

# oil spill INTELLIGENCE REPORT®

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## **USCG Issues Positive Report on Compliance with Maritime Safety and Security Standards**

The US Coast Guard (USCG) issued an annual report on 10 June 2005 that found foreign-flagged vessel compliance with new international security requirements was better than expected in the first six months of implementation, although safety compliance declined in 2004.

The report, known as the Annual Port State Control Report, examined the safety and security compliance of foreign vessels visiting the United States.

New international maritime security requirements went into effect 1 July of last year, just 18 months after 143 countries signed an agreement establishing basic security standards for ships and ports around the world (see *OSIR*, 1 July 2004). In the weeks leading up to the deadline, observers and industry members worried that strict USCG enforcement of the requirements would have negative impacts on global trade, as it appeared much of the world's merchant fleet was not in compliance with the new security requirements.

However, in the first month of enforcement, the USCG found that only 2.5 percent of vessels arriving in US ports were significantly non-compliant with the new security requirements, and were denied entry to port, detained in port, or expelled from port as a result.

“With the usual dedicated professionalism, the vast majority of maritime stake holders rose to the occasion and exceeded all expectations,” said Rear Adm. Thomas Gilmour, the USCG's assistant commandant for marine safety, security, and environmental protection. “We all met a tough challenge. Shipping did not come to a standstill and now we have a baseline of security for ships and ports around the world.”

By the end of December, the percent of vessels arriving in US ports with major problems fell to 1.5 percent. Over the first six months of enforcement, the USCG conducted over 6,000 security inspections, but denied entry to, detained, or expelled only 92 vessels.

The USCG will target vessels for increased inspections if they are registered in a country whose vessels have below average compliance in either meeting safety or security requirements. Vessels registered in Antigua and Barbuda, Cyprus, Malta, Panama, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines had below average compliance in both areas.

Safety compliance declined slightly in 2004, with 2.43 percent of vessels detained because of poor compliance with safety standards, an increase from 1.99 percent in 2003, but still less than the 2.5 percent that were detained in 2002.

The USCG began tracking safety compliance in 1995, when 6.55 percent of vessels were detained for poor compliance. This is the first time the report has included security compliance.

A total of 7,241 individual vessels, registered in 81 different countries, made 72,178 US port calls in 2004, and the USCG conducted over 11,000 safety examinations.

The current Annual Port State Control Report can be downloaded from <https://www.piersystem.com/external/index.cfm?cid=786&fuseaction=EXTERNAL.documentlist&typeID=7186>. More information on the Port State Control Program, along with previous reports and explanations of the USCG's port state control program, can be found at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/pscweb/index.htm>.

## **CRRC Invites Research Proposals**

The Coastal Response Research Center (CRRC), located at the University of New Hampshire, USA, is

inviting proposals for project funding consideration. CRRC was established in 2004 as a hub for spill

research, development, and technical transfer (see *OSIR*, 8 April 2004). The Center, which is a partnership between the University of New Hampshire (UNH) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), operates in cooperation with the UNH Environmental Research Group. The CRRC collaborates with other federal, state, and local research and development programs to promote effective protection and restoration of coastal areas and resources.

The Center typically funds US \$1 million in research through its Annual RFP. Grant awards through the Center are based on the scientific relevance of the proposed research, technical approach and innovativeness, transferability, qualifications of investigators, institutional support and capabilities, and appropriateness of the proposed budget. There is a two-stage peer review process: 3-page pre-proposals followed by 15-page invited full proposals. Proposals are reviewed by NOAA for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance prior to funding approval.

## Priority Areas for Research and Development

The Center develops its R&D priority areas with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) natural resource trustees and emergency response missions in mind, and is particularly interested in proposals in the priority research areas described below. In addition, the Center is soliciting research proposals in any of the potential research areas identified in the newly released National Research Council (NRC) report, *Understanding Oil Spill Dispersants: Efficacy and Effects* (see *OSIR*, 2 June 2005), as well as any proposals associated with the priorities identified in the Center's 2003 Workshop report, (see *OSIR*, 8 April 2004) or other areas of need relevant to the Center's goals and NOAA's interests. Proposed projects must provide quantitative information that can be used in making response and restoration decisions. Proposed projects

need not take place in the US but the funded party is responsible for obtaining all necessary permits for the work. Collaborative partnerships are encouraged.

