ISCO NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of the International Spill Response Community

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ISCO & THE ISCO NEWSLETTER

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

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International news

LNG EMERGENCY AND INCIDENT RESPONSE GUIDELINES FOR INLAND NAVIGATION ARE AVAILABLE NOW

April 15 - Safety around Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) is a hot topic, now that LNG is more and more becoming the fuel of the future. The results of a recent LNG emergency and incident response study are a big step forward in LNG safety in Europe. Today, the Rhine Port Group hands over the first edition of this study to Mr. Specht, 1st Major of the City of Mannheim and dedicated chief of the fire department. The Rhine Port Group consists of the Port of Rotterdam, the Port of Antwerp, the Port of Mannheim, the Port of Strasbourg and the Port of Switzerland.

The document informs emergency response organisations how to prepare themselves to manage credible LNG incidents on inland navigation along the Rhine-Main-Danube corridor. The target group of the study is emergency responders in the inland waterway transport (IWT) sector, consisting of emergency response organisations such as fire brigades and port authorities. This study was executed under the EU-funded project 'LNG Masterplan for Rhine-Main-Danube'.

Mr. Van der Veen (Managing director of Falck RISC) quotes: "We were very pleased to execute this study. I truly believe the bottom line – for now – is that people who are in need of this knowledge and these insights are enabled to get professional upgrade LNG emergency response education and practical training. This gap should be given highest priority."

The report can be downloaded free of charge on the LNG Masterplan website in English, German, French and Dutch language: LNG Masterplan website

Hellenic Shipping News Read more

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International news (continued)

ARCTIC OIL SPILLS IN CANADA LIKELY TO SPREAD ACROSS BORDERS: STUDY

April 25 - New research suggests that any type of significant oil spill in Canada's western Arctic would likely spread quickly and foul oceans around Alaska and possibly as far west as Russia.

"Spills originating from the Canadian Beaufort and resulting coastal oiling could be an international issue," says the report from RPS Applied Science Associates, a global environmental consultancy.

The research, funded by the World Wildlife Fund, comes as the National Energy Board prepares to consider blowout prevention plans in two separate proposals for offshore energy drilling. *Huffington Post* Read more

PLASTICS CHOKING ANIMALS TARGETED IN G-7 CLEAN-OCEAN PUSH

April 26 - The biggest advanced economies plan to urge the world to clean up plastic shopping bags and bottles clogging oceans, prodded by German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

Germany will put the cleanup on the agenda of the Group of Seven nations for the first time at the G-7's summit in June in the Bavarian Alps, Environment Minister Barbara Hendricks said in an interview. The goal is to encourage countries to reduce waste from plastic and tiny beads added to body scrubs and toothpastes that pollute the sea and kill marine life. *Bloomberg* Read more

ISO 14001: FINAL DRAFT OF REVISION EXPECTED IN JUNE

April 28 - The ISO Technical Committee, ISO/TC 207/WG 5, which is responsible for the revision of international environment management system standard ISO 14001, concluded their meeting in Chiswick, UK on Friday 24 April and has made significant progress towards the publication of ISO 14001:2015. *Green4Sea* Read more

International news (continued)

U.S., CANADA TOUGHEN OIL TRAIN SAFETY STANDARDS

May 1 - The United States and Canada on Friday announced long-awaited safety rules for trains carrying oil, as regulators seek to reduce risks after a series of explosive accidents that accompanied a surge in crude-by-rail shipments.

The rules call for a rapid phase out of older tank cars considered unsafe during derailments, and are more aggressive than even some of the toughest proposals yet put forward. The rail and energy sectors have already expressed concern that the required speed of the phase outs is not feasible and the potentially billions of dollars in costs will be too high for the small safety improvements they deliver. *The Maritime Executive* Read more

[PHOTOS] FAME AND GLAMOR IN CUNARD'S PAST

In the picture: Liz Taylor

Cruise line Cunard is celebrating its 175 anniversary this year. MarEx has gathered photos of the line's glamorous cruisers of the past.

48 passenger ships have flown the Cunard flag since Britannia established the first scheduled service across the Atlantic in July 1840, and every year since that departure Cunard ships have crossed and re-crossed the Atlantic, in peace and war, without fail.

The Maritime Executive See more pictures of the famous

Incident reports from around the world (in chronological order)

NIGERIA: OIL SPILL AGENCY REPORTS FRESH INCIDENT FROM EXXONMOBIL FACILITY IN A'IBOM

April 22 - The National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency on Wednesday said a fresh oil spill was detected at the Qua Iboe Terminal, Ibeno oil facility operated by Mobil Producing Nigeria Unlimited in Akwa Ibom.

The State Director of the Agency, Enyi Udeogu, said the spill occurred near Mkpanak community close to Ibeno Beach on Sunday, April 19. He, however, said the agency had not ascertained the volume of oil spilled into the environment in the community.

"The community reported the oil spill to us last week," Mr. Udeogu said, adding that NOSDRA was yet to carry out any investigation to determine the number of barrels of oil spilled in the area. *Premium Times* Read more

April 27 - Mobil Disowns Recent Oil Spill at Ibeno

Mobil Producing Nigeria (MPN) Unlimited, operator of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) joint venture, has said that the suspected oil spill that sparked protest from the youths of its host community was not from any of its facility but human factor.

