



N° 154 E - April 2008

Emergency Response

At the beginning of the month of March, our efforts were once again focused on the spill of Angola. A second person from Cedre was sent onsite to take over from the agent who had been there since mid-February. No pollutant had arrived onshore. Daily overflights showed a gradual disappearance of surface slicks due to the progress of natural dispersion as well, it appears, as to the sediment content of the water and the change in salinity.

Back in France, the storm on 10 March 2008 destroyed a tank at the diesel loading station in the port of St Guénolé Penmarc'h (Finistère, Brittany). Several dozens of cubic metres of marine diesel were spilled into the port, triggering intervention by the fire service. Two agents from Cedre were mobilised onsite as part of Cedre's Pilot Response and Training team.

In short

VISIT

► On 26th and 27th, visit from a delegation of three people from the Algerian company STH to draw up a training plan for their personnel

TRAINING COURSES

- On 11th, basic pollution response course (20 participants)
- From 17th to 20th, pollution crisis management course (22 participants)
- On 26th, course for student pilot officers in the naval air force (10 participants)
- From 31st March to 3rd April, aerial observation course (10 participants)

Donges Refinery

On 16 March, a pipe leak during the loading of a tanker at the terminal in Donges Refinery led to a spill of a quantity of IFO 380 initially estimated at 100 cubic metres. Upon request by the authorities and the refinery, Cedre sent two agents onsite the same day, then two more the following day. Tar balls were reported on 18 March at the opening of the estuary, however no significant recovery at sea could be carried out.

Since 16 March, four agents from Cedre have been assessing the extent of the pollution and providing advice on clean-up according to the substrate: mudflats, reed beds, beaches, riprap... An agent from Cedre has been taking part in daily meetings organised at the Préfecture of Nantes, at the operational response centre in Paimboeuf and at the response centre at the refinery, in charge of the implementation of clean-up operations. Several hundred people (fire service, civil security and private service providers) were set to work to remove as much as possible of the oil liable to be remobilised by the April spring tides. The Attorney General of Nantes also called upon Cedre to conduct analyses for legal purposes.

13th Information Day

On 18 March, Cedre organised its 13th Information Day, for the second year running in the very spacious and well equipped premises of the INHES (Institut National des Hautes Etudes de Sécurité) at Saint-Denis-La-Plaine near Paris. This Day brought together around a hundred participants to focus on the theme of "Accidental Pollution by HNS". The round table discussions held at the end of the morning and afternoon sessions were animated by constructive debates. The initial feedback has been very positive. The conferences given at the Information Day are available at www.cedre.fr in the "Publications" section.

Cataglop / Armoreco trials

Cedre regularly conducts assessments of response equipment by carrying out tests based on a standardised method. During March, two dual purpose recovery barges (oil and waste) each underwent a series of independent trials on Cedre's technical facilities: the barge "Cataglop XL" manufactured by Ecoceane and the barge "Armoreco 5.90" manufactured by Eco3S. In both cases, the tests, conducted in Cedre's trials basin in the presence of oil, were able to quantify the recovery capacity of the barges for different types of pollutants, and identify various ways of improving them.

Nice: training on response in ports

From 4 to 6 March, three agents from Cedre helped to led a three-day course organised by the Conseil Général des Alpes-Maritimes for around twenty participants from the Conseil Général, the Chamber of Commerce, the pilot station and port of Nice, as well as two representatives of Force 06. The mornings were dedicated to theory lessons and the afternoons set aside for exercises in the port of Nice, involving boom and skimmer deployment and riprap clean-up sites..

Spain: European project EASY

From 4 to 6 March, Santiago de Compostela was home to a meeting for the Interreg Atlantic Area project EASY (European Atlantic forecasting SYstem) which aims to build local sea and weather forecast models based on numerous parameters and the technical infrastructure which supports them.

Cedre was invited to the meeting as a potential end-user of the products being developed, in particular concerning dispersion prediction for inshore pollution. France was represented by Mercator Océan, whose models are used as a basis for developing the regional tools of other partners. The project is to be followed by a successive project, currently under preparation, extended to the Bay of Biscay and the Celtic Sea. See www.project-easy.info.

Portugal: European project MARINE

Cedre was invited as a potential end-user to attend a workshop on 17 March for the Interreg Atlantic Area project MARINE (Autonomous vehicles in the response to maritime incidents), which aims to provide the services of aerial and marine drones equipped with pollutant detectors with associated software for response coordinators. These services should allow decision-making without human intervention in the event of a chemical risk. Two Brest based structures, ENSIETA and Brest pilotage, are the project partners for France.

Europe: civil protection mechanism

On 5 March, the European Commission adopted a communication on reinforcing the European Union's response capacity in the event of a natural or man-made disaster. An action plan should be implemented by the end of 2008. The project will be carried by France in its role of EU presidency. Within this context, a proposal has been made to transform the "Monitoring and Information Centre" (MIC) under the Environment DG into an operational centre and to reinforce it with backup resources.

New Caledonia: training

Upon request from New Caledonia's new spill response committee, whose first meeting was held on 24 January, two trainers from Cedre led two training sessions on oil spill response on the shoreline, from 3 to 7 March then from 10 to 14 March. The courses brought together 42 people from mining, oil, towing and consulting companies as well as a public works and services company of the New Caledonian Government and the Navy. The sessions were divided into theory in the morning and practical exercises involving deployment of the available equipment in the afternoon. The participants emphasised their appreciation of (sup)joint training and exercises with trainees from different backgrounds, liable to need to collaborate in the event of a pollution incident. The debates highlighted various areas to be worked on by the spill response committee.

EMSA: new tender

The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), which has recently published its 2008 work programme, has launched a tender for clean-up services in the Black Sea (see Newsletter n° 141) and the North Sea. The submission of tenders proposing a "group" of vessels of which one or more could be mobilised is encouraged. The deadline for application submissions is 29 April. The specifications are available on the website www.emsa.europa.eu, in the "Procurement" section, "Invitation to apply", "2008 Vessel Tender: EMSA/Neg/03/2008".

OMI: OPRC/HNS technical group

The 7th meeting of IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) OPRC/HNS technical group was held from 25 to 28 March 2008 in Southampton upon the invitation of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. The meeting brought together 75 representatives of 26 countries and 7 international organisations. Cedre was particularly involved in the work of this group, mainly dedicated to preparing or revising guides or manuals and training courses. The group's president Mark Meza (US Coastguard) presented the Working group's report to the MEPC, whose 57th session was held in London from 31 March to 4 April 2008.

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