

Mediterranean Oil Industry Group for Oil Spill Response

The next MOIG meeting is scheduled for 7-8 June 2000, in Istanbul, Turkey. A further meeting will take place in Malta, prior to the REMPEC (Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea) Focal Points meeting (25-28 October).

Key Items on the MOIG agenda will be:-

- Information Exchange of oil spill response arrangements in various countries
- IPIECA Oil Spill Working Group Activities
- Regional Exercises and Information Systems
- Information Exchange on regional/international Conferences
- Review of MOIG members, structure and action plan
- REMPEC Focal Points Meeting
- Special Session on the Erika Incident

EXERCISES / TRAINING COURSES / EVENTS

Regional Training Course - MEDEXPOL 99 11th – 17th October 1999, Tunis, Tunisia

As part of its programme of activities, REMPEC, in collaboration with the Tunisian Ministry of Environment (MEAT: *Ministère de l'Environnement et de l'Aménagement du Territoire*), organized a regional training course on Accidental Marine Pollution Crisis Management (MEDEXPOL 99) from 11-17 October 1999 in Tunis, Tunisia. This training course, attended by representatives from all the Mediterranean countries, aimed at senior management staff and government officers, who would take part in directing major and medium sized marine pollution response operations in a real case.

The course programme was divided into 4 major parts: lectures, short exercises related to dealing with the press (whose role is too often underestimated), a tabletop exercise and a visit to the stockpile of oil combating equipment in the Port of Tunis/La Goulette area.

The lectures presented the principles of emergency management and trained participants in the skills necessary for providing prompt and efficient initial response. They outlined main international regulations concerning accidental marine pollution, including basic understanding of the legal, administrative and financial aspects of the response, and also explained the main concepts of international co-operation.

Within this scope, and taking advantage of the fact that a large number of Mediterranean countries were present, André Lamy, Chairman of MOIG, was invited by REMPEC to present the activities of the Group and the importance of the government/oil industry co-operation. Finally, through the presence of a journalist, the principles of effectively managing public relations and the way of handling the mass media were presented.

To illustrate the importance of dealing with the media and to "test" the trainees' ability, 2 short exercises were organized. The first consisted of issuing a press release based on an oil spill scenario and followed by camera interviews; the second one consisted in handling a press conference in which some trainees representing the Joint Emergency Response Centre were interviewed. These two exercises served not only as communication training but also highlighted the "do's and don'ts" when dealing with the press.

A tabletop exercise took place on the penultimate day, based on a fictitious collision between an oil tanker and a cargo vessel, resulting in a spill. This exercise, which involved all the participants divided into different "response headquarters", was a good implementation of the various lectures.

The outcome of this training course seems to have been very positive. Trainees participated very actively in discussions and exercises and many questions were raised. Apart from the training side of the course this six-day meeting also provided a good opportunity to regroup persons from different coastal States who might have to work together in the future.

MOIG OBJECTIVES

- *to promote regional cooperation within the industry and between governments and industry by creating a regional network of industry oil spill response coordinators in all Mediterranean countries.*
- *to enhance preparedness and response to oil spill incidents in the Mediterranean region by acting as a regional forum for information exchange and discussion on oil spill matters and by making best use of industry resources of equipment and expertise for education and training*

JOINT CYPRUS/EGYPT/ISRAEL EXERCISE 8th – 11th November 1999, Haifa, Israel

Following "Exercise Larnaca" (November '98) and a training course on the use of dispersants (April '99) in Haifa, Israel, REMPEC organized another oil spill exercise from 8 to 11 November 1999 in the Bay of Haifa, Israel within the framework of the sub-regional agreement between Cyprus, Egypt and Israel. The exercise aimed to implement and further develop Israeli capabilities in the management of oil spill incidents, as well as mutual assistance and co-operation between the three countries.