The Manager, Media and Communication of ExxonMobil, Mr Ogechukwu Udeagha, offered the explanation on Monday while responding to questions from THISDAY. "Internal investigations and results of fingerprint analysis of samples taken from the site indicate that the oiling is not from any of the onshore or offshore facilities of the NNPC/MPN JV. All facilities have been operating normally". *This Day Live* Read more

SPAIN ACTIVATES ALERT AS OIL SPILL THREATENS CANARY ISLANDS

April 25 - Spain's government activated an environmental emergency alert Saturday over oil slicks that threaten pristine beaches on the southwestern Canary Islands.

The government activated a level 2 alert after analyzing ocean current data from Spain's Oceanographic Institute, saying the slicks could affect the islands' vulnerable coasts. Level 2 is the second highest alert level.

The islands are a popular destination for European visitors and harbor an important tourism industry.

The government said one beach had been cleared of oil and clean-up operations were ongoing on three other beaches near the tourist hot-spot of Maspalomas on Gran Canaria after a slick came ashore Thursday. *ABC News* Read more

NEW ZEALAND: BUNKER FUEL SPILL IN NEW ZEALAND'S TAURANGA HARBOUR

April 27 - Update: An update Tuesday morning from the Bay of Plenty Regional Council said that oil has been spotted on Maungatapu, Tauranga covering about 300 meters of the beach following Monday's bunker fuel spill.

A helicopter survey this morning has shown no more oil in the water. It has not yet been determined how much oil was spilled. *gCaptain* Read more

April 27 - Rain and high winds are creating problems for oil spill responders dealing with a heavy fuel oil spill in Tauranga Harbour in New Zealand' North Island.

The oil spill occurred on April 27 when a ship was bunkering at the Port of Tauranga. Regional Council oil spill On Scene Commander Adrian Heays said severe weather was hampering oil retrieval. Some booms were proving ineffective in the high winds and heavy seas. *The Maritime Executive* Read more

April 29 – A helicopter is flying over Tauranga again this morning to check any movement of oil overnight after an oil spill in Tauranga Harbour on Monday.

Mobil last night accepted full responsibility for the spill.

The Bay of Plenty Regional Council this morning said oil had washed up high on the foreshore at Maungatapu covering about 300 metres of the beach north east of Turret Rd. *Bay of Plenty Times* Read more

Other news reports from around the world (countries in alphabetical order)

CANADA: THE ENGLISH BAY OIL SPILL WAS A WARNING ON THE RISKS OF MAJOR TANKERS

April 26 - The bunker-fuel spill this month of at least 2,800 litres – from the grain ship MV Marathassa, in English Bay, Vancouver – was small and localized. But it revealed big deficiencies on the part of the Coast Guard – and raised legitimate doubts about how well a large oil spill would be handled.

B.C.'s coastal waters could soon be home to a growing number of oil tankers. The TransMountain project of Kinder Morgan Inc., if approved and built, would move great quantities of diluted bitumen to Burnaby, to be loaded into double-hulled tankers, up to 120,000 tonnes per vessel. Currently, about 50 oil tankers a year depart from Port Metro Vancouver. If TransMountain goes ahead, that number could rise to as many as 400. *The Globe and Mail* Read more

CANADA: UNDER IDEAL CONDITIONS, MARATHASSA SPILL CLEANUP SHOULD HAVE BEEN EASY

April 26 - There was a high-pressure system over B.C.'s South Coast on April 8th, producing blue skies and very light breezes on English Bay. It was, one might say, perfect weather for an oil spill.

Marine accidents typically happen when conditions are foul. There is fog, or driving rain, or high winds. But on the day the Marathassa accidentally discharged 16 barrels of bunker fuel, while resting at anchor midway between Jericho Beach and Stanley Park, conditions were ideal for a cleanup.

The Coast Guard has praised itself for getting to the spill about 90 minutes after it was first reported by a recreational boater, and for having the Western Canada Marine Response Corp. on scene in a little more than four hours. But the Marathassa wasn't contained by a boom until 12 hours and 39 minutes had passed. And by then, the oil in the water had spread so far that it would take more than a week to clean Vancouver's beaches.

If it's that hard to contain and clean up oil spilled on a calm day, just a 15-minute boat ride from the main harbour, how difficult would it be to respond to a spill on a remote section of the coast, in bad weather? *The Globe and Mail* Read more

CANADA: IS CANADA READY FOR AN OIL SPILL?

April 30 - The mayor of North Vancouver voiced concerned this weekend over the speed of the response and oil spill expert Anita Burke, who has worked on emergency projects such as the Exxon Valdez oil spill, similarly expressed her disappointment over the handling of English Bay incident.

