

ISCO & THE ISCO NEWSLETTER

The International Spill Control Organization, a not-for profit organization 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 Intergovernmental, Governmental, NGO's and interested groups and individuals

ISCO holds consultative status at the International Maritime Organisation and observer Status at International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

CAREER CHOICES FOR THOSE WHO DEEPLY CARE ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

January 5 - Most often than not, environment lovers are enrolled with NGOs or other institutions that work towards protecting the environment. If you are one of those people and want to an even bigger step in helping nature breathe freely, you can consider taking up a full-time profession that will help you do so. Youth Inc / [Read more](#)

Note from Editor: ISCO was established "To raise worldwide preparedness and co-operation in response to oil and chemical spills; to promote technical development and professional competency; and to provide a focus for making the knowledge and experience of spill control professionals available to IMO, UNEP, and other organisations"

For young people interested in making a career in pollution prevention and response the organisation provides a career path, offering a one year free Membership to students, trainees and apprentices. As student members they have access to a large resource of reference information, including response guidelines, manuals and technical articles to assist in developing their knowledge. They also receive a free weekly newsletter which often contains interesting articles about pollution concerns, events, prevention and mitigation measures; also information on training courses and useful webinars, many of which are free to join. For more info visit www.spillcontrol.org or send an email to info@spillcontrol.org

ANOTHER ACTIVE YEAR FOR HELCOM OILED WILDLIFE RESPONSE INITIATIVES

December 21 - HELCOM maintains its position as the most advanced Regional Agreement in Europe when it comes to oiled wildlife preparedness and response policy. This year, Expert Working Group Meetings have continued, an online seminar on cross border co-operation in wildlife incidents was held and a number of important proposals have been discussed and adopted by HELCOM Response.

Sea Alarm's Hugo Nijkamp chaired two online meetings of the HELCOM Expert Working Group on Oiled Wildlife Response (EWG-OWR) in May and September. The EWG is made up of representatives of Baltic wildlife agencies who are responsible for national oiled wildlife response planning and was created by HELCOM Response in order to assist the Convention with the implementation of 2010 **HELCOM Recommendation 31E/6**.

HELCOM Response 28 also approved a new draft Chapter 7 of the HELCOM Response Manual, which will be considered for final approval at the Helsinki Commission meeting in March 2021. Chapter 7, drafted by Sea Alarm and approved by EWG-OWR, is dedicated to wildlife response, and describes the principles and procedures that governmental agencies should apply when requesting and integrating a team of experts, such as EUROWA, from abroad. Sea Alarm / [Read more](#)

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ADVANCE YOUR CAREER BY GAINING PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION.

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

All who have the relevant qualifications and the required level of experience can apply for Professional Membership of ISCO.

The organization offers independent validation and integrity. Each grade of membership reflects an individual's professional training, experience and qualifications.

You can apply for Student Membership, Associate Membership (AMISCO), MEMBERSHIP (MISCO) or FELLOWSHIP (FISCO)

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Go to www.spillcontrol.org and enter your name and email address in the Registration Form (located on the right-hand side of the home page) then click on "subscribe"

NEWS REPORTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Your editor relies on reports received from members and other readers but very few this week. Please send reports to john.mcmurtrie@spillcontrol.org

ITALY DEDICATES €105M TO 'ORPHAN' SITE REMEDIATION

January 6 - On 1 January 2020, Italian minister of the environment Sergio Costa approved a decree which allocates €105m to the clean-up of orphan sites - which are those areas where the parties responsible for pollution cannot be identified or do not fulfill the requirements for remediation.

"There are places in Italy," said Costa, "unfortunately many, which are not sites on the National Priority List or of regional interest, where the environment has been attacked and no-one has yet faced the reclamation". The funds will be divided into five annuities between 2019 and 2024, and spread across the various regions. Environment Analyst / [Read more](#)

NIGERIA: 3 MONTHS AFTER CRUDE OIL SPILL CAUSING ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION - BAYELSA COMMUNITIES CRY OUT OVER LOSS OF LIVELIHOOD

January 1 - Residents of Sangana and other coastal communities in Akassa Kingdom in Brass local government area of Bayelsa State have cried out over loss of their livelihood occasioned by the alleged continuous leakage of crude oil into the environment from an offshore facility in the area.

The troubled communities occupy the southernmost tip of Bayelsa and the country; where the Nun River estuary meets the Atlantic Ocean.

Though the cause of the spill could not be immediately ascertained, NDV learned that the leak, started September 3, 2020, at Well 13, Otuo field allegedly owned by Conoil. Market Screener / [Read more](#)

POLAND: OILED WILDLIFE RESPONSE WORKSHOP AND EUROWA TRAINING

December 23 - In September, Sea Alarm, in cooperation with WWF Poland, presented a National Workshop on Oiled Wildlife Response Planning in Poland, followed by a EUROWA Basic Response training.

The one day workshop was attended by 32 representatives from Poland's national authorities, the oil and gas industry, and non-governmental organisations, all brought together by WWF Poland.

