim ve Danismanlik Ltd. ti, responsible for Oil spill management, contingency planning, environmental modelling, safety reports, atex works

USA: MATT SIMMONS APPOINTED AS OPERATIONS MANAGER AT OSRL

Matt Simmons has been appointed as the new Operations Manager at Oil Spill Response Ltd. in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, USA



Obituary

DAVID HILL



David L. Hill, Washington, D.C. attorney and long time friend of our industry passed away on June 5, 2014. David spoke on many occasions to gatherings of our meetings with a view to counseling emergency responders on aspects of radio communications vital to our efforts.

David worked with Marc Shaye and David Usher for more than thirty years to develop strategies in order to provide our member companies and the industry priority when licensing radio spectrum for day-to-day and emergency operations. David is survived by his wife, Nita and daughter, Heather.

This sad news received from ISCO Committee Member, Marc K. Shaye Hon.FISCO on 8 June 2014

In the picture, from left to right, David Usher, Marc K. Shaye, David L. Hill

FORUM ON GROUP V (NON-BUOYANT) OILS – UPDATED CALL FOR PAPERS AND NOTICE OF EXTENSION OF SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Emerging Concerns: The International Forum on Group V (Non-buoyant) Oils

9-10 September 2014 Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority Building
130 Atwater, Detroit, MI 48226

The International Spill Control Organization, Sponsors and Management and Program Committee have issued an industry-wide call for participation. The Forum covers the following general aspects of the Group V (Non-buoyant) Oil issues:

Program Objectives and Outline

This Forum intends to explore multiple aspects of spill response for Group V classified oils, emerging production of oils such as Bitumen and Dilbit with the potential for sinking, and other heavy oils known to sink.

The platform and presentations are structured to facilitate better understanding between the various parties making up the response community so that each discipline can ascertain from others the importance of how they intersect in relation to regulatory issues, scientific issues, production and transport, spill preparedness, spill management and spill response.

Track One: Regulatory Rulemaking Updates

- A. OSRO Classification and Group V Oils
- B. Response Plans and Group V Oils
- C. OPA 90 - New Trends in Transport - Rail and Pipeline Issues

Track Two: Fate and Behavior of Group V Non-Buoyant Sinking Oils

- A. Properties of Group V Oil and Submerged Oil Releases
- B. Emerging Issues of Potential Sinking Oil: Oil Sands, Dilbit and Bitumen
- B. Explore the different environments at risk

Track Three: Storage and Transport issues (maritime, pipelines, rail and trucking)

- A. Trends in Transport: Rail and Pipeline
- B. Risk Mitigation and Spill Response Planning
- C. Industry Safeguards
- D. Community Information Programs

Track Four: Detection and Surveillance of Non-Buoyant Sinking Oils

- A. Submerged Oil Detection Techniques
- B. Existing and Emerging Technologies and Practices

Track Five: Group V Response Preparedness

- A. Group V Oils and Response Planning on the Regional and Local Level (Area Contingency Plans)
- B. International Agreements and Cooperation
- C. Interagency Issues

Track Six: Group V Non-Buoyant Sinking Oil Spill Response:

- A. Spill Management
- B. Response Strategies and Counter-Measures
- C. Submerged Oil Containment Techniques
- D. Recovery Methodologies for Submerged Oils
- E. Equipment and Materials Available for Group V Sinking Oil Response
- F. Case Studies

All submissions should:

- Be objective and include practical and impartial information.
- Identify primary and contributing authors.
- Indicate the topic or focus most appropriate for the presentation.
- Submit to : forumdetroit3@gmail.com

The new Abstract Submission due date is **June 30, 2014**. You will receive email confirmation when your submission has been received. Speakers will receive notification as to acceptance or non-acceptance as soon as possible after submitted papers have been received and assessed by the committee. Thank you for your interest in participating in the Forum.



In this issue of the ISCO Newsletter we are printing No. 177 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 177: CONCLUDING REMARKS

Previous articles relating to the paper intended for MEPC 67 have noted that the minority in any belief-consensus may be acquiescent and compliant or dissenting and non-compliant; and that when the regulating majority is not among those thus regulated, it may tend to absolutism.

Thus, in respect of the current environmentalist belief-consensus, we see that that the member states do not regulate themselves as to common standards for casualty-response, while they regulate the shipping industry as to common standards for safety and operational-discharge avoidance; that their intention is absolute, though progressive to avoid open dissention; but that while dissention has been covert thus far in respect of operational-discharges, it is now being openly expressed by all shipping NGOs and by a significant number of member states in respect of ballast-water and exhaust-gas regulation.

In response to these observations, the intended paper for MEPC 67 will identify the source of dissention as the tendency of some member states to drive regulation of industry beyond known need and known capability. It will also identify the means of dissention avoidance as unanimous agreement to regulate for satisfaction of known needs with known capabilities while recognising the scope for realistically foreseeable developments.

The intended paper will amplify this new approach by identifying the knowledge which is ignored by current belief-only response to casualty-releases of oil/HNS; the knowledge which saved earlier belief-only regulation from open dissention in respect of operational discharges of oil/HNS; and the absence of the knowledge now needed to resolve current dissention in respect of ballast-water and exhaust-gas regulation.

