

TODAY IS WORLD OCEANS DAY

In 2008, the United Nations General Assembly decided that, as from 2009, 8 June would be designated by the United Nations as "World Oceans Day"



To mark this day, UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, has issued the following message –

“The first observance of World Oceans Day allows us to highlight the many ways in which oceans contribute to society. It is also an opportunity to recognize the considerable challenges we face in maintaining their capacity to regulate the global climate, supply essential ecosystem services and provide sustainable livelihoods and safe recreation.

Indeed, human activities are taking a terrible toll on the world’s oceans and seas. Vulnerable marine ecosystems, such as corals, and important fisheries are being damaged by over-exploitation, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, destructive fishing practices, invasive alien species and marine pollution, especially from land-based sources. Increased sea temperatures, sea-level rise and ocean acidification caused by climate change pose a further threat to marine life, coastal and island communities and national economies.

Oceans are also affected by criminal activity. Piracy and armed robbery against ships threaten the lives of seafarers and the safety of international shipping, which transports 90 per cent of the world’s goods. Smuggling of illegal drugs and the trafficking of persons by sea are further examples of how criminal activities threaten lives and the peace and security of the oceans.

Several international instruments drawn up under the auspices of the United Nations address these numerous challenges. At their centre lies the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. It provides the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out, and is the basis for international cooperation at all levels. In addition to aiming at universal participation, the world must do more to implement this Convention and to uphold the rule of law on the seas and oceans.

The theme of World Oceans Day, “Our oceans, our responsibility”, emphasizes our individual and collective duty to protect the marine environment and carefully manage its resources. Safe, healthy and productive seas and oceans are integral to human well-being, economic security and sustainable development.”

PROGRESS BEING MADE IN DEVELOPMENT OF CHEMICAL / HNS ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

The joint working group established by the International Spill Accreditation Association (ISAA) in collaboration with the International Spill Control Organization (ISCO) has now been working as a correspondence group for nearly six months on the work of developing spill response accreditation criteria for assessing spill response organizations (SROs) involved in response to onshore chemical spills and marine HNS incidents.

The task is not an easy one and it is anticipated that the minimum accreditations standards for different categories of chemical / HNS responders (public and private) will be introduced in stages.

The Working Group includes internationally respected experts from USA, Canada, UK and the Netherlands:

- Dr Merv Fingas, who has more than 25 years of spill response experience with Environment Canada where he was head of the Emergencies Science Division. He was appointed to the United States Academy of Sciences and is on the editorial board of the Journal of Hazardous Materials. Publications include The Handbook of Hazardous Materials Spills Technology and Survey of Chemical Spills Countermeasures.
- Mr Kevin Miller, who, as Managing Director of HazmatLINK works with industry, emergency services and governments, providing advice and consultancy on planning and managing incidents involving hazardous materials. Prior to this he managed the United Kingdom's National Chemical Emergency Centre (NCEC). In this role he was responsible for ensuring a rapid and professional response to over 1500 incidents per year. He was a member of the Department for Transport working group that developed the code of practice for security of dangerous goods transported by road and rail, assisted in the development of the European Emergency Response Intervention Cards (ERICards), and peer reviewed the CDC/NIOSH's emergency response safety and health database.
- Dr. Manik Sardesai, Vice President of Technical and Environmental Affairs and Director of Training of Detroit, Michigan, USA based Marine Pollution Control (MPC) Corporation, responsible for developing both in-house and client training programs, including 40, 24, and 8 Hour Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HazWoper, CFR 1910.120) courses, DOT, Incident Command Systems (ICS), and Chemistry classes. As a Faculty, he has taught both undergraduate and graduate level courses at Wayne State University, U.S.A. and University of Saskatchewan, Canada. Since 2002, he has been a member of Chemical Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) (USCG, USA).
- Dr Wierd Koops is Professor in Maritime, Marine, Environmental and Safety Management at the Maritime Institute Willem Barentsz. He also is an independent consultant and manager of Accidental Spill Control Consultancy vof with specific expertise on accidental or deliberate marine pollution. He has more than 30 years of professional experience in oil and chemical spill response. He is an experienced project manager, with extensive international experience in all the aspects of emergency management: prevention, preparation, response and evaluation. He has broad experience in international projects (Helcom, Bonn Agreement, Barcelona Convention, IMO and EU).
- Mr Nick Bailey joined DV Howells in 2003 as a chemicals expert with many years international incident response experience. He also sees to it that the Chemical / HNS spill response units are maintained with the most appropriate and up to date equipment. Nick's track record of managing chemical response scenarios is impressive. Aside from dealing with a wide range of incidents, he is also heavily involved with chemical, biological and hazardous incident response services worldwide.
- Mr Bill Atkinson is Head of Emergency Response at the National Chemical Emergency Centre (NCEC), AEA Technology. He is responsible for a team of experts providing chemical emergency response advice worldwide to emergency services, chemical industry and the transport sector