Led by Hugo Nijkamp (Sea Alarm and HELCOM Expert Working Group on Oiled Wildlife Response) with support from Claude Velter (**Wildlife Rescue Centre Ostend**), the attendees were encouraged to strengthen relationships between them and their respective organisations, and to further elaborate the details of Poland's current Oiled Wildlife preparedness plan for oiled wildlife response. Sea Alarm / [Read more](#)

USA: LATEST NEWS REPORTS FROM NOAA OR&R

January 3 – Please click on the links below to read the latest news from NOAA OR&R

[Marine Debris Program Participates in United Nations Environment Programme Workshop on Plastic Pollution](#)

USA: COMMENTARY: DELAWARE BAY OIL SPILL CLEANED BUT REMAINS A MYSTERY



Photo: Examples of tar balls that came ashore on Broadkill Beach. (NOAA photo)

January 3 - To date, the Coast Guard has not been able to identify the source of the spill. As a result, Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay opened the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund to cover the costs of the response. Initially, it was thought that several vessels involved in a lightering operation in the Delaware Bay a few days prior to the oil coming ashore may have been the source, but after collecting source oil samples from these vessels, including tracking one vessel to Corpus Christi, Texas, the Coast Guard's Marine Safety Lab in Connecticut was not able to "fingerprint" a match between the source oil samples and the field samples. NOAA also made arrangements through Louisiana State University's chemistry department to analyze the tar balls.

Laura Basirico, an LSU chemist, concluded that the oil was a “fresh” oil, probably a refined high-aromatic heating or diesel fuel oil.

Since there are several nearby wrecks offshore from New Jersey and Delaware, that raised the question of whether one of these wrecks, especially those that were sunk by German U-boats in the early 1940s, could be the source. Christopher Barker, an oceanographer at OR&R, prepared several different trajectory models using these known wrecks as a potential source. The modeling showed that it was extremely unlikely that any of these wrecks were the source.

We also reached out to NOAA’s National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service Satellite Analysis Branch (NESDIS). NESDIS operates a fleet of environmental satellites that provide critical worldwide imagery of significant weather and environmental events. For this case, we reached out to Juan Velasco, an ocean remote-sensing operations officer in NESDIS, for imagery support. Even with several days of excellent satellite imagery of the shipwrecks located off the coast of New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland, imagery did not detect any oil leaks from the vessels. To further support the Coast Guard’s efforts to identify a source, U.S. Coast Guard District 5 arranged for C-130 fisheries flights to fly over the wrecks as part of their patrol missions, and the fishery flights did not detect oil being discharged from the nearby wrecks.

With regard to the old question, “How clean is clean?” in terms of removing oil on the beaches, Jacqui Michel, a NOAA contractor, recommended that the cleanup endpoint for this spill be to remove all tar balls larger than dime size or larger than 3 centimeters and to remove all oiled debris. Employing mostly manual removal, with the use of some mechanical beach rakes, all visible oiled wrack and tar balls were removed by the contractors — totaling 85 tons. Delaware State News / [Read more](#)

USA: TEXAS LEGISLATORS EYE TOUGHER RULES ON CHEMICAL TANKS TO PREVENT EXPLOSIONS, SPILLS DURING STORMS

January 5 - A string of explosions involving little-regulated petroleum and chemical storage tanks have lawmakers and regulators talking about new rules as the Legislature prepares to convene this month.

Two bills, one from state Rep. Mary Ann Perez, D-Pasadena, and another from Sen. Nathan Johnson, D-Dallas, would task the state’s environmental agency with creating tougher rules on the structural integrity of these above-ground tanks at chemical plants, refineries, electric power plants or other large storage facilities.

The bills would instruct the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to create more stringent standards for tanks in areas prone to flooding, storm surges and hurricanes. But the legislation largely leaves the specifics up to the TCEQ — a move that Democrats hope will ward off the most vigorous industry opposition, but is less palatable to environmentalists who have often criticized the TCEQ for being too industry friendly. Texas Tribune / [Read more](#)

USA: ALASKA - KEEPING WATCH OVER SEABIRDS AT THE WORLD’S EDGE

January 5 - In Alaska, one of the longest-running and most comprehensive seabird monitoring projects is equal parts tedium, adventure, truth, and beauty. Article - Text by Sarah Gilman, Photos by Nathaniel Wilder.

[Join writer Sarah Gilman and managing editor Adrienne Mason](#) on January 14, 2021, at 11:30 a.m. Pacific Time, for a discussion about Gilman’s experiences on St. Matthew Island.

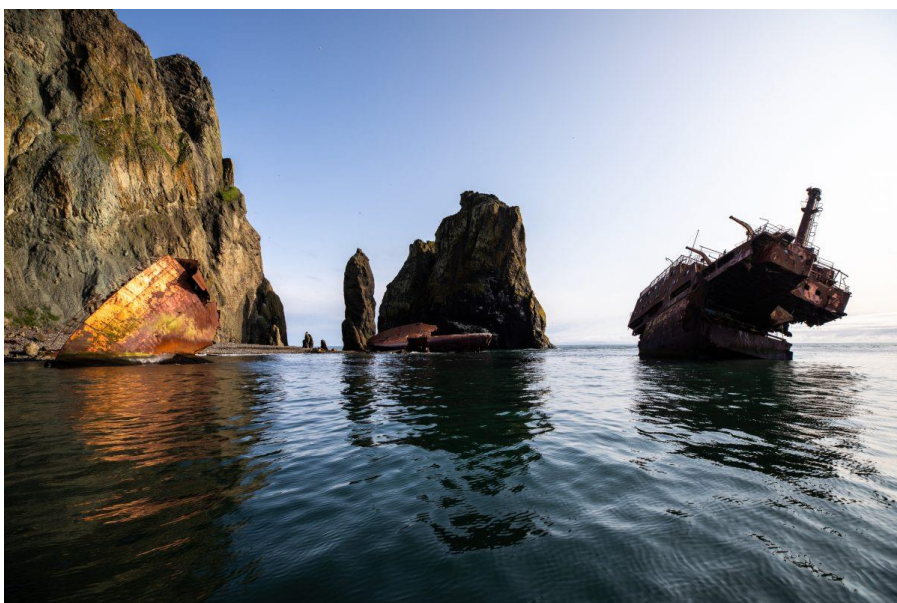


Photo: The Milos Reefer, a Greek cargo vessel, wrecked off the northeast coast of St. Matthew Island, Alaska, in 1989.