The two-day scenario involved an oil tanker whose hull was ruptured after an explosion in one of its tanks during discharge operations at a multi-buoy mooring terminal. The incident led to human casualties (man fallen overboard) and spillage of crude oil requiring salvage, containment and recovery actions.

After notification of the incident an Emergency Response Centre, led by the Israeli Ministry of Environment and supported by the Ministry of Transport, was immediately set up. Action was then taken to collect information on the incident (type of oil spilled, ship structure conditions, weather forecast, etc.), and to mobilize resources, including an aircraft for airborne surveillance. After Search and Rescue operations, it was decided to undertake dispersant-spraying activities due to the propitious weather conditions.



Unfortunately, insufficient quantities of dispersants were available to comprehensively eliminate the pollution risk. As the slick started drifting and spreading towards the bay, reaching large dimensions, response capabilities of Israel were assumed not to be sufficient. Israeli authorities then decided to activate the Sub-Regional Contingency Plan (SRCP) and requested Cyprus and Egypt to swiftly dispatch equipment (dispersant, pumps, etc.)

On the second day the exercise focused on beach cleaning and oil waste storage operations. Although the on-scene team lacked manpower, volunteers were brought on-site to take part in the cleaning, which at the end of the day, was carried out properly and successfully.

During these two days, several press conferences were held and press releases issued to inform the public of situation and give credit to the actions

undertaken by the national authorities in charge of the response.

Finally, on the third day a debriefing session highlighted the positive aspects of the response, as well as points that failed or were not fully satisfactory. This session was also an opportunity for exchange of points of view and sharing of lessons learned. The outcome of this exercise was very positive, although some improvements still remain to be made. A report of this exercise is in the process of being issued.

Erika Tanker Incident off the Brittany Coasts, 12th December 1999

The Erika tanker, belonging to the Italian ship owner Tevere Shipping and spot chartered by Totalfina, was loaded with heavy fuel oil, commonly called N°6 or bunkers crude. While sailing from Dunkirk to Livorno (Italy), she sunk off the Brittany coast on December 12th, 1999. The Polmar Sea Plan was activated by the French Navy Authorities. The crew was rescued with no casualties, while the vessel was breaking in two sections causing the immediate release of approximately 10,000 tons of product at sea.

Despite the very viscous nature of the oil and the particularly bad weather conditions, sea recovery operations were launched by the French Navy and by vessels from other European Community members activated through mutual aid agreements.

The fuel oil on board the Erika has to be heated at 70°C to become fluid, which explains the difficulties encountered during pumping operations. 1,500 tons of emulsified oil were collected in a five day working period. The storm lasted a few days, breaking the slick into oil pancakes, being more difficult to track and to recover.



Source: Marine Nationale Francaise

On December 22nd, as the slick was threatening Vendée and Charente Maritime departments, the Polmar Shore Plan was activated. Pushed north by changing winds, the main part of the slick finally reached the south of Brittany on December 25th, Christmas, finally depositing across more than 500 km of beaches.

Recovery of the fuel on the ground was carried out by the French Army, Civil Defense Fire Brigades and volunteers. During the Christmas vacation they were more numerous than the shovels and buckets available. The oiled wastes stored in temporary storages along the beaches are progressively transferred to environmentally secured final storage areas, mainly in the Elf refinery in Donges. More than 100,000 m³ of oiled wastes are already stored. Nevertheless, three months after the spill, oil pancakes still come on the beaches after each tide.

As early as December 17th, rescue centres for birds were opened in the concerned areas. Some centers already existed (3), others were created following the accident (10). About 60,000 birds have been picked up, of which 12,000 are still alive. Thanks to these centres, birds were nursed, fed, washed. Five washing machines for birds have been used in the area, allowing a less stressful treatment for these stricken animals. Today, cleaned waterproof birds are being set free again.

As per current International Conventions, the ship owner is responsible for the pollution; therefore he and his insurers will compensate the victims' losses and the cleaning operations expenses. If the capped amount of compensation from the ship owner is not sufficient, the IOPC will be activated for further compensation.

