



## ISCO NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of the International Spill Response Community

Issue 617 2 January 2018

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<http://www.spillcontrol.org>



### ISCO & THE ISCO NEWSLETTER

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

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### International news

#### UN PURSUES NEW TREATIES TO PROTECT HIGH SEAS

December 24 - The United Nations General Assembly voted Sunday to pursue an international treaty to protect the marine environment on the high seas. According to the Pew Charitable Trusts, the treaty would be the first of its kind, extending beyond MARPOL's regulation of marine pollution and UNCLOS' demarcations of sovereignty. It would provide a cohesive global system to coordinate the conservation and use of marine biodiversity and to account for the impact of human activities on the high seas, including fishing and shipping. It would also pave the way for the creation of marine protected areas (MPAs) and fully protected marine reserves on the high seas, which would protect key areas of biodiversity. *The Maritime Executive* [Read more](#)

#### P&I CLUBS VOICE THEIR SUPPORT FOR NEW RESPONSECON CONTRACT

During 2017 all Clubs in the International Group of P&I Clubs have issued circulars – **“Members are informed that BIMCO and ISCO (the International Spill Control Organisation), have launched two standard contracts, RESPONSECON and US RESPONSECON, for the hire of specialised spill response services and equipment.**

The contracts were drafted by a project sub-committee representing industry and chaired by a representative from the International Group. They conform with the International Group's Guidelines on Vessel Response Contracts.

RESPONSECON is tailored for international use, whereas US RESPONSECON is specifically for use in the United States. Terms and conditions are set out in standard clauses with accompanying annexes for the parties to insert detailed descriptions of the required services and rates for personnel and equipment. Both contracts are available free of charge from BIMCO's website, subject to Conditions of Use”.

During 2018 it is anticipated that the adoption of the new contracts by governments, response contractors and potential polluters will accelerate – RESPONSECON has already been used in December by a major response contractor and a beginning has been made in the enactment of nation state legislation requiring responders to utilise the BIMCO-ISCO contract in territorial waters. (see Honduras on Page 5)

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## International news (continued)

### PROGRESS MADE ON DEVELOPMENT OF GLOBAL OILED WILDLIFE RESPONSE SYSTEM

During 2017 considerable further progress has been made in the Beta-phase of the GOWRS (Global Oiled Wildlife Response System) project.

The GOWRS project partners have held two in person meetings and working groups within the project have made progress on the development of various deliveries.

An in-person meeting was held last September at the Mallydams Centre of the RSPCA, near Hastings in the UK. The remote location of this Centre, which also has in-house B&B facilities, allowed the project group to work intensively together. A great deal was accomplished during this meeting, including conducting an extended internal exercise to practice the decision making process of a mobilized assessment team for oiled wildlife response. The various working groups discussed the content and outline of project deliveries that will, in future, support the cooperation of expert groups and their collective response efforts. *Sea Alarm* [Read more](#)

### COAST GUARD, ARCTIC PARTNERS CONTINUE WORK ON OIL SPILL RESPONSE, SEARCH AND RESCUE IN THE ARCTIC MARINE ENVIRONMENT

December 26 - Coast Guard members from the [Incident Management and Preparedness Policy Directorate](#) attended the [Arctic Council](#) Working Group on Emergency Prevention Preparedness and Response (EPPR) meeting in Malmö, Sweden Dec. 5-7, 2017, to continue work on matters related to marine environment response and search and rescue in the Arctic marine environment.

The EPPR Working Group, formed in 1991, is made up of representatives from each of the Arctic Council nations: Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the U.S. The EPPR formed two sub-working groups: the Marine Environmental Response Experts Group, chaired by the U.S. Coast Guard, and the Search and Rescue Experts Group, chaired by Finland. EPPR holds meetings twice a year to discuss projects, proposals, and guidance from the Ministers and Senior Arctic Officials. In addition, the group uses the meetings as a venue for sharing best practices and lessons learned to ultimately enhance infrastructure and protocols needed to prevent, prepare, and respond to emergencies in the Arctic.

The EPPR focuses much of its attention on exercising the Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic (MOSPA Agreement). The objective of the MOSPA Agreement is to strengthen cooperation, coordination and mutual assistance among the Parties on oil pollution preparedness and response in the Arctic to protect the marine environment from pollution by oil.

Lt. Cmdr. Wes James, Chair of the EPPR Marine Environmental Response Experts Group, led discussions that centered on plans for the upcoming 2018 MOSPA Agreement exercise, which will be a full scale exercise between Finland and Sweden. MER Experts Group members collaborated on the exercise framework, timeline, and objectives and incorporating any lessons learned from the 2016 MOSPA Agreement exercise. *US Coast Guard* [Read more](#)

## Incident reports

### GREECE: LAY-UP SHIP SPARKED POLLUTION FEARS: UPDATE SHIP BEACHED



December 18 - Passenger ro-ro ship MAKEDONIA dragged anchor in Selini Kinosoura waters, Salamina Island, Gulf of Saronic, Greece, at night Dec 16 in stormy weather. Derelict and unmanned ship is either in lay-up or decommissioned, for quite a long time, judging from her looks. Fearing possible oil leak, maritime authorities fenced the ship off with booms.