“We get to see stuff like this a lot,” Romano says quietly as we make our way slowly along the cliffs. The refuge’s 37-meter research vessel, the *Tiġlaġ*, delivers staff to some of the state’s farthest and wildest corners: the long arc of the Aleutians, slung across the Pacific from North America to Asia; the bird-spattered heights of the Pribilof Islands, some of the nearest land masses at more than 350 kilometers to the south of us. The scientists have watched humpbacks breach and killer whales devour seals. They’ve been pounded and tossed by storms. “But this,” Romano says, “this is really special.” Because St. Matthew is so far from anything and so expensive to reach, the *Tiġlaġ* has rarely sailed here more than once

every five years, until recently. When it does come, the weather often makes skiff surveys difficult, with fog down to the decks or the sea hurling itself against the islands in 10-meter explosions of spray. On this July day in 2019, though, the water is glassy, the sky clear. We can get close enough to feel small. The Hakai Magazine / [Continue reading this article](#)

USA: MASSACHUSETTS - EPA CELEBRATES NEW BEDFORD HARBOR CLEANUP ACCOMPLISHMENTS LEADING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

January 7 - The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is observing the significant and rapid progress addressing polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) contamination in New Bedford Harbor during the past several years. EPA's cleanup work in the harbor has achieved major milestones, resulting in EPA now transferring control of a 5-acre industrial port facility with rail access, formerly used as a sediment dewatering facility within New Bedford's working waterfront. This is a significant advance for the City and its ongoing economic revitalization.

After more than 17 years of effort, the Superfund dredging of PCB-contaminated sediments in both the upper and lower harbor below the low tide line was finally completed in March 2020. EPA has removed a total of approximately one million cubic yards of PCB-contaminated sediment from the harbor, marking the completion of all Superfund subtidal dredging. As a result, EPA's rail-accessible sediment dewatering and load-out facility on Hervey Tichon Avenue is no longer needed and has been decommissioned and transferred to the City of New Bedford to allow shoreline redevelopment in the port's working waterfront. EPA / [Read more](#)

ISCO NEWS

MINUTES OF ISCO ONLINE 2020 AGM

The draft minutes of the meeting were circulated by email to the meeting attendees on Wednesday 6th January. Attendees have been asked to review the draft and to advise by email to info@spillcontrol.org if there are any **significant** omissions or corrections that need to be made.

The Secretariat requests that any requests for changes be submitted no later than Friday 20th January. After making any requested changes a final version of the minutes will then be published as the official record on the Meetings Page in the Members' Area of the ISCO website.

NEXT ISCO ZOOM MEETING

The next Zoom meeting for members and others who are interested has been provisionally arranged for Thursday 21st January 2021 at 14:00 EST, 19:00 GMT and Friday 22nd January 2021 at 0600 AEDT. Note that this time is one hour earlier than the time used for the AGM. This time was set after consultation with Matthew Sommerville and Mary Ann Dalgleish, who will be hosting the meeting.

It is expected that the above will be confirmed and announced in the next issue of the ISCO Newsletter together with an agenda.

ISCO'S ONLINE DIRECTORY OF SUPPLIES & SERVICES

Mike Watson, ISCO's IT Support Contractor, is currently working on re-designing and improving the layout of the online directory. While the work is ongoing, access to the directory will be temporarily suspended.

NEWS FROM ISCO MEMBERS

FROM ORBITAL EARTH OBSERVATION SOLUTIONS - RECENT SATELLITE HISTORY



Above: Puig-Suari and Twiggs with a cubesat from NASA.

January 4 - The questions that we are trying to answer today are:

- What were the first satellites like?
- How have satellites changed?
- Are all satellites the same?

The first artificial satellite that was ever launched was the Sputnik 1, on 1957. A metallic sphere of 83 kilograms and 58 centimetres of diameter was the first object to be put in orbit, and it changed forever the way we see space. In the following audio it is possible to listen to an audio recording of Sputnik's radio transmission by NASA.

(To listen to the audio, please click on <https://www.orbitaleos.com/satellite-history/>)

Since that first piece of metal that was launched technology has been greatly improved, satellites are more efficient and are able to accomplish bigger goals. Satellites have also grown in size, the development of propulsion technology and the improvement of structures, materials and hardware has allowed bigger deployments with bigger payloads, bigger solar panels and bigger antennas.

However, with the progress towards bigger satellites there has also been a tendency towards smaller and cheaper satellites. More efficient batteries, materials, the same way Moore's Law works, have allowed space companies to create smaller and smaller satellites. Which has made possible to launch more satellites together at the same time in the same rocket. All of this has helped in the democratization of space, by making it more accessible and open to bigger audiences.

[Continue reading this interesting illustrated article by Jesús Lucero Ezquerro, Collaborator in Earth Observation - B. Eng. Aerospace Engineering at T.U. Madrid - MSc. in Astronautics & Space Engineering at Cranfield University.](#)

FROM OSRL - COVID-19 UPDATE (8TH JANUARY 2021)

OSRL continues to monitor the impact of COVID-19 closely. We are liaising with travel specialists to maintain response readiness. At the beginning of the pandemic, OSRL established several measures to ensure personnel could travel to support our members. These measures still stand and have been successfully followed over several recent response and preparedness activities. This activity demonstrates our ability to safely deploy personnel whilst maintaining business continuity.

