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Newsletter

REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON ENHANCING OIL SPILL PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE IN THE ADRIATIC AND MEDITERRANEAN REGIONS: CALL FOR PAPERS

12 April 2022, The Steering Committee is proud to launch the call for papers of the Regional Workshop on Enhancing Oil Spill Preparedness and Response in the Adriatic and Mediterranean Regions; which will be held from 25 to 27 October 2022; in Opatija-Croatia.

The main objectives of this workshop will be to reinforce and develop Sub-Regional contingency plans, to stay abreast of the newest technologies, to benefit from responders & manufactures technical expertise as well as to share information on lessons learned and best practices of the previous exercises.

This event will host representatives from Governments, Oil and Gas Industry, Responders, Manufacturers, National and International Organizations, Shipping Companies, Academics, CEOs, Directors, Managers, experts, consultants and Engineers and will be a good opportunity to exchange ideas, to improve knowledge and skills on oil spill preparedness and response as well as to network and develop new contacts. The event will hear papers delivered by speakers along the following topics:

- **T1** : Contingency planning & Regulatory and legal requirements
- **T2** : Regional initiatives and activities in the Adriatic and Mediterranean regions
- **T3** : Oil spill modeling and training
- **T4** : Spill preparedness capability and response management
- **T5** : Oil spill response services and new technology
- **T6** : National and regional emergency response Exercises

We kindly invite you to join us and give a talk as well as share your valuable experience in oil spill prevention, preparedness and response. The deadline for submitting abstracts will be 31 August 2022,

Thank you for your consideration and looking forward to your active participation to make this event a memorable success.

BANKER TANKER XELO SANK OFF THE GULF OF GABES IN TUNISIA

On Friday 15th April 2022, the bunker tanker Xelo carrying 750 tons of diesel fuel issued a distress signal requesting to enter Tunisian waters due to bad weather, reporting water ingress and flooded engine room, at Gabes Anchorage, Tunisia. The vessel later sank in the Gulf of Gabes off the south-eastern coast of Tunisia on Saturday 16th April 2022. The tanker is 58 meters long and 09 meters wide. All 07 crew members (Georgian, Turkish and Azerbaijani nationalities) were evacuated by Tunisian authorities.

Mr. Mohamed Karray, spokesman for a court in Gabes said that "There are minimal leaks, which are not even visible to the naked eye and fortunately the oil is evaporating, so there should not be a disaster in the Gulf of Gabes". It was also reported that small amounts of liquids in the form of engine oil have leaked from the Tanker. At the same time. there is a 24/7 pollution watch whilst salvage operations are ongoing.

The Tunisia's Ministry of Environment quickly activated the National emergency response plan to combat marine pollution events following the sinking of the bunker tanker with the aim of bringing the appropriate response to control and avoid the spread of pollutants.

Mme. Leila Chikhaoui, the Minister of Environment was traveling to Gabes on Sunday 17th April 2022 to coordinate with regional officials, she told state television that "the situation is under control". Several other ministries such as National Defence, Interior, Transport and the Customs were also said to be coordinating under the national framework to avoid "a marine environmental disaster in the region and limit any impact from this incident".

Mr. Rabii Mjidi, the Minister of Transport stated that “the tanks of the tanker were properly closed according to the declarations of crew members and the results of diving operations carried out by the Tunisian Navy in order to inspect the hull of the tanker and ascertain its state”. The Ministry of Environment stated “We are waiting for the weather, winds and swell to improve, to allow divers to check with more certainty the condition of the hull and cargo, and undertake the necessary measures such as bringing the vessel closer to shore in order to secure the cargo, engine oil and everything else”.

Whilst there is no reported release of cargo, given the sensitivity of the area and public concerns response measures were conducted through the deployment of Offshore booms anchored around the Bunker Tanker to protect shorelines, mitigate the risk of environmental and ecological damage should a release occur. Approximately 05 tons of engine oil have been recovered by the Office of Merchant Marine and Ports (OMMP) response team.

MOIG contacted the National Committee on Saturday 16th April 2022 for an update on the ongoing incident and to offer any technical support that may be required through its members and technical partners. MOIG Members and Technical Partners throughout the Mediterranean region raised concerns since the ccurrence offering support. MOIG illustrated our databases of available expertise and resources available within Tunisia and from throughout the Mediterranean Region. MOIG is in constant contact with the National Committee and remains available at any time to provide technical assistance, if requested. This is clearly an example of cooperation in the times of need.

PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMSSIONING OF STIR OIL SPILL RESPONSE EQUIPMENTS

28-29 March 2022, the MOIG Director was invited by the Tunisian Refining Industries Company (STIR); MOIG member; for the commissioning of the new first Tier 1 oil spill response equipment package; referenced LOT N°1.

STIR was founded in 1961 and its social purpose is the refining of crude oil in order to satisfy the needs of the National market in terms of oil products. The company has a huge tank park with a capacity of one (01) Million Cubic Meters. STIR joined MOIG in February 2015; as a regular member.

The new first oil spill response equipment package LOT N°1 acquired is New Navel brand and it's composed of 1000 meters of fence boom and 600 meters of solid filled curtain boom.

The first day was dedicated to oral presentations, in which Feten Rezgui; Environment Responsible from STIR welcomed attendees and exposed the stockpile of oil spill response equipments. Moreover, Houcine Mejri, MOIG Director, provided a brief overview on MOIG framework, the lessons learned from Bizerte Tier 2 oil spill response exercise and the forthcoming MOIG activities planned in 2022. In addition, George Kardaris; Technical Sales Engineer from New Naval; presented the technical specifications of the LOT N°1 and the results of the operational tests performed; by an independent expert; in the New Naval base in Greece.

The second day was devoted to the commissioning of the LOT N°1; in which STIR response team assisted by the New Naval representatives; deployed 50 meters of solid filled curtain boom and 25 meters of fence boom at sea in STIR jetty A.

Through the acquisition of these new oil spill response equipment packages LOT 1 and LOT 2 "composed of 06 Power packs and 06 fastanks", STIR will enhance its capability to respond quickly and efficiently to oil spill incidents and therefore preserve and protect the marine environment.

The MOIG Management Committee Members would like to thank STIR representatives for their warm welcome and hospitality and their kind invitation to the commissioning of its new first Tier 1 oil spill response equipment package.

WEBINAR ON IN-SITU CONTROLLED BURNING

06 April 2022, the MOIG Director participated; via electronic conferencing platform; to Tiered Preparedness and Response (TPR) Series Webinar titled In-Situ Controlled Burning; organized by Oil Spill Response Limited (OSRL); technical partner.

The webinar was presented by Tristan Barston; Senior Consultant OSRL from Houston Technical Office.

Tristan Barston started by explaining the TPR Capabilities highlighting that there are 15 recognized capabilities which essentially represent the scope of Tiered Preparedness and Response. He noted that each capability is underpinned by a robust Incident Management System (IMS).

Tristan Barston introduced the Tiered concept Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3, explaining that Tier 1 means resources required immediately to handle local spill and/or provide an initial response. For Tier 2, he said that it consists of National or regional resources necessary to supplement Tier 1 response. Regarding Tier 3, He clarified that it means global resources necessary for spills that require substantial additional response dues to incident scale, complexity and/or impact potential.

Tristan Barston provided the definition of the In-Situ Controlled Burning (ISB), which consists of a burning operation of spill oil at, or close to, the site of a spill in a carefully monitored and fully supervised manner. Regarding the ISB working, he explained that flammable vapors are needed in the air above an oil slick to support combustion. In addition, an ignition source is used to either directly ignite those vapors or the oil heated to a temperature at which sufficient vapors to ignite are generated.

Tristan Barston outlined the six key steps in an In-Situ Burning operation which are: planning and training, preparation, containment of the oil, ignition of the oil, extinguishing of the burn and recording and reporting. On the other hand, he presented the advantages of the ISB controlled Burning Operation highlighting that it has high efficiency oil removal rates from water, land or ice surface, required less equipments and less labor-intensive than other response options, can be conducted at night and applied in remote areas where other methods cannot be used because of distances and lack of infrastructure, prevents and minimizes impacts to the environment and other resources at risk as well as has a significant reduction in oil and oily waste requiring storage, treatment and/or disposal.

