INTERNATIONAL SPILL CONTROL ORGANIZATION

ISCO NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of the International Spill Response Community

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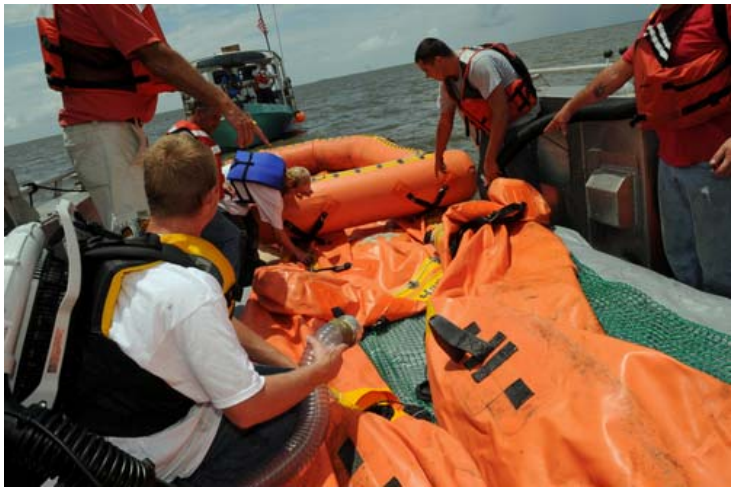
USA: DEEPWATER HORIZON UPDATES



Local fisherman learning how to rig oil containment system - A Harbour Buster oil containment system is deployed to skim oil, including tar balls in the waters off Fox Island in St. Bernard Parish, July 4, 2010. Crews from the U.S. Navy Puget Sound Naval Shipyard train local fishermen in the operation of the equipment. U.S. Coast Guard Photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Kevin Rofidal.

Key points from Admiral Thad Allen's briefing of July 9 – "We continue produce off of current container device at the well head to the Discover Enterprise. We got 16,308 barrels. The Q4000 recovered and flared another 8,091 barrels for a total of 24,399.

We are in the process of also trying to hook up a third production platform, the Helix Producer. That was delayed because of the last front, weather that passed through. We now have weather that is allowing us to proceed with that hook up.

That hook-up is in progress today. We hope that we will finish checking for leaks purging the lines. We have a possibility to be able to produce out of the Helix Producer sometime on Sunday. As you all know, that will raise the total capacity for our current containment cap system that is online between 50-53,000 barrels a day.

And subject to any issues that need to be clarified we'll be able to proceed. That means that we could at the earliest start removing the current capping device upon the wellbore sometime tomorrow (confirmation of removal advised on July 10) That would be followed a period where there would be no capping device, and we continue to produce through the Q4000 and the Helix Producer when it comes online.

But there would be a multi-day period there while we're putting the new containment cap on whether it be some exposure to hydrocarbons going into the environment. We continue to move forward. We think this weather window presents a significant opportunity for us to accelerate the process of capping—shutting down the well from the top and increasing the prospects for being able to kill the well from below through the relief wells.

Regarding the relief wells, we continue to make progress there. As of yesterday, we had moved to 17,780 feet in measured depth. We can move to 17,830 feet. It's getting very, very close. Things are going to get slow at this point as they go in small sections."

A BP Media video release will give you an interesting insight and help you understand what is involved in intercepting and plugging the well. Just click on Relief Well Operations Overview - Kent Wells and Relief Well Team - 27 June 2010

Another recent news item discloses the discovery of a second pipe within the Deepwater Horizon that may explain the problem encountered when the riser was cut at the top of the BOP and might even have contributed to the failure of the BOP shut-down system. This article is at http://www.nola.com/news/gulf-oil-spill/index.ssf/2010/07/post_19.html

The Unified Area Command announced Sunday that the skimmer fleet supporting the Deepwater Horizon Response Operations doubled the volume of oil skimmed near the well site Saturday.
The skimming armada capitalized on good weather conditions and surged to the site to confront the anticipated increased oil flow from the current operation to remove the top cap and install the capping stack. The skimmers were able to skim an estimated 25,500 barrels of oily water Saturday, doubling the amount collected the previous day.

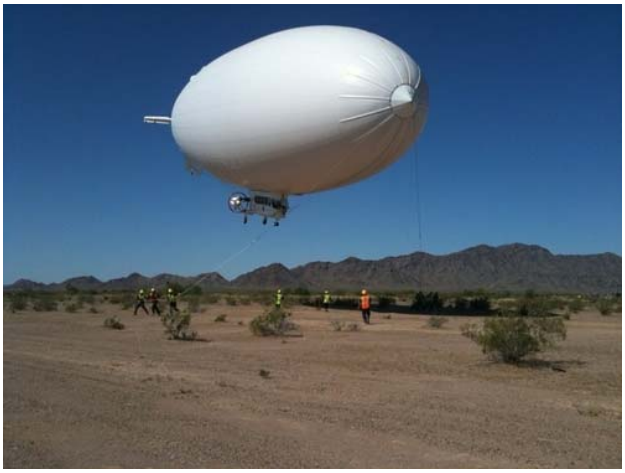
"As BP transitions to the new cap, we have massed our best skimming forces at the source of the oil, 40 miles offshore," said Rear Adm. James Watson, Federal On Scene Coordinator for the Deepwater Hoizon Response. "The skimmers join a total force of 65 vessels that are supporting an effort to kill the well and collect the oil offshore before it hits the beaches and marshes. This represents the world's largest collection of skimmers located in one area. These are a very important few days and we will continue to work around the clock and use everything at our disposal to mitigate the oil's impacts."