Following the recent strains of the virus identified, our travel team are continually reviewing countries that are enforcing travel restrictions on personnel departing the UK and South Africa. This work also includes confirming entry requirements identified by these countries, which forms part of our planning process during a response.

Another recent significant event commenced from the 1st January, when the United Kingdom started to operate under several new trade agreements, including a new deal with the European Union (EU). OSRL has some assurance activities planned for January and February to understand how the recently developed EU agreement will affect our operations and update response and business procedures accordingly.

We will shortly be updating our Brexit statement held on this website which includes more information on the impact of Brexit on our operations.

During December some AN-124 aircraft were grounded following an incident. The grounded aircraft are slowly making their way back into service throughout January, thus improving availability across the market.

OSRL is a global company with personnel and equipment located across the globe, ensuring we remain agile to support industry across all our services. This geographical spread, combined with a strong focus on Business Continuity, ensures that we can still deliver our international response capability despite localised restrictions. To follow on with our country plan updates, Australia, The Guianas, Gabon, Norway, Republic of Congo, Senegal, and United Kingdom are available on our website.

We've kicked off the New Year with some new webinars. Our first one takes place on the 19th January; "Hiring response equipment, a best practice guide to organising, storing and maintaining your Tier 1 oil spill response equipment", two sessions for this webinar are available.

On the 21st January, Daniel Cruz, Duty Manager at OSRL's Fort Lauderdale base, will explain the OSRL activation process when an incident occurs in our "How to activate OSRL seminar". Two sessions will be available, one being in Spanish.

And finally, on the 28th January, Paul Kelway, OSRL's Wildlife Preparedness & Response Manager and various contributors will be talking about current tiered response and preparedness, future steps that industry could take and the services currently available to OSRL Members to support their efforts. Two sessions will be available. If you would like to register onto any of these webinars, please use [this link](#).

As always, we remain just a phone call away, ready to virtually support you and your operations. Should you have any questions, please email CMT@oilspillresponse.com or contact our Duty Managers.

FROM SEA ALARM - IMPROVING AND UPDATING OUR COUNTRY OILED WILDLIFE RESPONSE PROFILES

December 21 - In 2020, as part of our ongoing work to provide information on oiled wildlife response preparedness in all the coastal countries of the world, we updated 11 Country Wildlife Response Profiles (Mozambique, China, Japan, United Arab Emirates, Iran, Vietnam, Panama, Singapore, Romania, Spain and the USA) and created new profiles for Lebanon, our 107th, and Malta, our 108th.

The CWRP project began in 2004 as a Sea Alarm initiative supported by BP, aiming to assess the capacity for oiled wildlife response in coastal countries around the world. In 2005 the ambitions of the project became further structured and integrated as part of the wider cooperation with Oil Spill Response (OSRL), to create a useful international information resource to support oiled wildlife preparedness and response around the globe. The decision was taken to make the CWRPs more widely available by publishing them on the Sea Alarm website and, by doing so, providing quality information on wildlife resources that would complement country information provided by organisations such as ITOPF and REMPEC. To date 108 profiles have been created. Profile number 100 was published in 2017. Sea Alarm / [Read more](#)

Postings for publication in this section should be sent to the Editor – john.mcmurtrie@spillcontrol.org

USA: NINTH TECHNOLOGY WORKSHOP FOR OIL SPILL RESPONSE

A VIRTUAL EVENT – FEBRUARY 22-26, 2021

Information on this event was published on Page 10 of last week's ISCO Newsletter (Link at <https://spillcontrol.org/newsletters/>)

RECOGNITION TRAINING FOR STRUCK-BY AND CAUGHT-IN-BETWEEN HAZARDS

Advice on webinar received from Marc K. Shaye Hon.FISCO, Member of ISCO Executive Committee.

Information on this event was published on Page 11 of last week's ISCO Newsletter (Link at <https://spillcontrol.org/newsletters/>)

JOURNAL OF MARINE SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING - MARINE OIL SPILLS



The Journal of Marine Science and Engineering is sponsoring a webinar on oil spills on **January 14, 2021** beginning at 13:00 Eastern Standard Time. The topics covered will include new developments in the field of oil spills.

Free webinar on oil spills: register at <https://jmse-1.sciforum.net/> The Schedule is give below

Time (EST)	Speaker	Topic
13:00	Dr. Merv Fingas	Foreword
13:10	Dr. Jacqui Michel	A Response Guide for Sunken Oil Mats (SOMs): Formation, Behavior, Detection and Recovery
13:30	Dr. Jacqui Michel	Questions
13:40	Dr. Edward Owens	API K9 field trials with weathered subsurface oils at 5 m depths
14:00	Dr. Edward Owens	Questions
14:10	Dr. Bill Lehr	Are neural networks the answer to long-standing scientific challenges in oil spill analysis?
14:30	Dr. Bill Lehr	Questions
14:40	Dr. Merv Fingas	Recent developments in Oil Spill Remote Sensing
15:00	Dr. Merv Fingas	Questions
15:10	closing	

SPILLCONSULT ONLINE TRAINING PORTAL

For information on the following courses, please visit <https://spillconsult.learnupon.com/store>

- ICS 100 & 200
- ICS 100
- ICS 200
- Incident Command System Refresher
- Incident Command – The Reactive Phase
- Principles & Features of ICS
- Proactive Phase – Planning Cycle, Meetings & Briefings
- Transitioning to Proactive Response
- UKCS Overview of Oil Spills for Corporate Management

WEBINARS FROM OSRL

January 19 - "Hiring response equipment, a best practice guide to organising, storing and maintaining your Tier 1 oil spill response equipment", two sessions for this webinar are available.

