

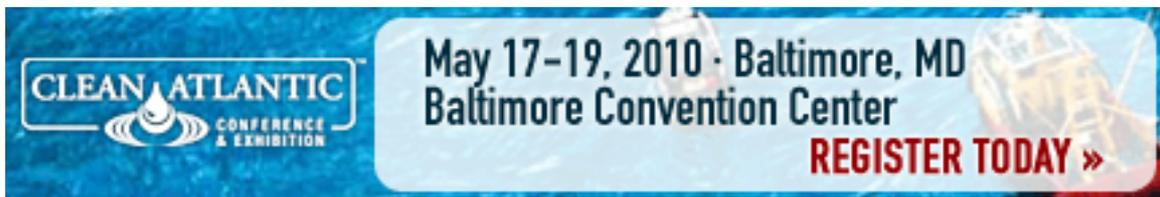


ISCO NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of the International Spill Response Community

Issue 223 15th March, 2010

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



SILENT BUT DEADLY UNDERSEA THREAT: FOUR BILLION GALLONS OF OIL

Slightly off your radar screen, the “Wrecks of the World: Hidden Risks of the Deep” (WOW) Conference held in Linthicum, MD in September highlighted a ticking time bomb. As industry and the regulatory arms converged at MITAGS to contemplate the mitigation and removal of as many as 4.3 billion gallons of oil lurking on some 8,500 shipwrecks around the globe, an emerging environmental threat became apparent. For those who did not attend the conference, this is also probably a good time for you to turn up the “gain” on your radar. Those dots on the screen are not “clutter.”

The threat represented by seeping oil from the world’s sunken wrecks has been characterized as a hidden cancer on the ocean environment. And with 75 percent of these wrecks of World War II vintage or older, the magnitude of the problem comes into clear focus and can no longer be denied. Identifying, prioritizing and funding the elimination of these threats is another problem altogether.

Although a concerted international effort to address the threat of these sunken wrecks is lacking, there are exceptions. Sweden and Norway (since 1992) have been actively identifying and at least beginning to address the sunken vessels in their own waters. Separately, France and Italy have begun their own cooperative effort. Finally, there is hope that international ratification of the 2007 Wreck Removal Convention will eventually come to pass. When and if that might happen is anyone’s guess, but the convention will come into force after ratification by at least ten states. The convention seeks to lay down a uniform set of rules for dealing with a wreck and its removal and also, importantly, with the issue of compulsory insurance and the right of action directly against that insurer. Complete article is at: <http://www.maritime-executive.com/article/silent-deadly-undersea-threat-four-billion-gallons-oil/>

EUROPEAN CHEMICALS AGENCY PROPOSES EXPANDED REGULATIONS

Trichloroethylene and seven other compounds would be potentially singled out for tight regulation under March 8 [proposals](#) published by the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA). The proposals, initiated by Denmark, France, and Germany, would classify TCE, three boron-containing compounds, and four chromates as substances of very high concern because they can potentially harm human health. The eight chemicals are carcinogenic, mutagenic, or toxic to reproduction, according to ECHA.

If European Union member states agree these chemicals should be classified as “substances of very high concern,” ECHA will place them on a list of compounds that are

candidates for authorization, a strict form of regulation. If they are selected for this level of control, chemicals can only be used if ECHA grants a specific authorization.

In addition to TCE, the chemicals are boric acid, anhydrous disodium tetraborate, tetraboron disodium heptaoxide hydrate, sodium chromate, potassium chromate, ammonium dichromate, and potassium dichromate. Read the complete article at: <http://pubs.acs.org/cen/news/88/i11/8811news1.html>

EU NATIONS CAN MODIFY 'POLLUTER PAYS' PRINCIPLE

Members of the European Union can develop their own guidelines on holding polluters liable for environmental contamination and forcing them to clean it up, Europe's top court ruled.

The ruling stems from three cases centered on the Augusta Roadstead region in Sicily, a hub for the oil industry that's been exposed to environmental pollution since the post-World War II era. Italian oil companies filed suit against national authorities seeking to decontaminate the area.