December 19 - Salvage under way, in the process of lightering, salvors and owner fear structure strength could be compromised. Fuel tanks weren't breached so far. *Maritime Bulletin* [Dec. 18 report](#) [Dec 19 Report](#)

## Incident reports (continued)

### RUSSIA: TRANSNEFT HALTS DOMESTIC OIL PRODUCT PIPELINE AFTER SPILL

December 19 - Russian pipeline monopoly Transneft on Monday said it had stopped pumping oil products such as diesel through one of its lines after discovering signs of an oil spill. The company said the spill had occurred due to "criminal tapping into a major oil product pipeline which pumps diesel fuel". Signs of the spill were discovered on the Novki-Ryazan pipeline, some 200 kilometers southeast of Moscow. *GDNOnline* [Read more](#)

### UK: OIL SPILL OFF EAST WIGHT

December 22 – An oil spill was reported three miles off East Wight earlier this week (December 20). The incident, thought to be the consequence of refueling between two ships, is being monitored by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), who are undertaking regular surveillance flights across the area. *IOW County Press* [Read more](#)

### FINLAND: MASSIVE OIL SPILL CLEAN-UP UNDERWAY IN KOKEMÄKI RIVER

December 22 - Some 50,000 litres of light fuel oil leaked into the Kokemäki river from a Pori Energia heating plant in western Finland on Thursday.

Dozens of emergency service personnel and a private oil clean-up team are hard at work in the city of Harjavalta to remove the spilled oil. Emergency services say they have no precise data on the exact extent of the spill, which nonetheless represents an area several kilometres in diameter. *YLE.fi* [Read more](#)

### EGYPT: AUTHORITIES CONTAIN OIL SPILL IN LUXOR'S NILE RIVER

December 23 - The Nile Protection Department and Environment in Luxor, Southern Egypt, announced a state of emergency after an oil spill in the Nile River on Friday evening. In accordance with the precautionary measures usually followed in such cases, the Luxor water station was temporarily suspended from 8 pm on Friday until 10 am on Saturday. *Egypt Today* [Read more](#)

### GREECE: SMALL OIL SPILL NEAR TRAGONISSI



December 26 - The Hellenic Coast Guard reported on Tuesday a minor strip of polluted water, seemingly from fuel spill, at the sea close to Tragonissi island by Myconos, where cargo ship Little Seyma ran aground a few days ago. *Ekathimerini.com* [Read more](#)

December 27 - The strip of pollution was estimated at about 200 meters long and five meters wide, and the coast guard has already placed containment booms at the spot. Around the ship there was no water pollution found. The coast guard added that a contracted company has already started the process for pumping away the vessel's fuel. *Focus Information Agency* [Read more](#)

### USA: MARYLAND - OIL TRUCK OVERTURNS ON INTERSTATE 83, SPILLS 2,500 GALLONS INTO JONES FALLS IN NORTH BALTIMORE

December 26 - A fuel truck overturned on Interstate 83 Tuesday morning, blocking traffic for hours in North Baltimore and spilling red-dyed heating oil into the Jones Falls stream. About 2,500 gallons of heating oil spilled into the Jones Falls, said Jay Apperson, spokesman for the Maryland Department of the Environment. Crews captured another 300 gallons of fuel on I-83 before it reached the stream.

Emergency crews worked to capture and vacuum up the heating oil near the scene of the wreck. Downstream, workers deployed a series of oil booms to block fuel from reaching the Inner Harbor. They deployed the floating booms where the stream resurfaces downtown beside South President Street. *The Baltimore Sun* [Read more](#)

### USA: ALASKA - OIL NO LONGER LEAKING FROM COOK INLET PIPELINE, BUT SCOPE AND CAUSE OF SPILL STILL UNKNOWN

December 26 - The flow of oil from an undersea pipeline leaking in Cook Inlet was halted Sunday, one day after the leak was, state officials said. What's not yet known is how much crude oil escaped from the pipeline into the waters of the inlet — or what caused the leak. *Luxora Leader* [Read more](#)

## Incident reports (continued)

### LIBYA: EXPLOSION AT MAJOR OIL PIPELINE

December 26 - An explosion has rocked a crude oil pipeline that feeds the Es Sider sea terminal in Libya, an oil source in the country said. The Mediterranean port of Es Sider, also spelled as Sidr and Sidra, features the largest oil depot in Libya. The blast occurred near Marada, on the pipeline belonging to the Waha oil company, the source told Reuters. *RT.com* [Read more](#)

### NEW ZEALAND: WW2 WRECK THREATENS OIL SPILL ACROSS HAURAKI GULF

December 28 - New efforts are under way to convince government to salvage a massive quantity of oil trapped inside a shipwreck in one of New Zealand's most treasured marine environments.