January 21 - Duty Manager at OSRL's Fort Lauderdale base, will explain the OSRL activation process when an incident occurs in our "How to activate OSRL seminar". Two sessions will be available, one being in Spanish.

January 28 - Paul Kelway, OSRL's Wildlife Preparedness & Response Manager and various contributors will be talking about current tiered response and preparedness

For more info on the OSRL seminars please visit

https://www.oilspillresponse.com/news--media/events/?utm_medium=website&utm_source=email&utm_campaign=covid-19%20member%20update&utm_content=link%20to%20website&utm_term=covid%20update,%20covid-28

LLOYDS MARITIME ACADEMY - CERTIFICATE IN MARITIME ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Course commences on 28th January 2021. Study the principles underpinning maritime environmental management and associated issues of management strategy, compliance and enforcement. [More info](#)

ENERGY INSTITUTE - ACCIDENTAL RELEASES MODULE – OFFSHORE ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Short online course. This module will provide offshore workers with an overview of accidental releases and different control measures that can be implemented for good practice and risk mitigation. [More info](#)

ENERGY INSTITUTE - CHEMICAL MANAGEMENT MODULE – OFFSHORE ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Short online course. This module will provide offshore workers with an overview of the impact of chemicals and different types of control measures that can be implemented for good practice and to mitigate the dangers of chemical spills. [More info](#)

ENERGY INSTITUTE - OFFSHORE ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS - ONLINE

This Energy Institute (EI) eLearning course is a training tool for offshore environmental awareness - an issue that has become more imperative in the last decades within the oil and gas industries to minimise the environmental impacts of exploration and production activities. [More info](#)

ENERGY INSTITUTE - OILY DISCHARGES MODULE - OFFSHORE ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

This module will provide offshore workers with an overview of oily discharges and different types of control measures that can be implemented for best practice and risk mitigation. [More info](#)

ENERGY INSTITUTE - CHEMICAL MANAGEMENT MODULE - OFFSHORE ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

This module will provide offshore workers with an overview of the impact of chemicals and different types of control measures that can be implemented for good practice and to mitigate the dangers of chemical spills. [More info](#)

EMPIRE EGYPT - OIL SPILL RESPONSE - 1 DAY FOUNDATION COURSE

1 Day online self-paced training program which provides a foundation knowledge and skills for on-site first response to oil spills with the emphasis on combating and the various clean-up methods, supported by exercises and quizzes. A Certificate of Completion will be issued for candidates who pass the final assessment exam.

MEET THE INSTRUCTOR - Alaa Abdallah is a Marine Engineer and an Oil Spill Response expert with a diverse experience in the Oil & Gas and Maritime fields since 2001. He has responded to various types of oil spill incidents throughout the Middle East and Internationally. [More info](#)

CHEMICAL WATCH - THE PRACTICAL GUIDE TO ECOTOXICOLOGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

This course provides you with the knowledge to recognise the ways in which chemicals may interact with the environment and the precautionary measures which are needed to prevent harm. [More info](#)

CHEMICAL WATCH - THE BASICS OF REACH REGULATION

The primary objective of REACH is to improve the protection of human health and the environment. Without compliance with the Regulation, companies and their personnel could open themselves to potential fines, injunctions or even prison sentences. Understanding the Regulation and how to comply with it ensures the safety of humans and the environment along with protecting the interests of your company. [More info](#)

SPECIAL ITEM

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE UN MISSION TO THE SAFER OIL TANKER IN YEMEN



Released by the UN News on December 30 2020

1. What is the SAFER oil tanker?

SAFER is a Floating Storage and Offloading (FSO) oil vessel moored off Yemen's west coast, approximately 8 kilometers (4.8 nautical miles) South West of the Ras Isa peninsula on the West coast of Yemen, permanently anchored at the same location for more than 30 years without any dry-docking or shipyard repairs.

SPECIAL ITEM (CONTINUED)

The vessel was converted in 1986 from the single hull oil carrier “Esso Japan”, initially built in 1976, to FSO SAFER. SAFER is legally owned by the national oil company, the Safer Exploration & Production Operation Company (SEPOC). Prior to the escalation of the conflict in 2015, the vessel was used to store and export oil from fields around Ma’rib. The de-facto authorities in Sana’a have controlled the waters where the SAFER is moored since 2015.

2. What would happen if there is a spill or other disaster onboard the SAFER?

The tanker is reportedly holding nearly 1.1 million barrels of oil, which is about four times as much oil as spilled from the Exxon Valdez in 1989. The aging tanker has not undergone regular maintenance since the escalation of the conflict in 2015. SAFER’s structure, equipment and operating systems are deteriorating, leaving the tanker at risk of leaking, exploding or catching fire.

A spill would have catastrophic environmental and humanitarian consequences. Research by independent experts indicates that a major oil spill would severely impact Red Sea ecosystems on which almost 30 million people depend, including at least 1.6 million Yemenis. All the fisheries along the Yemeni west coast would be impacted within days and the livelihoods of the fishing communities would collapse, at a time when 90 per cent of these populations are already dependent on humanitarian aid. The shores of Hudaydah, Hajjah and Taiz will likely be the worst-hit. If fire erupts on SAFER for any reason, more than 8.4 million people could be exposed to harmful levels of pollutants.