The Court of Justice in Luxembourg ruled that a "polluter pays" principle does not preclude national legislation to remedy contamination. However, the country must establish a link between current operators and the pollution, give the operators an opportunity to present their case, invite landowners to submit their observations, and state the reasoning behind any decision. The national authority is not required to establish fault for the pollution, but must investigate it, the court ruled. It may also condition continued operation of allegedly polluting facilities on environmental remediation, Europe's high court concluded.

<http://www.courthousenews.com/2010/03/10/25442.htm>

AUSTRALIA: OIL SPILL REVIEWS HIGHLIGHT GOVERNMENT FAILURES

An oil spill on March 11, 2009, triggered a massive clean up of Moreton Island, Bribie Island and Sunshine Coast beaches after a ship leaked heavy oil into the ocean in rough seas. *Photo: Getty Images*

Two independent reports into one of Queensland's worst environmental disasters have criticised the clean-up effort, with one federal agency saying delays worsened the ecological impact.

Almost a year after 270,000 litres of fuel oil was spilled off the state's south coast, washing onto pristine beaches, Premier Anna Bligh tabled two reviews in state parliament.



The Maritime Safety Queensland report found there were a number of elements of the disaster response that were poorly coordinated, resulting in duplication, under-use of resources and poor communication.

A second report by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, also tabled in parliament today, found a strategy for cleaning the spill was only developed eight days after the accident, and implemented after 12 days. Read the complete article from the Sydney Herald at: <http://www.smh.com.au/environment/oil-spill-reviews-highlight-government-failures-20100310-pxu1.html>

TECHNOLOGY: NEW REPORT GIVES TECHNICAL GUIDANCE FOR APPLICATION OF IN SITU REMEDIAL REAGENTS

A newly available technical report by a state-sponsored working group of Los Angeles-area environmental scientists, regulators and remedial contractors provides a detailed guidance document for subsurface injection of in situ remedial reagents (ISRRs) to eliminate groundwater contaminants. The 46-page document is available for download online at www.regenesis.com/ISRRGuidance.pdf. Read more at:

http://www.environmental-expert.com/newsletter/News_Soil_Groundwater_11032010.htm

SECTOR FOCUS: OIL SPILL RESPONSE IN MIDDLE EAST



In the picture: Khamis Juma Bu-Amim, CEO, Regional Clean Sea Association

Khamis Juma Bu-Amim, CEO of the Regional Clean Sea Association calls for a unified national emergency response plan - The scale of devastation a coastal oil spill could do to the reputation and economy of the UAE is greater than ever. As the population base has grown rapidly in Abu Dhabi, Dubai and the Northern Emirates, so too has the coastal infrastructure which

supports that growth. Power stations, desalination plants and the lucrative – but highly vulnerable - tourism industries all rely on clean seas.

Given the vast amount of upstream activities and midstream oil and gas activity in the Gulf, it is unsurprising that the major oil industry players clubbed together back in 1972 to form RECSO, the Regional Clean Sea Association.

“RECSO was officially set up in 1972 by 13 founder members. The oil companies in the region at that time recognised a need for collective response to major oil pollution incidents and thus came together to achieve a common objective - protecting the Gulf’s resources from oil pollution,” says Bu-Amim.

In addition to arrangements for mutual aid in times of oil spill emergencies, provision was also made for reimbursement of costs incurred by member companies in responding to oil spills originating from another member’s installation or facilities – a pioneering development for the organisations role to promote mutual cooperation. Read the complete article at:

<http://www.arabianoilandgas.com/article-7043-sector-focus-oil-spill-response-in-middle-east/>

USA: NORFOLK SOUTHERN TO PAY \$4 MILLION

Norfolk Southern Railways have agreed to pay \$4 million and make substantial repairs to the environmental infrastructure surrounding the immediate area impacted by the January 2005 train wreck and resulting chlorine spill. The penalty was agreed upon to resolve alleged violations of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and hazardous materials laws for the 2005 chlorine spill in Graniteville and will bring to an end the federal lawsuit between the Environmental Protection Agency and Norfolk Southern.

During the derailment, one of the train's tank cars was punctured and released chlorine gas. As a result, nine people died of chlorine exposure, and hundreds of people sought medical care due to respiratory distress. The incident resulted in the evacuation of more than 5,000 people living and working in the valley area of Aiken County. Read more at: <http://www.aikenstandard.com/Local/0309EPAAvondale>

IVORY COAST: IVORY COAST WASTE 'VICTIMS' RECEIVE TRAFIGURA PAYOUT



The case concerns chemical waste dumped in 2006.