According to reports at the time of the spill, Western Canada Marine Response Corporation, the company in charge of the clean-up effort, arrived four hours after the Canadian Coast Guard had been notified and didn't have booms in place until twelve hours after initial reports. **Typical international standard response times for such incidents are between fifteen minutes to a half hour.** *The Maritime Executive* Read more

FINLAND: OIL SPILLS SURPRISINGLY COMMON – CLEANUP DEPENDENT ON VOLUNTEERS

Photo: World Wide Fund for Nature volunteers place booms (large floating barriers that round up oil and lift it off the water) along the shores of the northwest coastal city of Raahe to prohibit an oil spill from ruining the rocky beach area. Cleaning up oil from a rocky shore is a monumental task. Image: Antti Haavisto WWF

April 26 - About 2,000 oil spills a year take place in Finland, the large majority of which only leak small amounts of oil into the environment. Even so, cleanup of Finland's waterways and shores after oil leaks can take weeks, months or even years.

Local authorities are responsible for making sure areas are suitably prepared for oil spills. South Savo Rescue Department head Jyri Silmäri says the famous Saimaa lake and waterway region in eastern Finland has been ready to deal with oil accidents for decades.

"We have collection vessels and booms for creating barriers, as well as other oil prevention-associated equipment. We cooperate actively with our neighbouring regions of South Karelia, North Savo and North Karelia too. This allows us to gather our equipment and enact preventative measures quickly, containing the damage to keep it minimal," says Silmäri. *Uutiset* Read more

Other news reports from around the world (continued)

GHANA: COURT RULES ON IVORY COAST OIL DISPUTE

Photo: Kofi Buah, Ghana's Minister for Energy and Petroleum

April 25 - An international maritime tribunal on Saturday ruled that Ghana can continue developing a $4.9 billion dollar offshore oil project in an area caught up in a border dispute with Ivory Coast but must not start new drilling.

The decision is positive for the government of Ghana and for British firm Tullow, which leads a consortium developing the TEN field and has already drilled the wells it needs to begin production in mid-2016. *The Maritime Executive* Read more

NORWAY: GOVERNMENT PROPOSES TO RATIFY HNS CONVENTION

April 29 - In December 2014 the government proposed to Parliament that the International Convention on Liability and Compensation for Damage in connection with the Carriage of Hazardous and Noxious Substances by Sea 1996 (the 'HNS Convention') be ratified and that the Maritime Code be amended accordingly.

The HNS Convention establishes a new liability and compensation regime that will cover not only pollution damage from hazardous and noxious (HNS) substances carried by ships, but also the risks of fire and explosion, including loss of life or personal injury and loss of or damage to property. Its aim is to improve the position of claimants after accidents with hazardous and noxious goods onboard ships, as well as to protect environmental interests.

Norway is expected to ratify the HNS Convention in 2015 or 2016, although the timing will presumably depend on when the other European countries – particulatly the Nordic countries – will ratify the convention.

For further information on this topic please contact Kaja Oftedal Rasting, Herman Steen or Gaute Gjelsten at Wikborg Rein by telephone (+47 22 82 75 00) or email (kof@wr.no, hst@wr.no or ggj@wr.no). The Wikborg Rein website can be accessed at www.wr.no. InternationalLawOffice.com Read more

PAKISTAN: OIL SPILLAGE INTO SEA NEAR BADIN

April 29 - Thousands of liters of oil are flowing into the sea along the coastal belt of Badin due to spillage which is adversely affecting the marine life but the Government of Sindh is not paying any attention to it.

Oil is seeping in large amounts into the sea, clogging fishes and affecting marine life due to the explosion in an oil well along the coastal region of Badin.

A company named UEP while claiming the well worthless, had completely inhibited it six months ago. Local authorities are of the view that heavy machinery is needed to completely obstruct the well. However due to poor infrastructure and the absence of proper ground travelling routes, problems are being faced. *TheNewsTribe.com* Read more

RUSSIA: RUSSIAN OILPATCH IGNORES RIGHTS, ENVIRONMENT: ABORIGINAL LEADER

Photo: An oil spill outside Usinsk, Komi Republic, Russia is shown in this undated handout photo. Russian aboriginal people from the area affected by the spill are in Canada at an international meeting of Arctic states to raise attention to the environmental costs of that country's oilpatch. THE CANADIAN PRESS/HO - Greenpeace International, Denis Sinyakov

April 25 - When you live in the middle of the Russian oilpatch, even the fish smell, says an aboriginal leader from that country. "The fish are smelling like oil and the water in the rivers, it's undrinkable," said Nikolay Rochev, the head of Izvatas, a group that represents the Izhma Komi people who herd reindeer in the forests, wetlands and tundra of a France-sized area in central Russia.

Rochev was in Canada for a meeting of the Arctic Council, the group of eight nations that ring the North Pole that offers the main international forum for regional cooperation. His group belongs to the federation of Russian aboriginals that is one of the council's permanent participants. On Friday, Russian Environment Minister Sergei Donskoi told the council that his country is determined to develop its Arctic resources according to the highest international standards. "We are certain that this should happen, but only happen with great care and stewardship for the environment and with the necessary respect for the people who live there. "Asked if he believed that, Rochev's response required no translation: "Nyet." *Times Colonist* Read more

Other news reports from around the world (continued)