A worst-case scenario could lead to the immediate closure of the key port of Hudaydah, which is estimated to cause steep increases in the prices of food and fuel and hinder the delivery of vital humanitarian aid to millions of Yemenis. Yemen, particularly in the north, cannot afford the closure of Hudaydah port. Yemen imports about 90 per cent of its staple food and almost everything else, and so the majority of Yemenis heavily rely on imports to meet their basic needs.

A majority of imports enter through Hudaydah. The risk of Hudaydah port closing is even more alarming at a time when Yemen is facing a [renewed risk of famine](#), as confirmed by recent food security assessments. Overall, the economic cost of an oil spill from the SAFER tanker to Yemen fisheries could run to an estimated \$1.5 billion over 25 years.

Other Red Sea littoral countries, including Djibouti, Eritrea and Saudi Arabia, are also likely to be impacted. A spill could also debilitate one of the world’s busiest commercial shipping routes through the Red Sea, which accounts for about 10 per cent of global trade.

3. What has the UN been doing to address the issue?

The United Nations has been seeking to deploy an expert mission to assess the condition of the tanker and conduct initial repairs for over two years. In August 2019, the United Nations deployed a team of experts to Djibouti, which was to serve as the staging location for the mission, based on agreement in principle from all parties. That mission was [cancelled](#) after the de-facto Houthi authorities withdrew their approval the night before departure.

Negotiations with the de-facto authorities in Sana’a have been ongoing ever since to deploy another mission. These discussions accelerated following reports of a leak of seawater into the SAFER engine room in May 2020. That leak was contained, but it is unclear how long the fix will last.

Since then, the United Nations has been engaging with the de-facto authorities to agree on a detailed Scope of Work for the proposed mission, which has three clear objectives:

1. To assess the condition of the SAFER oil tanker through analysis of its systems and structure;
2. To conduct urgent possible initial maintenance that might reduce the risk of an oil leak until a permanent solution is applied;
3. To formulate evidence-based options on what solutions are possible to permanently remove the threat of an oil spill.

The United Nations received a letter on 21 November 2020 from the de-facto authorities in Sana’a officially signaling their approval of the Scope of Work.

In light of this approval, the United Nations is now in a position to commence the logistical preparations for the mission, including by using donor funds to secure the technical experts and procure the necessary equipment. The Government of Yemen has expressed its full support for the proposed technical mission as well.

The deployment of the initial expert mission will not eliminate the threat of an oil spill from SAFER. The mission is designed to produce the needed assessment and generate evidence-based options to permanently address the threat posed by the tanker. [The United Nations has no prejudgment as to the outcome of the assessment.](#)

The technical experts will conduct light maintenance tasks in accordance with an agreed Scope of Work document, subject to having practical access, as well as environmental limitations, and other considerations regarding the personal safety of the mission’s staff, upholding the integrity of the vessel and its systems, and other relevant factors.

In addition to working on the deployment of an expert mission, UN entities are also supporting contingency planning efforts aimed at strengthening readiness for assistance and response, should a spill occur.

SPECIAL ITEM (CONTINUED)

4. What has changed since 2019?

The situation is now even more urgent than it was in 2019. On 27 May, seawater leaked into the engine room, threatening to destabilize or sink the vessel and to cause a massive oil spill. It took the divers from the SAFER corporation a total of 28 hours under water over five days to contain the relatively small leak through a temporary fix. This was a dangerous and a very difficult task and it remains unclear how long this patch may hold. The next incident might not be something that can be contained. The explosion in the port of Beirut serves as a tragic reminder of the cost of inaction.

The international community has been clearer than ever that it expects progress on this critical issue to be made, including at a special [Security Council](#) meeting dedicated to the SAFER on 15 July 2020. The mission will be deploying based on multiple rounds of constructive technical discussions with the de-facto authorities and a detailed, mutually-agreed Scope of Work document.

5. What is the Scope of Work document?

The Scope of Work is a mutually-agreed technical document that outlines in detail the objectives of the mission and the tasks the mission staff will undertake once onboard the SAFER. It has been finalized following weeks of consultations with the de-facto authorities in Sana'a in an effort to ensure clarity and to avoid any misunderstandings that could lead to the mission's delay or cancellation later.

The Scope of Work was endorsed by the de-facto authorities in a formal letter dated 21 November. This has provided the United Nations with the required confidence to start spending donor money and begin the ongoing procurement process for the specialized equipment needed by the mission. The Scope of Work document can be found at this [link](#)

6. What is the timeline for the mission's deployment?

As of late December 2020, the United Nations estimates the mission team can arrive on site by midFebruary. However, the timing of deployment will depend on a number of factors including the market availability of the needed equipment and staff, shipping times and routes, transit weather conditions and funding availability.

The mission will continue to require facilitation as planning progresses including additional permits and authorizations to enable the mission's success. As such, the continued cooperation of all stakeholders, particularly the de-facto authorities in Sana'a, will be a crucial factor in the timely deployment of the mission. The United Nations appreciates the commitments received from all stakeholders to continue this facilitation.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

USING PLASTIC WASTE IN ROAD CONSTRUCTION



In the photo: Prof. R. Vasudevan

A Government order in November 2015 has made it mandatory for all road developers in the country to use waste plastic, along with bituminous mixes, for road construction. This is to help overcome the growing problem of plastic waste disposal in India. The technology for this was developed by the 'Plastic Man' of India, Prof Rajagopalan Vasudevan, Professor of Chemistry at Thiagarajar College of Engineering, Madurai.

The plastic waste items that can be used for road construction are various items like plastic carrybags, plastic cups, plastic packaging for potato chips, biscuits, chocolates, etc.