If successful, it will be a return to the wreck which sank in 1940 with half a billion dollars worth of gold on board.

The gold has been removed but the RMS Niagara remains, sitting 120 metres below the surface with at least 1000 tonnes of oil still on board. *Newstalk ZB* [Read more and listen to commentary](#)

## News reports from around the world (countries listed in alphabetical order)

### CANADA: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN OIL SANDS PIPELINES SPILL?



Above: August 2, 2010 picture of oil spill recovery efforts on the Talmadge Creek and the Kalamazoo River in Michigan. Image credits: USEPA Environmental-Protection-Agency via Flickr

December 21 - In June next year, a remote lake in Canada will suffer eight simultaneous oil spills. But it will be for a good cause. Scientists are trying to learn how dilbit, or diluted bitumen -- the complex mixture of bitumen, gasoline and other chemicals that flows through pipelines and is hauled on railway cars away from Canada's oil sands -- behaves when it is released into the environment.

Researchers at the International Institute for Sustainable Development's Experimental Lakes Area in northwestern Ontario will study the fate and behavior of dilbit in freshwater and how best to clean it up when a spill does happen.

The oil sands have been producing bitumen for decades and major pipeline projects like Keystone XL are planned to help transport the material and increase production. However, surprisingly little is known about how bitumen, especially in its diluted form, acts during a spill, and how it affects the environment. "This is still an area with a lot of low-hanging fruit," said Greg Pyle, an aquatic toxicologist at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta. Even basic questions such as whether the dilbit will sink or float remain largely unanswered. *Inside Science* [Read more](#)

## News reports from around the world (continued)

### CANADA: ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCY (E2) PLANS

December 23 - Environmental Emergency (E2) plans are **required by Environment and Climate Change Canada** for all industries that have large volumes of hazardous substances produced or stored at their facilities. ERAC can assist Plan Participants in meeting the regulations by developing new E2 plans, reviewing and editing existing E2 plans, and developing or assisting with annual drills and exercises.

The E2 Regulations apply to any person who owns or has the charge, management or control of a listed substance that:

- is at or above the quantity set out in **column 3 of Schedule 1 of the E2 Regulations** at any time during a calendar year; or
- is at a quantity greater than zero and is stored in a container that has a maximum capacity equal to or exceeding the threshold quantity for that substance (**see subsection 3(1) of the E2 Regulations**).

For more information on E2 plans, please contact **Don Merriam**, Operations Manager, 514-626-3019.

*Emergency Response Assistance Canada* [Read more](#)

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### HONDURAS: OIL SPILL RESPONSE – NEW REQUIREMENTS

December 22 - Web-only circular issued by International Group clubs - Members are informed that there are new oil spill response requirements in Honduras. These will come into force on 1 January 2018 and will apply to both tank and non-tank vessels.

The Honduras Maritime Authority has advised that according to Act DGMM-022-2015 all vessels must nominate an oil spill response organisation (OSRO) which has been approved by the Authority to secure the availability of private personnel and equipment necessary to remove, to the maximum extent practicable, a worst-case discharge, and to mitigate or prevent a substantial threat of such a discharge.

One such OSRO currently exists, Ocean Pollution Control S.A. Honduras, who has agreed to contract on an unamended RESPONSECON form in the event of a spill. Members will recall that RESPONSECON is the standard industry contract developed by BIMCO/ISCO for the hire of specialised spill response services and equipment in the event of an incident in international waters outside the United States. The terms and conditions conform to International Group's guidelines for vessel response plan contracts.

The Honduras Maritime Authority has confirmed that an IG Club's Certificate of Entry is sufficient evidence of insurance to cover the liability of the registered owner for pollution damage for all vessels calling at Honduran ports or requesting anchorage within Honduran waters. This is required to be submitted to Port State Control officials at least 24 hours prior to the vessel's arrival together with, for CLC tankers, the vessel's State Certificate issued in accordance with the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage.

The shipowner will also need to arrange via their local ship's agent in Honduras a "standby contract" - Certificate of Coverage for marine pollution response issued by Ocean Pollution Control S.A. Honduras. The wording of the standby contract conforms to International Group's guidelines. The contract has the following footer: "Ocean Pollution Control, S.A. Honduras Effective 01.12.2017" and [can be accessed via the link here](#).

*All Clubs in the International Group of P&I Clubs have issued similar circulars*

[Thanks to Tony Paulson, Chairman of Pollution Committee INTERNATIONAL GROUP OF P&I CLUBS and Pernille Kæravad Jacobsen, Manager, Contracts & Clauses BIMCO]

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### INDIA: CHENNAI OIL SPILL: FOR WANT OF DISASTER MITIGATION PLAN, A COAST WAS SPOILT

December 24 - Thousands of volunteers — students and professionals — pitched in to help the authorities clean the oil that swept onto the beaches of Chennai on the morning of January 29, 2017, a day after two ships collided off Ennore. Officials across agencies too were coordinating, deciding on the fly what needed to be done and how to work around bureaucratic turfs to execute the clean-up operation.