Currently 46 skimmers are operating at the well site, where crews continue to work around the clock to place a new capping stack on the blowout preventer to contain the oil. The skimmer force working at the well site is part of the fleet of more than 570 skimmers conducting the largest oil spill response in U.S. history.

Controlled burn task forces operating in a wider band around the source were able to conduct 15 controlled burns Saturday, further assisting the skimmer fleet and the Q4000 containment vessel in mitigating the additional flow from subsea operations.

The Helix Producer is expected to begin operations Sunday.

USA: AIRSHIP TO ASSIST IN GULF OIL SPILL RESPONSE



The Navy's "MZ-3A Airship" is currently en route to the Gulf Coast to be used in the Deepwater Horizon response, the largest oil spill response in history.

The airship is more economical to operate and can stay aloft for longer periods of time than helicopters or fixed wing aircraft already in use. Because the airship travels slowly, it will be a helpful platform for aerial observers looking for marine mammals and other wildlife that may be in distress.
While the airship's primary mission is spotting and monitoring oil to support command and control of skimming operations, the locations of animals will also be passed to the Incident Commands so that vessels and crews can be dispatched to assist wildlife. The airship will play an important role in achieving the goal of saving a way of life with the massive response.

The airship, the first to be used in the oil spill response, began its flight the last month in Yuma, Ariz. It is expected to arrive in the Gulf Coast sometime after July 6, weather permitting. The airship will operate from a mooring three miles southeast of the Mobile Bay shoreline.

"The airship will operate relatively close to shore, primarily supporting skimmers to maximize their effectiveness," said U.S. Coast Guard Capt. Kevin Sareault, Deputy Area Commander for Aviation, Unified Area Command, Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Response. "While different sensors are being considered, one of the primary means for locating oil will be by simple visual observation by the embarked aerial observers. The mission of overflights is to locate and direct surface assets to actionable oil - that is oil that can be burned, dispersed or skimmed."

Some of the sensor options under consideration include electro-optical, infrared and radar sensors. The sensor packages are scheduled to arrive during the week of July 12 and will take several days to install, test and evaluate.

Two potential advantages of airship monitoring of oil in the Gulf:

1. The airship can operate for a 12-hour endurance period, much longer than fixed wing aircraft or helicopters.
2. The airship is more economical because it can monitor a larger area and is less expensive to operate compared to fuel and manpower costs for several helicopters or fixed wing aircraft to cover the same area.

There are currently no plans for other airships to be used in the response. The MZ-3A Airship was built in 2006 and has flown missions as far away as Greece where it provided security for the Olympic Games. It has also been deployed for the Office of Naval Research and Marine Mammal Research, and EPA Atmospheric Testing. [Source: Press Release from Deepwater Horizon External Affairs]

ITOPF WINS OCEAN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AWARD

Dr Karen Purnell accepting the award from Adam Dupré of Ocean Intelligence.

ITOPF has won the Ocean Environmental Protection Award at the Sustainable Shipping Awards 2010, held in London on 24th June. This award recognises the company or organisation that has made the most significant contribution to the reduction and prevention of pollution of the oceans by ships and covers areas such as oil pollution, ballast water treatment and hull coatings. Judged by a panel of key figures involved in shipping and the environment, ITOPF received the award in recognition of its "holistic and proactive approach" to ship-source pollution.

Dr Karen Purnell, ITOPF's Managing Director, was presented with the award at a dinner attended by 150 representatives of the maritime sector, commenting "I am very pleased to accept this prestigious award, which recognises the long-term commitment of our shipowners and their insurers to ensuring that best practice in oil and chemical spill response and planning is promoted through the work of ITOPF". She also played tribute to ITOPF's Chairman, Bjorn Moller, CEO of Teekay Corporation, for his continuing support and thanked the team at ITOPF for their role in making this award possible. http://www.itopf.com/news-and-events/

LIBYA: WORKSHOP ORGANIZED BY THE ENVIRONMENT GENERAL AUTHORITY (EGA) ON THE PROTECTION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT IN LIBYA

At the invitation of EGA, REMPEC participated in a workshop organized on 30 June on the protection of the marine environment. Representatives from EGA, the maritime administration, ports, shipping industry as well as the navy and several oil companies operating in Libya attended the workshop.