The entire process is very simple. The plastic waste material is first shredded to a particular size using a shredding machine. The aggregate mix is heated at 165°C and transferred to the mixing chamber, and the bitumen is heated to 160°C to result in good binding. It is important to monitor the temperature during heating.

The shredded plastic waste is then added to the aggregate. It gets coated uniformly over the aggregate within 30 to 60 seconds, giving an oily look. The plastic waste coated aggregate is mixed with hot bitumen and the resulting mix is used for road construction. The road laying temperature is between 110°C to 120°C. The roller used has a capacity of 8 tons.

Plastic waste helps increase the strength of the road, reducing road fatigue. These roads have better resistance towards rain water and cold weather. Since a large amount of plastic waste is required for a small stretch of road, the amount of waste plastic strewn around will definitely reduce.

Prof R Vasudevan's inclination to keep experimenting led to another innovation. He decided to try creating a stone block with plastic coating and, in 2012, 'plastone' took birth. A plastone block is made from a mixture of waste plastic and stone. It has been found to withstand more pressure and it resists water percolation. In the professor's department of chemistry they have made plastone blocks using granite and ceramic waste, along with plastic waste.

The Better India / [Read more](#) [Thanks to Captain D. C. Sekhar, Member of ISCO Council for India]

UPCOMING EVENTS

Event organisers are requested to notify ISCO immediately if a listed event is cancelled or postponed

Your Editor is doing his best to keep this listing up-to-date but it should not be assumed that listed events have not been cancelled or postponed. It is recommended that you check with event organisers before finalising your attendance plans.

If an event title is not printed in blue ink it is not hyperlinked to the event website. This may be because the website is not yet available or because the link for the website has not yet been given. If you want to request the addition of an event please contact the Editor.

For more information click on Title of Event			
COUNTRY	2021	TITLE OF EVENT	LOCATION
VIRTUAL EVENT	February 2-4	Sustainability Leaders Forum 2021	Online
VIRTUAL EVENT	February 8-9	The JOIFF Industrial Fire & Hazard Management Virtual Conference & Exhibition 2021	Online
VIRTUAL EVENT	February 22-26	Ninth Technology Workshop for Oil Spill Response	Online
ICELAND	March 2-4	International Symposium on Plastics in the Arctic and Sub-Arctic Region	Online
MALTA	March 10	Regional Meeting of National Experts on the Post-2021 Mediterranean Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships	Online
FRANCE	March 23	CEDRE Information Day on Containers	Paris
USA	May 9	APICOM GM Meeting	New Orleans LA
USA	May 10-13	International Oil Spill Conference (IOSC 2021)	Online
MALTA	May 25-27	Fourteenth Meeting of the Focal Points of the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC)	Valetta
UAE	April 6-7	HSE Forum UAE 2021	Dubai
CANADA	June 8-10	43rd AMOP Technical Seminar on Environmental Contamination and Response	Edmonton, Alberta
USA	June 8-10	Elastec Spill Workshop 2021	Carmi, IL
USA	June 28-30	Clean Pacific Conference & Exhibition	Seattle, WA
USA	September 7-10	Hazmat Emergency Response Workshop	Sacramento, CA
USA	Sept. 13-15	Clean Waterways Conference & Exhibition	Louisville, KY
USA	Nov. 16-18	Clean Gulf Conference & Exhibition	San Antonio, TX
BAHREIN	Nov. 28-30	International Conference & Exhibition on Spills, Clean Seas & Environment	Bahrein

Please advise the Editor if any of the above entries require correction or updating. John.mcmurtrie@spillcontrol.org

CONTRACTS, TENDERS AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

INTERNATIONAL OPEN TENDER NOTIFICATION SERVICE

This is a subscription service. [Have a look to see examples of open tenders](#).

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES: USA & EUROPE

USA - Government solicitations are frequently posted in Technology Innovation News Survey and US EPA Tech Direct.

EUROPE – European Maritime Safety Agency invitations to tender are often posted in The EMSA Newsletter.

See “Links for other publications” for links to download current issues of these publications.

ISCO Members are welcome to post tender invitations in this section.

POLLUTION PREVENTION & MITIGATION BROAD AGENCY ANNOUNCEMENT

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Funding Opportunity BAA-OAA-E3-POLLUTION-2020

This BAA announcement seeks opportunities to co-create, co-design, co-invest, and collaborate in the research, development, piloting, and scaling of innovative interventions for effectively mitigating air, water, and soil pollution, including ocean plastic pollution, electronic and other forms of solid waste in low and middle-income countries. USAID invites organizations, companies,

CONTRACTS, TENDERS AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES (CONTINUED)

academic and research institutions, and investors to propose innovative approaches for preventing and mitigating pollution in countries to promote healthier populations, cleaner environments, and inclusive, sustainable economic growth. This BAA for pollution prevention and mitigation was developed to improve the Agency's ability to assist partner countries in solving complex pollution problems that threaten sustainable development. Specific opportunities to do so will be provided through Addenda issued under this BAA. The current closing date for applications is February 5, 2022. <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=324244>