By the end of April, the clean-up was declared complete. Following extensive surveys, levels of pollutants in the sea and the shore were declared within safe limits.

While these were the positives, a review of reports submitted by the various agencies involved — the Directorate General of Shipping, the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests, the State Department of Environment — documents submitted to the National Green Tribunal (NGT), and interviews with a cross-section of stakeholders and experts show that there were a series of missteps and several mistakes in the clean-up.

Officials of the Coast Guard, the nodal agency tasked with containing and mitigating an oil spill on the coast, have

## News reports from around the world (continued)

blamed the crew of Dawn Kancheepuram, who initially reported that only two tonnes of fuel oil had spilled. Apparently, they had not realised that one more large tank in the ship, containing fuel oil, had been breached during the collision and some 250 tonnes of fuel oil had leaked. This resulted in a delay in launching the larger clean-up operation required which, in turn, contributed to much of the oil reaching the shores.



Coast Guard and Port officials say they did all they could, under the circumstances. For instance, temporary containment barriers, called booms, were laid around the ship some three-and-a-half hours after the collision, but it did not have the desired impact. *The Hindu* [Continue reading](#)

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## NETHERLANDS: DEVELOPING OILED WILDLIFE PREPAREDNESS IN THE NETHERLANDS

December 21 - As of October 2017, the leadership of a five-year (2017-2022) oiled wildlife programme has been contracted to Sea Alarm. The programme, contracted by Rijkswaterstaat, the national authority that is responsible for oil spill response and preparedness, aims to further develop and enhance national preparedness for dealing with oiled seabird incidents in the Netherlands.

Designed following the principles of the recently published IPIECA *Good Practice guideline on oiled wildlife response preparedness* (which can be downloaded [here](#)), the programme uses the recently produced EUROWA materials (found [here](#)) as its basis.

The ambitious objectives of the programme include development and establishment of an organisation that will take responsibility for the coordination of an array of preparedness activities to be carried out by a large number of organisations. These include national agencies, coastal municipalities, rescue forces, nature and animal welfare organisations, and wildlife responders.

Sea Alarm will initiate the activities, working and interacting with these agencies and organisations, while assisting in the development of the new organisation, its governance structure and coordinating role, in dialogue with all the organisations that would benefit from it. Planned preparedness activities include training and exercises that will be defined for all functional roles: from volunteers to experts on the work floor, and from facility managers to incident managers.

In the Netherlands, the potential pollution risks to seabird populations are of deep concern. For example, incidents could involve many tens of thousands of wintering seabirds in the Southern Bight of the North Sea from October to March. Moreover, an oil spill in or near the Dutch Wadden Sea (a UNESCO World Heritage Site) could potentially impact tens of thousands of vulnerable sea and coastal birds at any time of the year.

The effective coordination of a wildlife response in such a geographically complex area needs thorough consideration, regional planning, and the availability of trained personnel in multiple organisations from which a useful contribution can be expected. [Source article](#) [Thanks to the Sea Alarm Foundation]

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## News reports from around the world (continued)

### **NIGERIA: YOUTHS PICKET NNPC OVER PLANNED RESUMPTION OF OIL PRODUCTION IN Ogoniland**

December 21 - The people of Ogoni in Rivers State under the aegis of Ken Saro-Wiwa Associates on Wednesday barricaded the entrance of the zonal headquarters of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, NNPC in Port Harcourt over an alleged plan to resume oil production in Ogoniland.

The protesters numbering more than 100 and led by the Coordinator of the Ken Saro-Wiwa Associates, Mr. Gani Topba, demanded that the planned resumption of oil exploration and production activities by one company called RoboMicheal Limited in Ogoniland should be halted.

Topba while handing over a copy of his protest letter addressed to the Group Managing Director of NNPC, Dr. Maikanti Baru, said the group has already written to the National Assembly that until the cleanup of Ogoni is implemented, there will be no resumption of oil exploration nor production activities in Ogoniland. *Naija247* [Read more](#)

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### **UK: PLAN TO TACKLE PLASTIC WASTE THREAT**

December 18 - A four-point plan for tackling plastic waste has been outlined by the Environment Secretary Michael Gove. He told BBC News that he wants to reduce the amount of plastic used in the UK, and to make it simpler for people to recycle.

Environmentalists fear Mr Gove will be reluctant to set tighter rules for firms which benefit from the current use of plastics.

The Environment Secretary outlined his thoughts during an informal meeting. He says he wants to:

- Cut the total amount of plastic in circulation.
- Reduce the number of different plastics in use, because that will help recycling firms
- Improve the rate of recycling, which has been slipping recently.
- And make it easier for individuals to know what goes into the recycling bin and what goes into general rubbish.