Development of the new standards will extend the existing ISAA accreditation disciplines that are focused on oil pollution and include freshwater spills, shoreline clean-up, marine spills, groundwater pollution, on-land spills and road/rail tanker incidents

EUROPE: THE EU LRIT DATA CENTRE IS IN PRODUCTION

As from 1 June 2009, the European Union Long Range Identification and Tracking of ships Data Centre (EU LRIT DC) entered in production following successful developmental testing. This is a milestone following a preparatory phase of a year-and-a-half of development work by the European Maritime Safety Agency and its main contractor – Collecte Localisation Satellite (CLS). By the entry into operation of the EU LRIT DC, the

participating Contracting Governments¹ meet the international deadline for providing LRIT information as of 30 June 2009.

The EU LRIT DC is a combined effort of the European Commission, in cooperation with Member States, through the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA). The Agency is in charge of the data centre's technical development, operation and maintenance. EMSA established a small Task Force in December 2007 to create an Implementation Plan early in 2008 for setting up the Data Centre. The original deadline of August 2009 was brought forward to June. Currently, it is estimated that the EU LRIT DC is the biggest data centre of the whole international LRIT system. When all Member States' ships are phased in by the end of 2009 it will track around 10,000 ships, which will generate a minimum of 40,000 position reports per day.

At present, there are 32 Member States, EFTA countries and Overseas Territories participating in the EU LRIT DC. This number may increase if other third countries join in the future. The EU LRIT DC covers an estimated 20 to 25% of the world fleet subject to LRIT. In addition to tracking EU-flagged ships, the EU LRIT DC also provides Member States, on request, with the LRIT information of any third country vessel bound to, or sailing within, EU waters. So it is possible to track any ship within a 1,000 nautical mile zone of a participating state's coastline, no matter what flag the ship is flying.

All maritime authorities of the Member States, such as those in charge of Search and Rescue, Port, Coastal and Flag State responsibilities, are authorised users of the system. They can use the EU LRIT DC to better track their ships and consult or request position reports.

"The Data Centre is yet another step in our common efforts to have safer ships sailing our seas. By tracking ships we will be able determine what sort of ship enters European waters. This is yet another success story for the European Union, where Member States have agreed to delegate a complex operational task to the EU. I thank EMSA for the development work it undertook over this last year-and-a-half leading to this achievement" said European Commission Vice-President Antonio Tajani, in charge of Transport.

¹ States participating in the EU LRIT DC are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Greenland, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Netherlands Antilles, Aruba, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, Iceland and Norway.

SAFER CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT MOVES CLOSER

From a UN press release of 15th May, 2009 - The world has taken significant steps this week towards ensuring that chemicals are produced, used and disposed of as safely as possible. The second International Conference on Chemicals Management – ICCM2 – which ends today, has made progress in several key areas and has defined its priorities for future work.