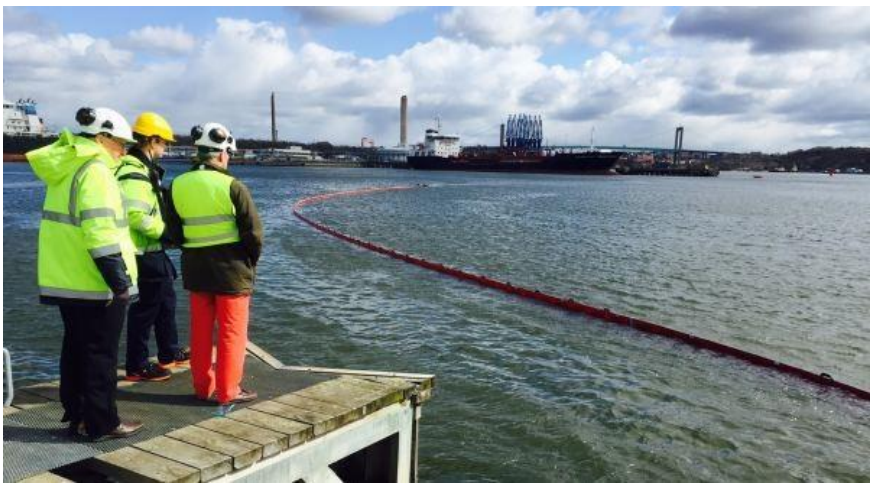
RUSSIA: CHERNOBYL: THE CATASTROPHE THAT NEVER ENDED

April 25 - Nearly 30 years after the explosion, Bob Simon travels to Ukraine and discovers the reactor still has the power to kill.

The following is a script of "Chernobyl" which aired on Nov. 23, 2014. Bob Simon is the correspondent. Michael Gavshon and David Levine, producers.

Some tragedies never end. Ask people to name a nuclear disaster and most will probably point to Fukushima in Japan three years ago. The nuclear meltdown at Chernobyl in Ukraine was 30 years ago, but the crisis is still with us today. That's because radiation virtually never dies. After the explosion in 1986, the Soviets built a primitive sarcophagus, a tomb to cover the stricken reactor. But it wasn't meant to last very long and it hasn't. Engineers say there is still enough radioactive material in there to cause widespread contamination. For the last five years a massive project has been underway to seal the reactor permanently. But the undertaking is three quarters of a billion dollars short and the completion date has been delayed repeatedly. Thirty years later, Chernobyl's crippled reactor still has the power to kill. *CBS News 60 Minutes* Read more and listen to the dialogue

SWEDEN: PORT OF GOTHENBURG INTRODUCES ROBOT TO CONTAIN OIL SPILLS



April 28 - A new robot will be introduced at the Port of Gothenburg. Its task will be to deploy booms in the event of an oil spill. This new technology will result in more rapid and safer oil spill clearance at the Port of Gothenburg.

The Port of Gothenburg is the site of the largest energy port in Scandinavia. Crude oil is brought in and refined into petrol, diesel, asphalt and other products. Despite very strict safety stipulations, an accident could occur resulting in an oil spill.

For this purpose, the Port of Gothenburg has invested SEK 3.5 million in an automatic GPS-controlled boom. In the event of a spill, a member of staff at the Energy Port office presses a button on the wall. This activates a torpedo-like unmanned craft that travels around the dock towing a 400-metre-long boom. The automatic boom is made of plastic and is half a metre below water and 20 cm above water. *Green4Sea* Read more

USA: DEEPWATER HORIZON & GULF OF MEXICO OIL SPILL DISASTER: FINAL ANALYSIS OF EVERY ROOT CAUSE PUBLISHED

April 27 - Five years on from the Deepwater Horizon disaster, energy industry network Oil & Gas IQ publish a comprehensive list of every root cause and contributing factor. This project was in partnership with oil and gas health & safety expert and former BP Offshore Operations Manager, Derek Park, to publish "Deepwater Horizon – Anatomy Of A Disaster".

Based on public domain facts presented throughout the BP trial, Anatomy of A Disaster is a detailed infographic guide to the perfect storm of events that lead to this tragic Macondo incident. *Benzinga.com* Read more

USA: KINDER MORGAN PIPELINE LEAK REACHES 300,000 GALLONS IN SOUTH CAROLINA

April 30 - More than 300,000 gallons of gasoline have leaked from Texas-based energy company Kinder Morgan's pipeline in Belton, S.C., since a structure failure in December, according to the Savannah Riverkeeper.

The spill was originally reported as 8,000 gallons, but was actually 8,000 barrels, Riverkeeper Tonya Bonitatibus said. There are 42 gallons per barrel.

The incident, located on Lewis Drive near the junction of West Calhoun Road in Belton, was reported Dec. 8 and was the result of a sleeve failure in the 27-inch pipeline, said Jim Beasley, spokesman for the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control.

Kinder Morgan spokeswoman Melissa Ruiz said in an email Thursday the pipeline sleeve that failed was installed in 1979 and has been repaired. "We are now inspecting other sleeves along the system that were installed during the same time period," Ruiz wrote. To date, 176,901 gallons of product have been recovered and removed, and 2,832 tons of soil have been removed and treated off-site. *Savannah Morning News* Read more

Other news reports from around the world (continued)

USA: FEE PROPOSED ON OLDER TANKER CARS TO ENCOURAGE RAILROADS TO UPGRADE

April 30 - Older, puncture-prone tankers hauling crude oil would be taxed to pay for new rail safety measures under a bill backed by Sens. Mark Warner and Tim Kaine.