*BBC News* [Read more](#)

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### **USA: LOUISIANA - OIL STILL LEAKING AT SITE OF 13-YEAR-OLD SPILL IN GULF**

December 18 - Federal officials say they have found fresh evidence of an "ongoing oil release" at the site of a 13-year-old oil leak in the Gulf of Mexico, where chronic sheens often stretch for miles (kilometers) off Louisiana's coast.

In a court filing Friday, government attorneys said recent surveys revealed two plumes of oil and gas flowing from where an underwater mudslide during a hurricane toppled an offshore platform and buried the cluster of wells owned by Taylor Energy Corp.

The company says there is no evidence that oil is still leaking from its unplugged wells on the seafloor. *US News* [Read more](#)

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### **USA: 5TH CIRC. BROADENS OIL POLLUTION ACT LIABILITY**

December 19 - In two issues of first impression, the Fifth Circuit read the complete defense provisions for oil spills under the Oil Pollution Act (OPA) to strictly construe the defenses and make them only very narrowly available. *Law360* [Read more](#)

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### **USA: FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR OIL SPILL FUND WILL END IN 2018**

December 19 - The nation's main oil-spill response fund will lose its biggest financial support at the end of the month, according to federal officials and watchdog groups.

On Monday, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility said by email that a 9-cent per-barrel excise tax on all American crude oil will expire at the end of the year.

That tax goes into the fund to pay for oil spills from a variety of sources, including pipelines, refineries, oil wells and ships. *Juneau Empire* [Read more](#)

December 21 - The 9 cents per barrel tax on oil that funds the [Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund](#), used by the [U.S. Coast Guard](#) to pay for cleanups after accidents like the [BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill](#), expires on Dec. 31, and there are no plans to ask Congress to restore it. *The Times Picayune* [Read more](#)

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## News reports from around the world (continued)

### USA: ORCAS AND OIL SPILLS ARE A CATASTROPHIC MIX



Photo: An orca whale “spyhops” in the Salish Sea in the San Juan Islands, July 31, 2015. The southern resident killer whales living in the area have lost about 20 percent of their population since the 1990s, likely because of dwindling food sources and contamination. (Elaine Thompson / The Associated Press)

December 25 - Gov. Jay Inslee’s supplemental budget includes funds needed to recover our endangered orcas and to prevent their extinction from a catastrophic oil spill. A recent series of underreported oil spills and maritime mishaps makes the timing even more urgent.

Protection of the environment is key to the state’s economy. An estimated 1,000 visitors a week come to glimpse the Salish Sea’s natural beauty. But that beauty veils ugly environmental realities. The dramatic

decline of our once ubiquitous orcas from at least 100 to just 76 individuals shows that the Salish Sea is unraveling, putting into question the whales’ residence, along with our region’s economic and cultural heritage.

While many factors have contributed to the whales’ decline, living in tight family groups, or pods, makes the remaining resident whales exceptionally vulnerable to extinction by a large spill. *Seattle Times* [Read more](#)

### USA: NORTH DAKOTA - PSC: KEYSTONE RESPONSE TO SD OIL SPILL SHOWED ITS RESPONSE PLAN WORKED

Photo: Public Service Commissioners Brian Kroshus (l), Randy Christmann (PSC chairman) and Julie Fedorchak. Credit Dave Thompson / Prairie Public

December 27 - Representatives of Trans-Canada -- the owner of the Keystone Pipeline -- met with North Dakota’s Public Service Commissioners to talk about a big oil spill in northern South Dakota, and the company’s response to it.

The pipeline leaked 210,000 gallons of oil near the South Dakota city of Amherst. The Keystone Pipeline runs through North Dakota into South Dakota.

North Dakota Public Service Commissioner Julie Fedorchak said PSC members wanted to know why it happened, and to be updated on the clean-up efforts. Fedorchak said the company’s quick response to the spill shows its response plan worked perfectly. “The system was shut down within three minutes,” Fedorchak said. “And importantly, the spill was detected.” *Prairie Republic* [Read more](#)



## Special item

### USA: NOAA - A RECORD YEAR FOR OR&R’S EMERGENCY RESPONSE DIVISION

By Doug Helton, regional operations supervisor for the West Coast, Alaska, Hawaii, and Great Lakes Region of OR&R’s Emergency Response Division.

Each year during this time, NOAA’s Office of Response and Restoration (OR&R) takes a step back to examine the previous fiscal year in its 2017 Accomplishments Report. Fiscal Year 2017 was a busy year for OR&R, but even more so for the Emergency Response Division, which responded to a total of 205 incidents — a new record.

In a typical year, OR&R’s emergency response teams work on 150 or so spills and other incidents — averaging out to about three incidents a week. Spills and other marine accidents are tough to predict. Sometimes it’s quiet and other times we’ll get three calls in a single day. During the week, calls come to our small operations center in Seattle. Spills don’t take holidays, nor do they stick to a nine-to-five schedule; so our staff are on call and ready to respond 24/7.