### 1) Data Sets to Verify Fate and Transport Models

The ability to forecast the 3-D movement of oil through the marine environment in an accurate and timely manner is the basis of an effective response. The models currently used for this assessment have been developed over time and, given the difficulty of acquiring permits for experimental releases in the US, there has been little opportunity to quantitatively verify these output(s) in field situations. As reliance on these numerical models for both planning and response increases, so does the need to verify and test them. Predicting fate and transport of submerged oil was highlighted as a need during recent spills of heavy oils in US waters. The Center seeks proposals that will use mesoscale or laboratory scale experiments, spills of opportunity, algal blooms, hindcasting techniques, or other innovative methods to collect statistically valid field concentration(s), phases, and distributions of oil on the water surface or in the water column. This would include research addressing the fate of chemically dispersed oil, floating oil, or submerged oil.

### 2) Integrating Regional Observing Systems with Circulation and Transport Forecasts

Real-time observational data can be used to enhance fate and transport forecasts. While observational data have been used to scale model coefficients, the increasing availability of observational systems such as HF radar (high frequency) and ADCP (acoustic Doppler current profiler) arrays provides new research needs.

Research is needed to define and demonstrate methods for effectively linking new observing systems with existing models. Examples might include developing methods to: estimate and display the uncertainties in the measured

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data, or verify models when the field data are sparse spatially and temporally.

### 3) Recovery of Natural Resources

One of the goals of spill response is to minimize harm to the environment and shorten the time for recovery; this does not always equate to “remove all of the contaminant.” Past experience at spills has shown that aggressive response methods can harm the environment and slow recovery. Furthermore, response methods may have differential impacts on various resources (e.g., burning may remove oil from the sea surface, but create an air pollution problem). In order to make good decisions regarding response options and techniques, information is needed regarding the total impact (i.e., extent of injury and time to recovery) for the various natural resources. Information on the factors influencing the rate(s) of natural recovery for impacted resources that have not undergone restoration is of primary importance. These factors may include specifics of the release (e.g., season of release, type of oil, response method(s) used, influence of weather, and harvest and usage pressures). Proposed projects should compare recovery rates of coastal sites where acute releases of oil and other hazardous materials have occurred, and identify and prioritize factors that influence recovery rates in these sites. The developed data must be quantitative and statistically robust, as this information will be widely disseminated and used in making response and restoration decisions. The Center is particularly interested in salt marshes, sandy beaches, and unconsolidated sediments.

### 4) Injury to Natural Resources

Laboratory studies of injury using static exposure regimes may not be relevant to realworld incidents. For example, oil spills in open waters may result in high contamination levels for a few hours followed by the rapid decline of these levels. The Center seeks proposals that will help in the prediction of injury (i.e., a measurable adverse change) to living marine resources from realistic exposure regimes involving oil and hazardous materials. The exposure regimes considered may be pulsed (tidal), short term (less than 96 hours), or long term (more than 96 hours). The proposal should explain the relevance of

the particular exposure regime used. The information developed must be capable of being used to make protective response decisions, and to determine the need for and amount of restoration required to compensate for injury to the test species in a real situation. That is, the information developed must be quantitative as well as relevant. Endpoints other than mortality may be considered, but the proposal should explain the relevance of the endpoint chosen. The Center is particularly interested in injury information that would aid decision-making on dispersant use in sensitive areas.

### 5) Valuing Restoration

The Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA) provides a broad definition of natural resources that includes both human and ecological services. OPA requires that natural resources lost or injured in an oil spill be restored to the state they would be in, but for the spill, and to compensate for interim lost services. Determining the success or failure of the increase in ecological services provided by restoration projects, at least in the short term, is often included in restoration plans. However, few plans consider determining the effectiveness of those projects used to compensate for lost human use services of the natural resources (e.g., boat ramps, fishing piers) or the value that humans place on the ecological services provided by the restored resources (e.g., ruddy ducks, marshes). The Center seeks proposals that would develop and implement state-of-the-art, quantitative socioeconomic metrics that can be used to monitor the results/progress of restoration projects against their stated goals.