People from Ivory Coast who said they had been made ill by dumped waste have begun to receive compensation cheques, after a four-year legal battle. Hundreds of Ivorians - many of them without bank accounts - queued for hours to receive their cheques. Some 30,000 people are in line for a share of a \$45m (£30m) payout from the multi-national oil company Trafigura. The firm has always denied that the waste was dangerous, or that it knew the

chemicals would be dumped. Trafigura hired a local firm in 2006 to treat and dispose of its waste - but the chemicals were eventually dumped in the main city, Abidjan. Shortly after, thousands of people complained of becoming ill, and the illnesses were eventually linked to the chemical waste. But reports that the waste had caused deaths or serious injuries were always rejected by Trafigura - and lawyers for the claimants eventually agreed. The two parties agreed in court that, at worst, the waste had caused flu-like symptoms. Read more: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/8548216.stm> [Thanks to Don Johnston of ISCO Associate Member, DG & Hazmat Group, for forwarding this story]

USA: CROWLEY'S NEAH BAY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TUG ASSISTS DISABLED CONTAINERSHIP

Crowley Maritime Corporation's tugboat Hunter, the state-funded emergency response tug stationed at Neah Bay, Wash., was dispatched this week to assist the 712-foot container vessel, Horizon Tacoma, after the vessel experienced engine problems.



The Horizon Tacoma was a few miles north of Neah Bay when it elected to shut down its main engines following the engine problem, though it continued to have full use of its thrusters and directional navigation. After notification by the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), the Hunter rapidly got underway and arrived at the ship in less than 30 minutes where it immediately connected a towline. Read more:

<http://www.maritime-executive.com/pressrelease/crowleys-neah-bay/>

SLICKBAR CELEBRATES HALF-CENTURY



Slickbar Products Corporation is very proud to be celebrating its 50th year in the oil spill industry.

Slickbar traces its long history through Neirad Industries, a plastics research and

development company owned by Millard F. Smith. In the late 1950's, Mr. Smith developed an oil spill containment boom and sold the first oil boom system in 1960. Since that time, numerous improvements in designs have occurred, and additional new products have been introduced to the product line which broadens the oil spill containment and cleanup product line. In 1969, Neirad Industries changed its name to Slickbar, Inc. When Mr. Smith retired in 1987, Slickbar Inc. changed its name to Slickbar Products Corporation with new ownership.

Through the past 50 years, several important additions have taken place; e.g. the purchase of JBF Environmental, developers of the famous JBF Dynamic Incline Plane (DIP) skimmers and vessels and also the addition of Corrosion Control International, manufacturers of advanced corrosion protection solutions, such as the Retrowrap system. The most significant event has been the merger of Slickbar Products with Lamor Group in Porvoo, Finland in 2008. The two brands, Slickbar and Lamor, are now united and the combination of both offers so many more creative and effective solutions.

<http://www.slickbar.com/Images/PressRelease50yrs/PressRelease50thanniversaryFeb2010.pdf>

USA: WASHINGTON DC SEMINAR ON REGULATION CHANGES

Washington DC, March 23, 2010 - Regulation changes – proposed and final - in Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure (SPCC), Globally Harmonized System (GHS) of Chemical Classification and Labelling, Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) and the Chemical Facilities Anti-Terrorism Standards (CFATS) will and do effect every environmental, health, safety and security(EHS&S) professional. THE EHS&S landscape is ever changing and as professionals you are being asked to do more.

This one-day program will specifically cover changes and proposed rules related to SPCC, GHS, TSCA and CFATS and allow you to maximize a short time out of the office while obtaining the knowledge necessary to stay ahead of the changes that affect your business success. The EHS&S landscape is changing rapidly and your company cannot afford any surprises that may result in lost revenue or hefty fines. For more information <http://www.infoinc.com:80/AHMP/030810.html> [Note from Editor – This link is to the site of “*The Essential Hazmat News*”, the newsletter of the Alliance of Hazardous Materials Professionals (AHMP) where you will find other interesting news and reports]

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.