With a total of 205 incident responses during FY17, ERD surpassed its previous record of 201 incidents from 2009. This new record breaks down to include 160 oil spills, 25 chemical spills, five hurricanes, four gas wells, three search and rescues, and eight other incidents. Not included, however, are the number of drills and exercises we support. *NOAA OR&R* [Read the complete text of this short article by Doug Helton](#)

## Science and technology

### CANADA: BALLS OF BITUMEN: CALGARY BREAKTHROUGH COULD BYPASS PIPELINE PROBLEM, RESEARCHER SAYS



Photo: Ian Gates at the University of Calgary's Schulich School of Engineering says his bitumen pellet invention will make it cheaper and safer to transport Alberta's energy products by rail. (CBC)

A Calgary engineer thinks an invention he stumbled upon in the laboratory could transform the way Alberta gets its heavy oil to market.

Ian Gates was researching ways to upgrade bitumen when he and his team accidentally found a way to degrade it, making it even more viscous — which, in turn, led to a discovery that they could envelope the oil in self-sealing pellets, with a liquid core and super-viscous skin.

These tough little balls of bitumen could be a pipeline-free way of getting Alberta oil to markets cheaply, sustainably and with less risk of environmental harm, said a release from the University of Calgary's Schulich School of Engineering, where Gates is a professor.

"We've taken heavy oil, or bitumen, either one, and we've discovered a process to convert them rapidly and reproducibly into pellets," Gates told CBC News.

"With this, we can put it in a standard rail car. It can go to any port where a rail car goes, which is an immense number of them, to get product out from North America." Gates says the pellets could be put in the thousands of rail cars built for coal that are now sitting idle. *CBC News* [Read more and watch video](#) [Thanks to Marc Shaye, Hon.FISCO]

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

<a href="#">AMSA Aboard</a>	News from the Australian Maritime Safety Authority	December 2017
<a href="#">Newsletter from George Holliday</a>	News and commentary on HSE issues from George Holliday	On request via email
<a href="#">Bow Wave</a>	Sam Ignarski's Ezine on Marine & Transport Matters	Current issue
<a href="#">Cedre Newsletter</a>	News from Cedre in Brittany, France	November 2017
<a href="#">CROIERG Enews</a>	Canberra & Regions Oil Industry Emergency Response Group	October 2017
<a href="#">EMSA Newsletter</a>	News from the European Maritime Safety Agency	December 2017 issue
<a href="#">EUROWA Newsletter</a>	European Oiled Wildlife Response Assistance Module	October 2017
<a href="#">IMO News Magazine</a>	News from the International Maritime Organization	Winter 2017 issue
<a href="#">IMO Publishing News</a>	New and forthcoming IMO publications	December 2017
<a href="#">Intertanko Weekly News</a>	International news for the oil tanker community	December 22, 2017
<a href="#">JOIFF "The Catalyst"</a>	Int'l Organisation for Industrial Hazard Management	Q4 2017 issue
<a href="#">Maritime Executive Magazine</a>	Often contains articles of interest to the spill response community	Sept.-Oct. 2017
<a href="#">MOIG Newsletter</a>	News from the Mediterranean Oil Industry Group	October 2017 issue
<a href="#">NOWPAP Quarterly</a>	News from the North West Pacific Action Plan	Quarter 2, 2017 issue
<a href="#">Ocean Orbit</a>	Newsletter from the International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation	August 2017
<a href="#">OCIMF Newsletter</a>	News from the Oil Companies International Marine Forum	December 2017 issue
<a href="#">Pollution Online Newsletter</a>	News for pollution prevention & control professionals	December 20, 2017
<a href="#">Safe Seas, Clean Seas</a>	Quarterly Newsletter from Maritime New Zealand	August 2017 issue
<a href="#">Sea Alarm Foundation Newsletter</a>	Oiled wildlife Preparedness and Response news from Sea Alarm	Winter 2017 issue
<a href="#">Technology Innovation News Survey</a>	News from US EPA – Contaminated Site Decontamination	Nov. 1-15, 2017
<a href="#">Transport Canada Newsletter</a>	News and articles re transport of dangerous goods in Canada	June 2017 issue
<a href="#">UK NCEC</a>	News from the National Chemical Emergency Centre	July 2017 issue
<a href="#">USA EPA Tech Direct</a>	Remediation of contaminated soil and groundwater	December 1, 2017

Your editor depends on regular receipt of updated links for listed publications. If these are not received, relevant entries may be discontinued

## Technical support

### INSURANCE: HELP FOR CONTRACTORS - WATCH OUT FOR THESE 'SIGNIFICANT COVERAGE GAPS'

December 28 - Environmental risks and pollution are top of mind issues for contractors and developers.

Standard liability insurance coverage for contractors does address some environmental exposures but there are various limitations and exclusions to watch out for.

Insurance Business spoke to Chris Robertson, vice president, environmental & construction at Chubb Canada, about the gaps contractors should be aware of and brokers should be communicating.