Regarding the disadvantages of the ISB controlled Burning Operation, Tristan Barston explained that it generates a very visible smoke plume, requires a significant level pre-planning and approval from regulatory authorities and agencies, might to be not appropriate in close proximity to populated areas and presents a risk of fire spreading to other combustible materials.

Tristan Barston talked about the burning properties for various oils and the considerations for implementing an ISB operation. He underlined that there's very restricted timeframe in which to limit the spread and reduce the potential impact of the oil for both on land and on water. For on ice and snow, he noted that if a spill occurs in ice-infested waters, mechanical recovery can be either ineffective, too hazards, or access to surface waters for dispraying system is limited.

Tristan Barston explained the response resources requirements for ISB operations highlighting that there are two main resources needed, the first one is the containment or herding mechanisms able to collect the oil into a thick enough layer to provide sufficient vapors for burning. The second one is the method of igniting the oil vapors. He underlined that the method to be chosen for each type of ignition device should be capable of supplying a reliable heat source to produce oil vapors from a slick to ignite the oil. He concluded by presenting the four key aspects of an in-situ burn operation which are: Fire safety, fire boom containment integrity, burn effectiveness and burn emissions.

INTERSPILL 2022

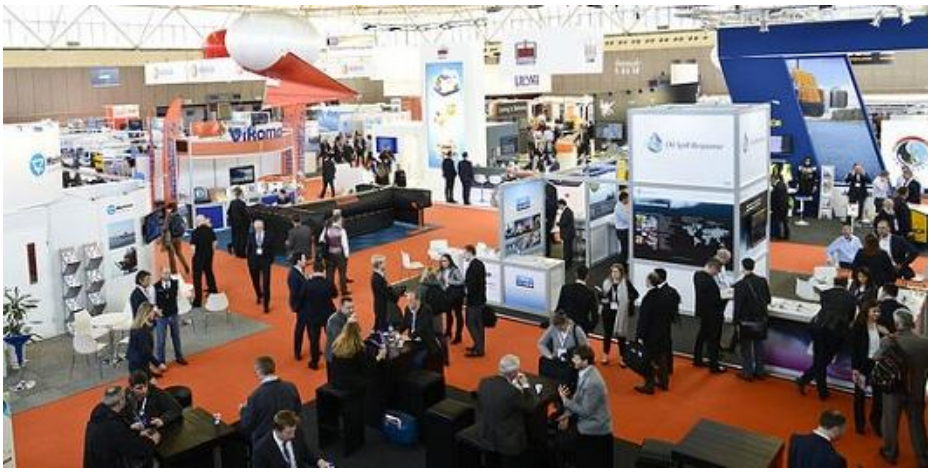
The Interspill conference and exhibition will take place at the RAI Exhibition Centre, in Amsterdam, the Netherlands from 21-23 June 2022.

The conference is controlled by the European spill industry associations NOSCA, SYCOPOL, SRGH and UK & Ireland Spill Association, together with EMSA, IPIECA, OSRL, IMO, IOPC Funds, ITOPF & CEDRE are members of the Interspill Committee.

This event provides a focused platform for all environmental, risk and spill personnel to boost technical knowledge, and connect with spill industry, professionals academic and government from across the globe.

Interspill 2022 will be one of the first face to face events for the oil spill industry since the pandemic, following a coordinated decision by the three triennial oil spill events (IOSC, Spillcon and Interspill) to postpone each of the events by one year.

Interspill is committed to ensuring the 2022 event is COVID safe and welcoming to exhibitors, conference delegates and visitors alike.



This event is expected to attract over 1,200 delegates, visitors and exhibitors from 70+ countries. A call for papers has been issued for those interested in presenting at the conference with the deadline for submission of 250-word abstracts by 31 October 2021.

A number of seminars, workshops, training events and networking activities are planned to run alongside the conference and exhibition. For more information on Interspill 2022, please visit the website at: https://www.interspill.org

MOIG is looking forward to this opportunity to meet members and technical partners and to reconnect with response community, to extending awareness of the role of the organization relating to preparedness and response to oil spill incidents.

This event will be also a good opportunity for MOIG to promote the forthcoming regional workshop on Enhancing Oil Spill Preparedness and Response in the Adriatic and Mediterranean Regions that will be held from 25 to 27 October 2022; in Opatija-Croatia in cooperation with ATRAC and JANAF.