The bill, announced Thursday on the anniversary of Lynchburg's downtown derailment, attaches a fee to the controversial DOT-111 tankers used to move crude oil, ethanol and other flammable liquids across the country. *News & Advance* Read more

USA: DNRC USES 1996 TRAIN DERAILMENT TO IMPROVE RESPONSE TO DISASTERS

May 2 - 19-years ago a train derailed in Alberton, causing one of the most significant hazardous chemical spills in Montana history.

Now, the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation and Montana Disaster and Emergency Services are looking at ways to learn from the disaster. A workshop is being held in Missoula looking at how incident management teams across the state can better work together to deal with disasters, including chemical spills and wildfires. *ABC Fox Montana* Read more

People in the news

ISCO MEMBER OF COUNCIL FOR UAE RECEIVES NOMINATION AS OIL BARON

April 16 - Dr Ali Saeed Al Ameri has come a long way since his initial studies in the oil industry, via establishing his own oil business and now to be nominated by his peers to become the Oil Baron for 2015. Dr Ameri feels that the Oil Barons award has really given people within the industry something important to get motivated for.

He believes it is important for the UAE to partner with international companies as they help bring in new technologies to the country and knowledge transfer is such a major focus within the UAE. "We can then blend these technologies with our local expertise and culture," he said.

Dr Ameri feels strongly about the importance of the oil industry to the UAE. "Oil made what the UAE is today, but under the vision and guidance of our founding fathers the UAE has been able to combine oil with other things. The UAE has been using its oil income to the benefit of our environment and the country's infrastructure, complementing it with renewable energy," he said. "For example, the drilling methodology has evolved over time. An important change is the mentality of the people of how to produce the oil. You can see this change in management now concentrating on the environment, which is good for the benefit of the country and the people in the future," added Dr Ameri. *Pipeline Magazine* Read more

ISCO congratulates Dr Ali Saeed Al Ameri on his achievements and on his nomination as the Oil Baron for 2015.

ISCO News

MEDITERRANEAN OIL INDUSTRY GROUP (MOIG) JOINS ISCO AS AN INDUSTRY PARTNER

ISCO is pleased to welcome MOIG as a new Industry Partner Member of the organization. In a press release MOIG Director, Houcine Mejri wrote "The MOIG Management Committee Members are delighted to announce that MOIG has joined ISCO as an Industry Partner. Following this membership, MOIG will gain benefits of membership including access to the Emergency Assistance Facility, receipt of the ISCO Newsletter, access to Technical & Reference data on the ISCO Website and other benefits".

At the same time, MOIG has invited ISCO to join the group as a new Technical Partner. Both organizations look forward to developing a co-operative relationship.

ISCO's Technical Partners include Centre de Documentation de Reserche et d'Experimentation sur les Pollutions Accidentelles des Eaux (CEDRE); DG & Hazmat Group; International Spill Accreditation Association (ISAA); INTERTANKO; The Sea Alarm Foundation and The UK Spill Association.

ISCO PARTICIPATION IN IOPC FUNDS AND IMO MEPC MEETINGS

Dr Douglas Cormack Hon.FISCO represented ISCO at The IOPC Funds' governing bodies meetings from Monday 20 to Thursday 23 April 2015. ISCO President, David Usher Hon.FISCO and Dr Cormack will be attending the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) meeting in London next week. ISCO will be presenting a paper on knowledge-only contingency and incident-specific response plans and *inter alia* the meeting is expected to approve the draft Guidelines on international offers of assistance in response to a marine oil pollution incident. Reports on these meetings will be given in a forthcoming issue of the Newsletter.

Contributed article

OIL SPILL RISKS – OLD CHALLENGES AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES

The author, Capt. D. C. Sekhar is the India representative on the council of ISCO. He was a captain of oil tankers and a marine risk management professional at a Singapore oil tanker company.

His Bengaluru, India based company, AlphaMERS Pvt. Ltd. provides resources and services in setting up spill response capability, besides developing new technology. sekhar@alphamers.com

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Oil spills like most emergencies, come unannounced. Scenarios that are safely tucked away in contingency plans, suddenly stare at us from television screens. It puts to test the investment of time, effort and funds, preparing exactly for such a day. When the incident happens, the preparedness or the lack of it manifests itself under full public glare.

This risk, like any other risk, is not sought to be completely eliminated, that being a utopian wish list. Rather the risk is sought to be methodically assessed, mitigating capability set up and the residual risk minimized to acceptable levels. That is putting a very complex subject in a few simple words.

Since many of these incidents may have trans-national implications, the OPRC and OPRC HNS conventions (OPRC - Oil Pollution Preparedness Response and Co-operation Convention, HNS Hazardous and Noxious Substances) seek to bring a certain worldwide standardization of approach to the preparedness. The national NOSDCP (National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan) provides the national review and perspective for this preparedness in India. The scale of such incidents varies hugely. The Gulf of Mexico event surprised even the usually well prepared United States of America. Here, it will be worth pointing out, that some fundamental differences exist between an oilfield spill and a ship accident.