Due to its position as a major oil exporting country, Libya is highly concerned with the risk of oil spills as well as the possible introduction of invasive alien species via ballast water from loading tankers. The workshop gave an opportunity to inform the Libyan marine community of REMPEC's activities in these fields. EGA introduced the work it has carried in the development of a National Environment Contingency Plan, which will also address the risk of oil spill whereas the National Oil Corporation (NOC) presented the result of a study it has recently commissioned to assess the available response equipment and trained personnel amongst all the oil companies operating in Libya and to set up a national response organization: the National Oil Spill Response Club.

MALTA: CONFERENCE HELD ON JULY 8th TO MARK THE COMPLETION OF A PROJECT TO UPGRADE MALTA'S PREPAREDNESS FOR RESPONSE TO MARINE POLLUTION

A project, supported by a grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA Financial Mechanism has just been completed with the commissioning of new equipment supplied by Vikoma Ltd. for intervention in marine oil and HNS incidents. The main outcome of the project has been a

very significant strengthening of measures taken by Malta to protect and preserve the marine environment.

Work included completion of a hydrographic study, incident and incident impact risk assessments, sensitivity mapping and a gap analysis in relation to pre-existing response inventories, culminating in the production of a new National Marine Pollution Contingency Plan to address oil and HNS pollution. The project was executed by Alpha Briggs Mediterranean Ltd.

The conference was chaired by Captain Richard Gabriele (Head, of Pollution and Incident Response). Speakers included Chris Farrugia (Project Leader, Transport Malta), Captain David Bugeja (Chief Officer Ports and Yachting Directorate), Richard Scarborough (Councillor, Royal Norwegian Embassy), Glyn Humphries (Chairman, Alpha Briggs), Richard Hill (Regional Sales Manager, Vikoma Ltd.), John McMurtrie (Project Leader, Secretary of the International Spill Control Organisation, Administrator of the International Spill Accreditation Association) and John Gatt (Permanent Secretary, MITC and Chairman, Maritime Security, Pollution Prevention Committee)

NIGERIA: OIL SPILL: SHELL TO PAY N15.4BN

July 6th - A FEDERAL High Court, yesterday, awarded N15.4 billion as special and punitive damages against Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Limited, SPDC, in favour of Ejama-Ebubu community in Tai Eleme Local Government Area of Rivers State for an oil spill that occurred in 1970. The spill affected an area of about 255.369 hectares.

Read the complete report at http://www.vanguardngr.com/2010/07/06/oil-spill-shell-to-pay-n15-4bn/

INDIA: GOVERNMENT FORMS PANEL TO CLEAN UP BHOPAL

July 8th - The Centre on Wednesday constituted an oversight committee to co-ordinate and monitor activities related to waste disposal, decontamination and remediation at the Union Carbide factory in Bhopal. Headed by Union environment minister Jairam Ramesh and Madhya Pradesh minister for relief and rehabilitation Babulal Gaur, the panel will ensure that all requisite technical, financial and other support is available to the state government and its authorities.

The primary responsibility for the removal of the toxic waste from the now defunct Union Carbide plant, soil and ground water remediation, and detoxification and dismantling of the defunct plant will be that of the state government. The 16-member oversight committee will ensure requisite technical, financial, logistical and other support is available to the state government and its authorities at all times while remedial action is taken. Read the complete text of this report at: http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics/nation/Government-forms-panel-to-clean-up-Bhopal/articleshow/6140953.cms

CANADA: PORT OFFICIALS, ENVIRONMENTALISTS SPLIT ON VANCOUVER'S OIL SPILL RISK

July 5th - Is the Metro Vancouver region prepared for the inevitability of a serious oil spill in Burrard Inlet? Does it have the resources to deal with a catastrophe if a tanker goes hard aground in Second Narrows and begins spilling its cargo of crude oil? Vancouver city councillors raised those concerns Monday. In response, they heard competing views from port and government officials who say the prospect of a catastrophe is negligible and yet manageable, and from environmentalists and an oceanographer who say it is not. Read the complete text of this article at: http://www.vancouversun.com/news/Port%20officials%20environmentalists%20split%20Vancouver%20spill%20risk/3238940/story.html#ixzz0tHhN80So

BALANCING THE CONTENT OF THIS NEWSLETTER

Some of our readers who are more interested in inland spill response and dealing with the aftermath of CBRN incidents may be unhappy because of the preponderance of reports dealing with marine oil spill response. Individually, inland oil and chemical spills are usually too numerous to mention and reports rarely give any insight into how these incidents were handled. As for CBRN, we think that readers will be most interested in information on the methodologies used to carry out decontamination and other processes that have to be carried out after the emergency services have secured the situation and need to be able to hand over the completion of work to non-governmental response contractors. Such information isn't easily available and readers are invited to send in contributions that will help in ensuring a better balance in serving the interests of all our readers.