As to casualty-releases, the intended paper for MEPC 67 will identify articles 1 - 136 of this Column as the repository of knowledge from which the new contingency and incident-specific planning approach is to be derived.

As to the benefits of adopting this approach, articles 137-171 reviewed the benefits already derived from its application to previous salvage adjudications, those derived from its influence on the Donaldson Enquiry, and those derivable from its adoption by response contractors should regulators so permit by rejecting the knowledge-countering beliefs identified in articles 116 - 130.

However, articles 172 - 176 have more recently recalled that while the dissention of industry from operational discharge regulations has been muted, it is now openly expressed by industry and even by some member states in respect of other aspects of the current environmentalist belief-consensus; and that the intended paper for MEPC 67 will seek knowledge-acceptance and belief-rejection in respect of casualty-release response, operational discharges, ballast water treatment and exhaust-gas emissions.

As to response to casualty-releases and regulation of operational-discharges, the intended paper will recall that the seawater concentrations arising from natural and dispersant-induced dispersions of surface slicks are too low to be toxic to the micro-organisms which biodegrade these dispersions as they subsequently dilute; that this non-toxicity is revealed by the higher concentrations and longer exposure times needed to measure their LC₅₀ values; and that the continued measurement of such values is used to promote belief in the toxicity of such releases, despite itself reality-refuting this belief to the knowledge of their non-toxicity.

Thus, this belief continues to be cited in justification for discharge regulations continuing to be based on LC₅₀ values for oil/HNS, despite their initially non-toxic discharge concentrations being further diluted and indeed biodegraded in the receiving water column. Thus, the intended paper will accept this knowledge of toxicity/non-toxicity being dependent on high/ low concentration as applying to all releases and discharges, and as confirmed by species-extinction/ ecological-disaster being absent in all incidents thus far whether casualty- or operation-related.

As to ballast water, the paper for MEPC 67 will respond to the reported failure of already approved systems by noting that those who list LC₅₀ values for regulatory purposes regardless of their seawater concentrations are perhaps not best suited to consider all ballast-water options for which efficacy could be reality-evaluated; that WSL protected its HNS tank-washing samples from *in transit* biodegradation, by killing the causative organisms with the biocide, hibitane; that it is thus possible to kill ballast-water organisms; but that this approach may be inhibited by belief in the toxicity of the final discharge, despite its post-discharge dilution tending to virtual infinity, and despite pesticides having already been developed to kill weeds and to degrade before damaging the subsequent crop.

- 1 The *Rational Trinity: Imagination, Belief and Knowledge*, D.Cormack, Bright Pen 2010 available at www.authorsonline.co.uk
- 2 *Response to Oil and Chemical Marine Pollution*, D. Cormack, Applied Science Publishers, 1983.
- 3 *Response to Marine Oil Pollution - Review and Assessment*, Douglas Cormack, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999.

Events

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) [More info](#)

UK: MANAGING MARITIME ACCIDENTS & EMERGENCIES, LONDON, 16-17 SEPTEMBER 2014

Join the 100+ professionals who have boosted their expertise in handling major incidents through the Managing Maritime Accidents and Emergencies Seminar. Get the perspective of the shipowners, national authorities, ship masters, underwriters and salvors on loss prevention and asset protection. [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	April 2014
The Essential Hazmat News	Alliance of Hazardous Materials Professionals	March 18 issue
USA EPA Tech Direct	Remediation of contaminated soil and groundwater	June 1 issue
USA EPA Tech News & Trends	Contaminated site clean-up information	May 2014 issue
Technology Innovation News Survey	From US EPA - Contaminated site decontamination	April 16-30 2014
Intertanko Weekly News	International news for the oil tanker community	No 23 2014
CROIERG Enews	Canberra & Regions Oil Industry Emergency Response Group	April 2014 issue
IMO Publishing News	New and forthcoming IMO publications	May 2014
IMO News Magazine	News from the International Maritime Organization	No 1, 2014
Pollution Online Newsletter	News for prevention & control professionals	June 4 issue
EMSA Newsletter	News from the European Maritime Safety Agency	May 2014 issue
JOIFF "The Catalyst"	Int'l Organisation for Industrial Hazard Management	January 2014 issue
Environmental Technology Online	Environmental Monitoring, Testing & Analysis	May 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	May 2014 issue
AMSA Aboard	News from the Australian Maritime Safety Authority	May 2014 issue

REPORT: RESPONDING TO OIL SPILLS IN THE U.S. ARCTIC MARINE ENVIRONMENT

U.S. Arctic waters north of the Bering Strait and west of the Canadian border encompass a vast area that usually is ice covered for much of the year but increasingly is experiencing longer periods and larger areas of open water due to climate change. Sparsely inhabited and with a wide variety of ecosystems found nowhere else, this region is vulnerable to damage from human activities.

This report reviews the current state of the science regarding oil spill response and environmental assessment in the Arctic region north of the Bering Strait, describes the unique ecosystems and environment of the Arctic, and makes recommendations to provide an effective response effort in these challenging conditions. The authors identify key oil spill research priorities, critical data and monitoring needs, mitigation strategies, and important operational and logistical issues.

National Research Council. National Academies Press, Washington, DC. ISBN: 978-0-309-30370-5, 250 pp, 2014

[More info](#) [Thanks to US EPA Technology Innovation News Survey]

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