The offshore oilfield operates within the jurisdiction of the coastal government, with consequent accountability and periodic inspections built into the system. The pour points, viscosity and toxicity of the oil being produced are known. The spill trajectory models have been fed with sea currents and vulnerability index of the particular geography. A runaway oilfield, though overwhelming, leaks over a period of time. The response actions are initiated after the initial shock has been weathered and response strategy is sometimes developed and put into place even during the leak. Shipping traffic on the coast is however a different ballgame. The vessels Prestige, Erika, Braer and Natuna Sea brought untold catastrophes to various coastlines one fine morning to an unsuspecting coastal population. Thousands of tons of crude oil landed on the coast, all of a sudden, as the vessels' grounded or broke up and capsized. Hundreds of vessels of these sizes pass our coast every day.

The regime to test the maintenance standards of a vessel flying the flag of another country, is not absolute. There is a port state convention that gives a limited leverage to a port state over vessels visiting her ports. This does not extend to stopping and inspecting vessels passing few miles off the country's coastline, which may have questionable standards of upkeep depending on her owners, flag and classification societies.

Incidents involving such vessels incidents on the coast are a mess to start with and often end up like that. Ownership of such vessels may be located anywhere in the world, behind a maze of holding companies and the vessel registration may be in flags of convenience. The oil quantity and characteristics are not known immediately unless the vessel is arriving or has departed from a port in the country. Coastal states have sometimes precipitated such incidents due to reluctance to provide refuge to a disabled tanker. To be fair the decision maker has a difficult job on hand. He will be judged, depending on the outcome - if the sheltered water actually saves the vessel or the vessel sinks after entering the port. Dedicated technology modernization has been slow to come by in oil spill response sector. We are not talking of automated machines here, but enhanced functional deliverables. Containment of spills in strong currents was always a challenge, be it in rivers or in waters of Gulfs of Kutch or Khambatt, where tidal streams are of the orders of 4 knots. Laying a boom with a skirt hanging 1 meter vertically into the waters and expecting it to stay near vertical is an unrealistic dream. Concrete dams may perhaps hold the flow, but not hanging fabric weighed down by a chain. (The author's firm has designed and patent applied for a boom design without a skirt for high current and river applications. This design is in the testing stage.)

The storm water drains of coastal refineries are an unwitting source to carry a leak within the refinery to the sea. The risk is compounded when a spill reaches the drain during night or during rains. There is need for reduced dependence on human factors in spill surveillance and a design that will raise an alarm and auto start the skimming system is in the testing stage.

Disaster management is all about what you have in order to deal with the situation on hand. Many spill responses in remote parts of the world have seen a lot of home made quick fix equipment solutions to contain the spread of oil. Many if not most, have worked. The booms used in Macando spill in Gulf of Mexico were of various types and sizes. Something on hand was clearly preferable to having nothing.

The technology for spill detection has however moved much ahead with development of remote sensing for various applications. Now you can detect the spill over a large area by satellite, or a smaller area by aerial surveillance, or pickup oil spill by a specialized radar, carry out surveillance from a drone or a Helium filled balloon mounted camera, or by a buoy mounted HC detector or a 360 degree floating camera that picks up floating oil and security threats. The options to configure the platform, the

sensors, the telemetry systems and power management systems are many. The capex, opex and cost benefit varies with each configuration.

The oil spill trajectory modeling over land has developed faster and the visualization of such incidents is excellent in multiple colors, viewing the oil flow through the terrain features and with provision for inputting changes of viscosity of the spilt oil. The various cross country oil pipelines, existing or upcoming, will have spill contingency plans where incidents, impact and response can be intuitively visualized. A decision support system is under development for use by offshore spill incident commander, wherein he can visualize the trajectory of the spill, the timelines for the spill to reach sensitive areas and the connectivity time to equipment stockpile, all on a single screen.

One promising development is the wing in ground effect crafts that make use of ground lift. These crafts are now designed for passenger movement and the take-off and landing is on water. They are characterized by 'flying' at 100 knots speed, few meters above ground and making use of ‘airlift’ from the water surface. These crafts will come in handy for coastal surveillance besides spraying Oil Spill Dispersant (OSD) over the spill. The small height over the water will facilitate optimum use of the OSD without wastage.

When the spill happens in coastal waters, the extreme time sensitivity is in the initial few hours of the leak. Few tons of furnace oil leaking from a six inch air pipe of a foundered vessel can coat a coastline of 25 kms with oil. An ability for source control or an ability for containment can minimize a lot of damage. This requires an ability to connect resources to the incident site quickly. Read that to mean an excellent capability for mobility of resources or a large well distributed inventory of equipment.

Photo: A new boom reel being transported on a trailer

The spill response equipment does not lend itself for quick mobility. A typical boom reel with just 300 meters of boom will weigh in the region of 2.5 Tons and occupy about 5 cbm of space. Not the kind of parcels that can be moved around by aircrafts. To put in perspective the Macando Gulf of Mexico incident used thousands of kms of boom. The truck is usually the only option from the warehouse to the landing jetty. Once the oil has hit the coastline, the time sensitivity is not in hours anymore, but in days, accompanied by socio economic issues and a high dependence on manual cleanup.