Achim Steiner, Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), who was at the high-level segment of the conference, said: "Reaping the benefits that chemicals offer to a modern society while reducing their potential for harm to the lowest level possible is a task for everyone – governments, international agencies like UNEP and many others, non-governmental organisations, and scientists. SAICM this week really has proved its worth as the one worldwide forum which brings together the people who can make change happen. I am particularly encouraged at the way it has focused attention on the four emerging issues – nanotechnology, e-waste, chemicals in everyday products, and lead in paint – because that will encourage us all to work harder to find some answers." Read the full report at <http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=585&ArticleID=6171&l=en>

GUATEMALA: REGIONAL CENTER OF TRAINING WILL PROVIDE ANSWERS TO HYDROCARBON SPILLS IN THE COASTAL ENVIRONMENT

After the hydrocarbon spill incidents that occurred in the Pacific and Atlantic coast of Guatemala since the year 1976, a group of persons from the different private companies and government authorities started environmental politics discussions, continuing them in the years 1983, 1991, 1996 and 1997; as an answer to the Coast Maritime Environmental Crisis in Izabal a committee was formed. After that, a Brigade was created as an answer to the hydrocarbon spills, integrated by private companies and government entities with the objectives of identifying the risk of maritime and land pollution and creating awareness educational programs. Months later, the committee and the brigade of spills was created in the Pacific area of Guatemala, specifically in Puerto Quetzal, with the same objectives.

The initiative to build this regional center for training will help to provide an answer to hydrocarbon spills affecting the marine coastal environment in Central America and will bring assistance and help to these countries in meeting the Cartagena and Pacific Northeast agreement requirements to prevent or avoid the sea pollution caused by a hydrocarbon spill at sea.

This is an extract from an article in the IPR Newsletter by Lt. Cd. (N) Edwin Federico Loarca C. Guatemala Navy. Access the complete article at http://aimediaserver6.com/electricpower/email/Article_Guatemala.pdf

IRELAND: ISAA "ALL-IRELAND" SRO ACCREDITATION SCHEME MEETING IN DUBLIN

The next meeting of the Steering Group of the International Spill Accreditation Association (ISAA) All-Ireland Accreditation Scheme will be on Tuesday 16 June at 1030 am at the HQ of the Irish Coastguard, Leeson Lane, Dublin.

Interested stakeholders are also invited to come along to the meeting. For security and to ascertain numbers for tea/coffee, please let me know if you intend to be at the meeting. john.mcmurtrie@spillcontrol.org

USA: SPANISH LANGUAGE OIL SPILL RESPONSE AND STRATEGIES TRAINING AT OHMSETT

The National Oil Spill Response Testing and Training Facility, in partnership with Texas A&M University's National Spill Control School, will hold a Spanish Language Oil Spill Response and Strategies Training on August 10-14, 2009 at the Ohmsett Facility, located in Leonardo, NJ USA.

The Ohmsett/TAMU NSCS training course is the premier oil spill training program designed with oil spill response personnel in mind. It is the ONLY program where students practice hands-on oil recovery operations in the test basin using REAL OIL IN WAVES. During the five-day course, students will learn the decision-making and responder skills essential to efficient oil spill response/recovery operations. All aspects of the course are taught either in Spanish or with expert interpreters.

The program also incorporates NIMS Incident Command System training, Series ICS-100 and ICS-700, the Incident Management Handbook and ICS forms, all of which are integrated into a table-top spill response exercise the last day of the training. Upon completion, students will receive FEMA ICS-100 certification and the National Spill Control School certificate of completion, which includes the 8-hour HAZWOPER refresher. Moreinfo at <http://www.ohmsett.com/Training.html>.

Legal disclaimer: Whilst ISCO takes every care to ensure that information published in this Newsletter is accurate, unintentional mistakes can occur. If an error is brought to our attention, a correction will be printed in the next issue of this Newsletter.