LINKS FOR DOWNLOADING AND READING OTHER PUBLICATIONS

AMSA Update	Latest News from the Australian Maritime Safety Authority	Current issue
ATRAC Newsletter	News from the Adriatic Training and Research Centre	October 2020
AUSMEPA Bulletin	News from the Australian Marine Environment Protection Assoc'n	Summer 2020
BIMCO Bulletin	Marine and shipping-related news from BIMCO	December 2020
Newsletter from George Holliday	News and commentary on HSE issues from George Holliday	Free on request
Cedre Newsletter	News from Cedre in Brittany, France	November 2020
EMSA Newsletters	News from the European Maritime Safety Agency	Current issue
Environmental Expert	Environmental News from Environmental Expert	Current issue
GDACS Newsletter	Daily alerts for natural disasters – earthquakes, floods, typhoons, etc.	Free on request
GEF Newsletter	Monthly Newsletter from the Global Environment Facility	Subscription
GESAMP	Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection	Latest news
GISEA Quarterly Newsletter	News from Global Initiative for South-East Asia	Q3 2020
IMO News Magazine	News from the International Maritime Organization	Autumn/Winter 2020
IMO Publishing Newsletter	New and forthcoming IMO publications	September 2020
ITOPF Ocean Orbit	News magazine from ITOPF with interesting spill response articles	October 2019
JOIFF Catalyst Newsletter	Int'l Organisation for Industrial Hazard Management	Q4 2020 issue
Maritime Executive Magazine	Often contains articles of interest to the spill response community	Current issue
MEDNEWS	News from UNEP Mediterranean Action Programme	02 / 2020
MOIG Newsletter	News from the Mediterranean Oil Industry Group	January 2020
NCEC Newsletter	News from the National Chemical Emergency Centre	December 2020
Navigate Response	Global crisis communications network for shipping & marine	Current issue
NOAA OR&R	Weekly round-up of news from NOAA's Office of Response & Restoration	Latest issue
Oceanbuzz	Newsletter giving news on the Ocean Technology Industry	Current issue
OCIMF Newsletter	News from the Oil Companies International Marine Forum	Current issue
OHMSETT Gazette	Oil Spill Response Research & Renewable Energy Test Facility Quarterly	Autumn 2020
Oiled Wildlife Log	Bi-annual Newsletter from Tri-State Bird Rescue & Research	Fall 2020
OSPAR Newsletter	Protecting & Conserving the N.E. Atlantic and its resources	End of year 2019
PEMSEA Newsletter	Healthy oceans, people and economies in the East Asian Seas	Current issue
Pollution Online Newsletter	News for pollution prevention & control professionals	Current issue
Salvage World	Quarterly Newsletter of the International Salvage Union	Current issue
Sea Alarm Foundation Newsletter	Oiled wildlife Preparedness and Response news from Sea Alarm	Current issue
Society of Maritime Industries	News from the UK's maritime engineering and business services sector.	October 2020
Technology Innovation News Survey	News from US EPA – Contaminated Site Decontamination	Nov. 16-31, 2020
The Maritime Advocate	Maritime News from Sandra Speares	Current issue
USA EPA Tech Direct	Remediation of contaminated soil and groundwater	January 1, 2021
Water Pollution & Flood News	Monthly round-ups of UK & Worldwide Spill and Flood News	Free on request
WestMOPoCo	Western Mediterranean Region Marine Oil & HNS Pollution Co-operation	November 2020

Your editor depends on regular receipt of updated URL links for listed publications. If these are not received, relevant entries will be discontinued. Publishers are kindly requested to advise the editor john.mcmurtrie@spillcontrol.org if any of the links are not up-to-date.

INCIDENT REPORTS

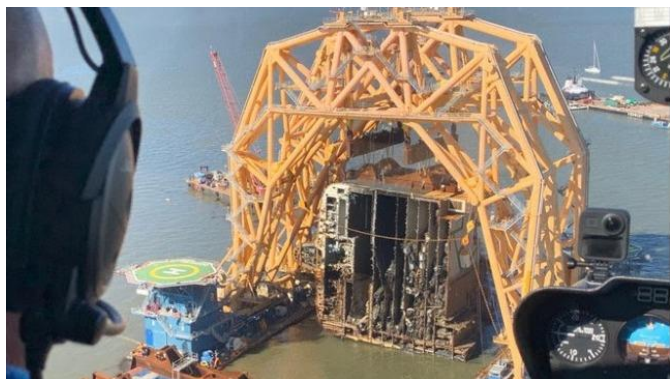
FRANCE: CORSICA - SHIP STRANDED IN AJACCIO: PUMPING OPERATIONS HAVE BEGUN

December 30 - Pumping operations began in Ajaccio, on the Torpedo wharf, in an attempt to extract some 51,300 litres of fuel from the tanks of the Sanguinaire Islands II beacon. According to Bruno Blanchenoix, head of the company SEA Techno-hygiene, in charge of the operation, the pumping should take at least two days. As a reminder, 4,000 litres of diesel fuel have already spilled into the sea and a floating dam was deployed yesterday to limit the risk of oil pollution. Corse Matin / [Read more](#)

USA: MASSACHUSETTS - CREWS CONTAIN OIL SPILL IN NEW BEDFORD HARBOR

January 2 - Crews responded to a marine oil spill in New Bedford Harbor on New Year's Day. The New Bedford Fire Department responded to an oil spill from a leaking fishing vessel. WBSM / [Read more](#)

USA: VIDEO: STERN SECTION OF GOLDEN RAY REMOVED ON BARGE



January 5 - The salvage team working at the wreck site of the Golden Ray completed the removal of the stern section, known as Section Eight, of the vessel on Tuesday morning. The team had completed on January 2 the cutting of the second section of the wreck and proceeded to begin the lift placing the section on the barge for removal.

The St. Simons Sounds Incident Response command reports that the heavy lift vessel, the VB-10000, hoisted the section onto the barge on Monday. After that, the team needed to complete ballasting the barge and sea-fastening operations overnight. The barge was moved this morning to the Mayor's Point Terminal where the section will

undergo further sea-fastening before in begin the trip to a recycling facility in Louisiana. The Maritime Executive / [Read more](#)

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