Oil spill dispersant is not the preferred method for dealing with spills, but often ends up being the only practical and available method, wherever allowed by the authorities for reasons of spill proximity to vulnerable locations or extreme weather conditions. Bioremediation has caught on in many sectors. The treatment usually takes weeks, and containing the contaminated waters for long periods is a challenge. However bio remediation products have come up where the remediation agent quickly adheres to the oil and then need not be contained. Bio remediation however comes in handy for proper shoreline cleanup disposal. That is, if the remediation agent can break down long carbon chain hydrocarbons time efficiently.

Risk management is always a difficult argument. I pay for life insurance every year for decades, but I die only once! Risk perception being a product of probability and consequence, while the consequence is easier to estimate, the probability is usually seen in the historical perspective. This explains why major regulatory changes in the industry have happened soon after major incidents. The country has a lot of oil industry activity and can support a sizable spill response capability and equipment stockpile kept within the country, typically a large Tier II or a small Tier III stockpile. Understandably as shared resource stockpile, the inventory carrying costs per facility is reduced drastically, while yet having a realistic access to a large equipment inventory stored within the country and within trucking distances. Once the economy of scale kicks in, enhanced technology for various applications will develop locally, including subsea interventions.

The International Spill Control Organization (www.spillcontrol.org) is a not for profit organization with members in 45 countries. ISCO is a consultant to International Maritime Organization (IMO). This is a great organization to mobilize knowledge, expertise and resources from its worldwide members during an emergency or otherwise. ISCO has recently conducted a very pioneering seminar on Group V oils (non-buoyant oils), which highlights the issues with pollutants that sink and are not visible on the surface. It is very important to realize that spill response is a specialized role and cannot be efficiently executed in an emergency by facility staff practicing mock drill once in six months. There are undeniably few exceptions to this statement, where facilities have actually invested good time and effort to get their hands wet on this job. But the time has come for specialist service providers (called OSRO-Oil Spill Response Organization), who possess relevant domain knowledge, have trained manpower and equipment stockpile within the country. It is also imperative for such agencies to have international arrangements to mobilize additional resources in a major emergency. Such OSROs can proverbially hit the ground running, when the emergency strikes.

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Science & Technology

STUDY: SOY COULD HELP CLEAN UP OIL SPILLS

The toxicity of oil spill dispersants to marine organisms has necessitated the search for alternative dispersant formulations that are environmentally benign. Soybean lecithin, a well-known surface active agent in the food industry, is effective at stabilizing oil-in-water emulsions. In addition to its excellent emulsification properties, it is biodegradable, less toxic than the traditional chemical dispersants, and ecologically acceptable.

In this study, soybean lecithin was used to formulate dispersants for crude oil spill application. Soybean lecithin was fractionated into phosphatidylinositol (PI) and phosphatidylcholine (PC) enriched fractions using ethanol. The fractionated PI was deoiled and characterized with Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FT-IR). The crude soybean lecithin (CL) and the fractionated PI and PC were solubilized in water and their dispersion effectiveness determined using the U.S. EPA's baffled flask test. The dispersion effectiveness of these solubilized dispersants was compared with that of solid crude lecithin (SL).

The dispersion effectiveness of PC was found to be higher than those of SL, CL, and PI at all the surfactant-to-oil ratios (SORs) tested. However, when the fractionated PI was modified or "functionalized" (FPI) with additional hydroxyl groups to alter the hydrophilic–lipophilic balance (HLB), its dispersion effectiveness improved remarkably and was higher than that of PC. At higher SORs (>28 mg/g), the dispersion effectiveness of FPI was slightly higher than that of solubilized DOSS and Tween 80 in propylene glycol. The dispersion effectiveness of PC and FPI on Texas (TC) and light crude (LC) oil samples were almost the same. PC and FPI performed better at the higher salinity of 3.5 wt % than the lower salinities of 0.8 and 1.5 wt %.

The findings from this study suggest that dispersants formulated from fractionated PI and PC have the potential to replace traditional dispersant formulations. More info available from American Chemical Society Publications

NEW SOFTWARE PROGRAM THAT CAN ANALYZE THE QUALITY OF PETROLEUM IN MINUTES

April 29 - Researchers at Florida State University's Future Fuels Institute have developed a highly sophisticated software program that can analyze the quality of petroleum in mere minutes, allowing petroleum companies and governments better insight into how crude oil can be used, but also potentially how to more effectively clean it up in hazardous situations.

Researchers at the Future Fuels Institute have long been able to use a practice called mass spectrometry, which allows them to essentially weigh molecules of crude oil and determine their chemical composition. But, in the outside world, scientists are not weighing one molecule of fuel at a time, but hundreds or thousands at a time.

And all of that information needs to be analyzed. That's where the software comes into the picture.