The Erika incident off the coast of France has generated significant interest in oil spill preparedness and response issues. The IPIECA Secretariat has no direct involvement in the Erika incident, but can indicate the following websites as relevant sources of information:

- International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation Limited (ITOPF) <http://www.itopf.com/>
- Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF) <http://www.ocimf.com>
- French Institute for Exploitation of the Sea (IFREMER) <http://www.ifremer.fr/anglais/>
- Centre of Documentation, Research, and Experimentation on Accidental Water Pollution (CEDRE) <http://www.ifremer.fr/cedre>
- TotalFina Elf <http://www.totalfinaelf.com/us/html/index.htm>
- Centre of Documentation, Research, and Experimentation on Accidental Water Pollution (CEDRE) <http://www.ifremer.fr/cedre>
- International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund (IOPC Fund) <http://www.iopcfund.org/>

Nevertheless the Erika incident shows the importance of the IPIECA Oil Spill Report Series, the IMO/IPIECA Oil Spill Report Series and the IPIECA/ITOPF Briefing Paper Series and the

Oil Spill Exercise - Canary Islands, Oct' 1999

A three day Elf oil spill exercise took place in Santa Cruz de Tenerife at the end of October 1999. It also involved the CEPSA, an Elf refinery subsidiary in Spain and the Spanish authorities. The scenario of the exercise involved an accident during the loading of petroleum products, fuel and gasoline. in the CEPSA shipping terminal on Tenerife ,

The first step of the exercise consisted of extinguishing the fire and taking care of the wounded. Then, plans concerning the cleanup of the pollution took place, in particular cleaning operations on the coast of Candelaria, on Grand Canary



The FOST (Fast Oil Spill Team) from Elf were in charge of the cleaning operations , based in Marignane (France). As soon as the alarm was given, the FOST was mobilized to deal with human and material resources. A DC8 cargo plane was chartered to transport the 22 tons of needed material: booms, a zodiac boat to put them in place, VIKOMA skimmers, hydrocarbon storage facilities, telecom facilities, in particular satellite transmitting material, etc. A Boeing 737 was also chartered to transport 40 sea firemen from Marseilles and their managers.

The operations took place in three steps: first, deployment of human and material resources on the impacted coastal areas, followed by, cleaning operations and finally, giving information to the observers and the media.

need for consensus within industry and with governments.

Regional Training Course MEDEXPOL 99-Brest, France 21-25 March 2000

After being asked by the REMPEC, CEDRE organised a regional training course on new clean-up techniques for oil spill response. 24 attendees were present and these represented the many of the countries of the Mediterranean region. The course included theoretical classes, practical exercises with oil spill exercises and lastly a visit to the various beaches where clean-up has been taking place after the Erika spill. The various techniques used on the French coast during the clean-up after the Erika spill were largely discussed.

TotalFina has been involved in the response operations assisting the Authorities in charge. The group is now involved in a full range of actions in cooperation with the national and local authorities and environmental associations to help with the cleanup operations, bird rescue, local tourism and business activities and projects to restore the environment.

FUTURE EXERCISES/TRAINING COURSES

-Training course on spill modelling for Cyprus/Egypt/Israel in Nicosia with tentative dates on the 15-18 May.

-3rd Meeting of National Operational Authorities subregional system (Cyprus, Egypt, Israel) tentatively scheduled for the 23-24 June in Haifa, Israel.

-REMPEC Focal Points in Malta on the 23-27 October.

-Regional Training Course MEDEXPOL 2000 tentatively scheduled for 6-10 November in Rome or Naples.