## Technical support (continued)

“Some General Liability (GL) policies will extend coverage to liability arising out of sudden and unforeseen pollution events,” said Robertson. “These policies may have general language such as sudden, unintended and unexpected, or it may tie an event back to a pollution event that is discovered within a defined time and reported within a set time period from discovery.

Therefore, the pollution coverage in a GL policy may address an element of remediation costs but it is not likely to deal with remediation costs on the insured’s premises, nor arising out of a governmental order.

This is an issue for contractors because one of the main exposures arising out of a pollution event is the cost to remediate and to respond to regulatory requirements in the form of orders or compliance with regulations.

*Insurance Business Magazine* [Read more](#)

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### USA: NEW VERSION OF MARPLOT 5.1.1

December 28 - MARPLOT 5.1.1 is now available for download at <https://www.epa.gov/cameo/marplot-software>

Note: If you're upgrading to MARPLOT 5.1.1 from a previous version, follow the instructions on the download page to ensure that your data is transferred successfully to the new version.

What's changed in MARPLOT 5.1.1?

- Made improvements to the auto-upgrade process to resolve rare issues some users experienced when upgrading to 5.1
- Modified new layer creation process so that layers default to Individual Graphics Mode
- Updated U.S. Boundaries layers to 2017 data
- Enhanced threat zone information display in ALOHA popup notes
- Made improvements to the installers and the data upgrade process for existing users
- Added enhancements for program stability and improvements for program speed
- Made additional improvements to the program interface and fixed bugs

[Thanks to Alan Finkelsteib, HAZMAT 101 Group]

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### BREAKING DOWN THE EMERGENCY RESPONSE GUIDEBOOK

December 29 - When an emergency incident happens at your facility, will you know where to go for valuable information? Understanding how to use the Emergency Response Guidebook before an incident happens is the key. The Emergency Response Guidebook (ERG) first was released by the U.S. Department of Transportation in 1973. Since then, the ERG has undergone some changes and has evolved into an efficient and effective means of initial information during an emergency incident. While some might think that this tool is just for use by emergency responders, they are mistaken. The ERG not only is useful to firefighters, police officers and EMS professionals, but to many others in a variety of industries. The key to using the ERG is understanding how the guidebook works, and the process used to safely size-up our emergency incidents. This does not necessarily mean that an incident already has occurred. The ERG is a great tool for pre-planning responses to the hazards associated with the materials we work with on a daily basis. The ERG is a tool for identifying the hazards and providing critical information on first aid, fire extinguishment and evacuation distances to protect ourselves, our workers and the community that surrounds our workplace.

#### Color-Coded Sections

From the first glance, you will notice that the ERG has four color-coded sections. The sections are color-coded for easy reference without having to know the page number. The 2016 ERG will have an expanded flow chart for ease of operation. It is important to understand what each of the sections covers.

**YELLOW** – If you find yourself saying, “I only know the 4-digit UN number for this material,” then the yellow section will help you with your response. All you need is the UN number and you can look up the physical name and corresponding guide number for the material in the yellow section.

**BLUE** – The blue section lists chemicals by name in alphabetical order. The blue section also will give you the cross reference to the UN number of a material and most importantly, the guide number associated with the material. Take care matching the spelling of the chemical name; there are several names that have similar spelling.

**ORANGE** – All other sections lead to the orange section. This section is the “meat and potatoes” of the ERG. The orange section gives the information on primary hazards and emergency response actions. Find the important information on PPE, evacuation distances, spill control, fire control and first aid measures in this section.

## Technical support (continued)

GREEN – Chemicals highlighted in green in the blue section or the yellow section shows they are toxic inhalation materials (TIH). TIH have specific initial isolation distance and protective action distance information. Be sure to keep in mind the location of the hazard. If the hazard is confined to a building, the evacuation distances will be different.

WHITE – There is a host of specialized information in the ERG. The white section in front includes many of the specialized items that could be of interest to industry. It shows information on rail cars, trailer identification, placards and pipeline information. The white pages in the back of the book provide information on explosives, boiling liquid expanding vapor explosions and a glossary.

It is important to train employees how to use the ERG. By using games and other methods of training, you can keep interest and skills fresh. Knowing how to use the information in the ERG is key in assisting in the safety of your employees and the neighbors around your business. A video highlighting the changes, and a new training game, the 2016 ERG Game, can be found at: <http://hazmatsolutions.net/2016-erg-game-video/>

More info on ERG <https://www.phmsa.dot.gov/hazmat/erg/emergency-response-guidebook-erg>

*About the author: Dean Blausler MS, CHMM, CPG, is the founder and president of HazMat Solutions Inc., which specializes in hazardous materials training for general industry and the federal government throughout the United States. [Thanks to Don Johnston of ISCO Industry Partner, DH & Hazmat Group]*

## Correspondence

### CANADA: AMOP SEMINAR WILL BE DELAYED

We regret to inform you that the 41st AMOP Technical Seminar on Environmental Contamination and Response originally scheduled to take place June 5-7, 2018 in the metro Vancouver region, British Columbia, Canada has been delayed until early October 2018 timeframe.