To deal with the large data sets, FSU Research Faculty Yuri Corilo developed novel software that could analyze the information and spit out results and visualizations of the data so that companies could make informed decisions about how to use the oil in their possession. *Phys.Org* Read more

Publications

NEW DANGEROUS GOODS WALLCHART FROM IMO

IMO has published a new Wall Chart: IMO Dangerous Goods Labels, Marks and Signs, 2015 (product code IF223E, price £12) The new edition will render the previous one obsolete.

Update - Manual on Chemical Pollution (Section 3), 2015 Edition (product code I637E, price £15) will be available in June.

You can receive news on new IMO publications in IMO Publishing News. An up-to-date link for the latest issue appears every week in this newsletter – See links for recent issues of other publications (below)

Links for recent issues of other publications (in alphabetical order)

AMSA Aboard	News from the Australian Maritime Safety Authority	April 2015 issue
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 2015
Celtic Biogenie enGlobe Newsletter	Latest Remediation and related technology news	Spring 2015 issue
CROIERG Enews	Canberra & Regions Oil Industry Emergency Response Group	Current issue
EMSA Newsletter	News from the European Maritime Safety Agency	April 2015 issue
Energy Institute eBulletin	News from the Energy Institute	April 2015 issue
Environmental Technology Online	Environmental Monitoring, Testing & Analysis	April 2015 issue
IMO News Magazine	News from the International Maritime Organization	No 1, 2015
IMO Publlshing News	New and forthcoming IMO publications	April 2015
Intertanko Weekly News	International news for the oil tanker community	No 18 2015
IPIECA eNews	Int'l Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Assoc'n	February 12 issue
JOIFF "The Catalyst	Int'l Organisation for Industrial Hazard Management	April 2015 issue
MOIG Newsletter	News from the Mediterranean Oil Industry Group	16 April 2015 Issue

Links for recent issues of other publications (continued)

NOAA update	Oil spill response news from NOAA OR&R	April 2015
OCIMF Newsletter	News from the Oil Companies International Marine Forum	March 2015 issue
Pollution Online Newsletter	News for prevention & control professionals	April 22 issue
Sea Alarm Foundation Newsletter	News from the Sea Alarm Wildlife Protection Organisation	Spring 2015 issue
SAC News	Oil spill related and other news from Alaska	April 2015
Technology Innovation News Survey	From US EPA - Contaminated site decontamination	March 1-15 2015
The Essential Hazmat News	Alliance of Hazardous Materials Professionals	March 23 issue
Transport Canada Newsletter	News and articles re transport of dangerous goods in Canada	Winter 2014 issue
USA EPA Tech Direct	Remediation of contaminated soil and groundwater	May 1 2015 issue
USA EPA Tech News & Trends	Contaminated site clean-up information	Winter 2015 issue

Events

CANADA: CLEAN PACIFIC 2015 CONFRENCE & EXHIBITION

Vancouver, British Colombia, June 16-18, 2015 - CLEAN PACIFIC covers a wide range of prevention, preparedness and response topics, with a focus on the growth in crude transportation across the West. It provides a forum for responders, operators, regulators, equipment providers and environmental groups to openly discuss best practices and industry trends. CLEAN PACIFIC is co-hosted by the member agencies of the Pacific States/British Columbia Oil Spill Task Force. It incorporates the Task Force's 2015 Annual Meeting. The 2015 agenda was developed by an Advisory Committee representing State/Provincial and Federal government, industry and the non-profit partners in oil spill prevention, preparedness and response. More info

NIGERIA: OIL SPILL CLEAN-UP AND REMEDIATION IN THE NIGER DELTA

Lagos, July 8-10 2015 - Oil spills in Nigeria have caused unimaginable and unacceptable level of environmental pollution and concomitant severe degradation and effects in the oil producing areas of the Niger Delta Nigeria.

This is why we are consistently using the conference forum to create awareness of the effects of oil spills, how best to prevent, respond and restore the oil -impacted areas and mitigate the effects on the people, aquatic community and the environment. Everyone that attends our Conference is expected to be a participant in the conference proceedings. More info

SINGAPORE: SALVAGE & WRECK ASIA CONFERENCE: 8-9 SEPTEMBER 2015

More info, including attendees and updated list of speakers

Training

UK: GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS TRAINING COURSES

University of Newcastle - Geographic Information Systems have become key in most corporate scenarios; 80% of all data now has a spatial element. Reap potential rewards in your business by learning about the power of GIS. These courses enable delegates to develop GIS skills in ESRI ArcGIS, the market leading GIS package. Three upcoming courses over 1-5 June 2015. More info

Company news

USA: EVTN TO EXHIBIT VORAXIAL AT OTC 2015 IN HOUSTON: MAY 4-7, 2015

Enviro Voraxial Technology, Inc. will demonstrate its Voraxial® Oil/Water Separator at the Offshore Technology Conference (OTC 2015) in Houston, Texas May 4th-May 7th, in Booth 2465. OTC 2015 is the world's foremost event for the development of offshore energy resources in the fields of drilling, exploration, production and environmental protection.

EVTN's Voraxial® Separator technology offers oil industry customers market leading efficiencies for many critical high volume, bulk separation applications including the processing of produced water, deck water, frac water and marine oil spill remediation. At the exhibit customers will be able to observe EVTN's patented Voraxial® separating oil from water by creating a unique, powerful vortex. More info