### 6) Efficacy and Effects of Dispersants

In its newly released report, NRC notes the need for dispersant data that is cost effective, scientifically rigorous, and suitable for dissemination and peer-reviewed publication. As a major sponsor of the NRC dispersants report, NOAA has great interest in furthering its understanding of dispersants. The Center encourages the submission of proposals that address any of the dispersant research topics identified in the NRC report.

Preliminary proposals are due 8 July. Visit [www.crrc.unh.edu](http://www.crrc.unh.edu) for additional information.

## **Goal-based Standards Take Shape at IMO's Maritime Safety Committee (cont'd)**

Basic principles and goals for goal-based standards (GBS) for new ship construction were agreed in principle

by the International Maritime Organization (IMO)'s Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) when it met at the

organization's London Headquarters for its 80th session from 11 to 20 May 2005.

Other important issues on the MSC agenda included the adoption of revised provisions for subdivision and stability in Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) chapter II-1 Construction – Structure, subdivision and stability, machinery and electrical installations; continued work on passenger ship safety; and consideration of issues surrounding the implementation of the maritime security measures adopted by IMO.

*OSIR*'s report on the outcomes of MSC 80 began in recent issues (see *OSIR*, 2 June 2005; 9 June 2005), continues below, and will conclude in future editions of this newsletter.

## Measures to Enhance Maritime Security

The MSC considered issues relating to the implementation of the special measures to enhance maritime security, which were adopted in 2002 and entered into force on 1 July 2004.

The MSC approved draft amendments to the STCW Convention on *Requirements for the issue of certificates of proficiency for ship security officers*; draft amendments to part A of the STCW Code on *Training requirements for issue of certificates of proficiency for ship security officers*; and related draft amendments to part B of the STCW Code on *Guidance regarding training for ship security officers*. The drafts will be circulated with a view to adoption at MSC 81 in 2006.

The proposed amendments to the STCW Convention and to parts A and B of the STCW Code require candidates for a certificate of proficiency as a ship security officer to demonstrate the knowledge to complete a range of tasks, duties, and responsibilities, including: maintenance and supervision of the implementation of a ship security plan; assessment of security risk, threat, and vulnerability; undertaking regular inspections of the ship to ensure that appropriate security measures are implemented and maintained; ensuring that security equipment and systems, if any, are properly operated, tested, and calibrated; and encouraging security awareness and vigilance.

The MSC also approved for circulation as MSC circulars:

*Guidelines on the training and certification of Company Security Officers (CSOs); Guidance on the access of public authorities, emergency response services and pilots onboard ships to which SOLAS chapter XI-2 and the ISPS Code apply; Guidance on the priority and testing of ship security alert system; and Interim scheme for the compliance of certain cargo ships with the special measures to enhance maritime security.*

The MSC also adopted amendments to resolution A.959(23) on *Format and guidelines for the maintenance of the continuous synopsis record* intended to update the CSR format to include the registered owner and the company identification numbers, and to address a number of practical difficulties encountered during the transfer of ships between flags.

## Long-range Identification and Tracking of Ships

The Working Group on Maritime Security held extensive discussions relating to proposed draft amendments to SOLAS to include a new regulation on long-range identification and tracking of ships (LRIT). The purpose of the proposed draft regulation is to establish a mechanism for the collection from ships of LRIT information for security, search and rescue, and any other purpose, as determined by the Organization, and also a scheme for the provision of LRIT information to Contracting Governments. The ships that are required to comply with SOLAS chapter XI-2 and the ISPS Code would be required to transmit LRIT information.

The Committee noted that there were still a number of outstanding technical issues to be resolved and agreed that an intersessional working group should meet ahead of the 10th session of the COMSAR Sub-Committee in early 2006 so that COMSAR 10 would be able to finalize the work. The COMSAR correspondence group on LRIT was also tasked with considering a number of technical issues, so as to enable COMSAR 10 to complete its own work on LRIT.

The Committee also authorized the convening of an MSC intersessional working group on LRIT, not later than seven months before MSC 81, for the purpose of developing draft SOLAS amendments on LRIT to be circulated with a view to consideration and adoption at MSC 81.