FUTURE CONFERENCES/SEMINARS

INFOPOL - Paris, Brest, Marseilles, (France) 19-30 June 2000

The INFOPOL Seminar organised by the Maritime Transport, Ports and Littoral Department under the Ministry of Equipment, Transport and Housing and with the help of Marine Nationale, CEDRE, the Port of Marseilles authority and the French Petroleum companies Elf and TotalFina will sensitise people on the prevention and the control of sea pollution. It will review the general considerations raised by the problems of pollution in various fields such as marine biology, marine law, oceanography, and various techniques that have been implemented for preventing and controlling accidental oil spills.

Interspill - Brighton (UK) 28-30 November 2000

The theme of this conference will be "A new Millennium - A New Approach to Spill Response?", which will cover success stories and lessons learned from the past as well as covering what we need to look to in the future. There conference will cover 5 technical sessions namely: salvage and cargo/bunker transfer; spillage response at sea and in inshore waters;

shoreline response, waste disposal and recycling; inland spills and remediation procedures; and innovation. For further information on the conference please visit the Institute of Petroleum website at: <http://www.petroleum.co.uk>.

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS / VIDEOS

IPIECA PUBLICATIONS

- **Choosing Spill Response Options to Minimize Damage Net Environmental Benefit Analysis**

This latest volume (number 10) in the IPIECA Report Series introduces and covers options available for clean-up following an oil spill, so that environmental and socioeconomic impacts are minimized. The pros and cons of different responses need to be compared with each other and those of natural clean-up.

- **A Guide to Contingency Planning for Oil Spills on Water (2nd Edition)**

A second edition of the most popular of the Report Series (Volume 2) will be available at the end of April. Although the fundamental principles of effective planning remain unchanged, the document has been thoroughly reviewed and updated in the light of the nine years experience since original publication. Due prominence has been given to the Articles and requirements of the OPRC.

- **Report Series 'Boxed' Set**

A box or 'wallet' has been produced to hold the full set of IPIECA and IMO/IPIECA Report Series plus the ITOPF/IPIECA Briefing Papers (currently 14 reports in total), costing £45 plus postage and packing.

- **Oil Spill Compensation: A Guide to the International Conventions on Liability and Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage**

Those who either conduct clean-up operations or suffer damage as a result of an oil spill from a tanker need to be assured that they will receive prompt and adequate compensation. It is therefore in everyone's interest that the 1992 Civil Liability Convention and 1992 Fund Convention are widely ratified.

The second ITOPF and IPIECA joint briefing paper addresses this subject. It provides a basis on which tanker owners, oil companies and other interested parties can promote the Conventions' ratification by all coastal States. Alongside explanatory text, the guide also contains a PowerPoint™ presentation (which can be downloaded from the ITOPF or IPIECA Websites) and a series of answers to commonly asked questions.

All of the above publications are available from the IPIECA Secretariat.

RAMOGE VIDEO

The United Nations, on the occasion of the Rio and Barcelona Conferences, and the European Union have repeatedly drawn attention to the need to develop environmental co-operation at a regional level in the Mediterranean. The RAMOGE agreement is an initiative by France, Monaco and Italy to ensure that the coastlines covering the Provence, Alpes, Côte d'Azur, Monaco and Liguria regions are protected against

further marine pollution. It ensures that the relevant authorities of the three signatory countries work together in a coordinated manner to ensure the protection of this marine environment. A video on this agreement is now available and can be obtained from the Commission Secretariat (ramoge@dial-up.com) and further information can also be obtained on the following website address: <http://www.ramoge.org>.

The International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association (IPIECA) was founded in 1974, following the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm two years earlier. IPIECA is the petroleum industry's principal channel of communication with the United Nations, having been granted ECOSOC Category II Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) consultative status.

IPIECA has special responsibilities for global environmental issues related to the petroleum industry, including oil spill preparedness and response, global climate change, urban air quality management, biodiversity, technology cooperation and capacity building.

IPIECA's programme takes full account of international developments in these global issues. This includes developments within the United Nations, and within intergovernmental organizations and institutions and other industry organizations.

For further information or to make contributions to forthcoming issues of this Newsletter, please contact

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