A recent series of developments arose while securing the venue that made it necessary for the AMOP Organizing Committee to make this decision. We assure you that this decision was not taken lightly and only made after all possible avenues were explored.

On behalf of the AMOP Organizing Committee we regret any inconvenience that may result from this decision. Taking into account the impact that this change might have, we will work to update and address questions and concerns of participants.

We will inform you of the revised schedule for the 41st AMOP Technical Seminar in the coming weeks as soon as the arrangements have been confirmed.

If you have any questions please contact:

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## Publications

### IPIECA RELEASES TECHNICAL SUPPORT DOCUMENT ON OILED WILDLIFE

December 19 - IPIECA has released a new publication - [Key principles for the protection, care and rehabilitation of oiled wildlife](#). This was developed in support of the IPIECA-IOGP guidance [Wildlife response preparedness](#).

The document provides additional guidance for animal protection and care in an oiled wildlife response to help operators and responders:

- Understand the overarching principles of wildlife response, including:
- The health and safety of responders
- Animal handling, including the principles of triage and euthanasia
- Construction and layout of facilities
- Wildlife response team organization
- Understand the technical principles of wildlife response, including:

## Publications (continued)

- Surveillance/reconnaissance
- Hazing/deterrence
- Capture of live oiled animals
- Collection/evaluation of dead oiled animals
- Field stabilization/first aid, care and support
- Pre – release care, release and post-release monitoring

[Download the new IPIECA publication](#)

## Upcoming events summary 2018

COUNTRY	2018	TITLE OF EVENT	LOCATION
For more information click on Title of Event			
USA	Jan. 3-5	<a href="#">28<sup>th</sup> Annual No Spills Conference</a>	Grand Traverse MI
USA	February 5-8	<a href="#">GoM Oil Spill &amp; Ecosystem Science Conference</a>	New Orleans LA
UK	February 5-9	<a href="#">IMO Pollution Prevention &amp; Response Committee</a>	London
EGYPT	February 12-14	<a href="#">Egypt Petroleum Show</a>	Cairo
CANADA	Feb. 21-22	<a href="#">12<sup>th</sup> Arctic Shipping Summit</a>	Montreal
UAE	Feb 28 – Mar 1	<a href="#">Offshore Arabia Conference &amp; Exhibition</a>	Dubai
UK	March 13-15	<a href="#">2018 INTERSPILL Conference and Exhibition</a>	London
UK	March 13-15	<a href="#">Oceanology International 2018</a>	London
USA	March 20-21	<a href="#">SCAA Annual Meeting &amp; Conference</a>	Arlington VA
RUSSIA	March 22-23	<a href="#">Baltic Sea Day International Environmental Forum</a>	St. Petersburg
BELGIUM	March 22-23	<a href="#">CONCAWE Oil Pipeline Experience Seminar</a>	Antwerp
KUWAIT	April 3-5	<a href="#">Kuwait Oil Spill Conference</a>	Kuwait
USA	April 4-5	<a href="#">Clean Waterways Conference</a>	St. Louis, MO
UK	April 9-13	<a href="#">IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee</a>	London
FINLAND	April 17-20	<a href="#">Arctic Shipping Forum</a>	Helsinki
NEW ZEALAND	May 1-3	<a href="#">NZ 5th Contaminated Land Conference</a>	Christchurch
USA	May 7-11	<a href="#">13th Int'l Effects of Oil on Wildlife Conference</a>	Baltimore, MD
UK	May 15	IMO 70 High Level Forum	London
UK	May 23-24	<a href="#">HAZMAT 2018</a>	Stratford on Avon
CANADA	Postponed	<a href="#">AMOP Tech. Seminar – Contamination &amp; Response</a>	Vancouver BC
ITALY	June 20-22	<a href="#">INTERTANKO Annual Event 2018</a>	Rome
USA	June 19-21	<a href="#">Clean Pacific Conference and Exhibition</a>	Portland, OR
INDIA	July 5-6	<a href="#">Oil Spill India 2018 Conference &amp; Exhibition</a>	New Delhi
UAE	October 9-10	<a href="#">RECSO EnviroSpill Conference &amp; Exhibition</a>	Abu Dhabi
UK	October 22-26	<a href="#">IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee</a>	London
To request posting of an event of interest to the Spill Response Community please send details to the Editor			

## Information for ISCO members

### MEMBER PROFILES IN THE ISCO NEWSLETTER

Did you know that for a £185 contribution to ISCO, you can have your corporate profile appear in the ISCO Newsletter. You get a full page with text and pictures to inform a highly targeted audience about your company and what you do. The rules are simple: The option is only available to paid-up members and any member is allowed only one entry per annum. No issue of the newsletter will ever contain more than one company profile. Content of your profile is subject to editorial approval in regard to suitability for publication. If interested, please contact [john.mcmurtrie@spillcontrol.org](mailto:john.mcmurtrie@spillcontrol.org)

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