



N° 167 E - News from April 2009

Fire in Cedre's laboratory

On Sunday 29 April at 10:57 am, the infrared intruder alarm alerted our surveillance company. Ten minutes later, the security guard on duty arrived onsite, discovered that a fire had started in the laboratory and alerted the fire brigade. Some twenty-odd fire officers began to fight the fire at 11:15 am and rapidly extinguishing it. Despite this rapid response, there is considerable damage. A freezer, two refrigerators and all the samples they contained, representing two months of experiments on living animals in Cedre's greenhouse, were entirely burnt out. All the electronic equipment in the laboratory will have to be replaced or at least decontaminated, including a brand-new gas phase chromatograph/mass spectrometer. The walls, floors and ceilings need to be completely replaced.

The first floor concrete slab stood up to the fire, but the first fire door leading to the stairs did not. The smoke therefore poured up the stairs, to the response centre, blackening the offices on the first floor. The offices of the Emergency Response, Research and Development, Contingency Planning and Spill Follow-up Departments are therefore now temporarily out of use. The other fire doors thankfully protected the conference room and the north wing of the building, where the offices of the Management, Administration and Finance, Training and Information Departments are located.

The electricity was only re-established after 24 hours, and the heating and internet connection after 48 hours. It will take several weeks to return to normal functioning, as activities are currently very disrupted. The activity of our laboratory will be severely affected for several months. Our response capacity in the event of a spill nevertheless remains intact. Our personnel, familiar with emergency situations, are mobilised in order to restore relative normality as quickly as possible. Following various surveys (the fire appears to have begun in the electrics of a refrigerator), clean-up operations by specialised companies began on Monday 27 in the afternoon.

In short

TRAINING

- ▶ From 6th to 10th, session 2 of the crisis management course for the Algerian company STH (Newsletter 166), 22 participants.
- ▶ Afternoon of 30th, "aerial observation" course for 6 student pilot officers in the naval aviation.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Cedre's 30th anniversary

Thirty years ago, following the oil spill caused by the *Amoco Cadiz*, Cedre came into being. To mark this event, an **Open Day will be held on 19 June** with a full programme including demonstrations, equipment deployment, a photo exhibition, a competition...

HOT OFF THE PRESS

- ▶ Editions Quae has recently published a work entitled "Et si le littoral allait jusqu'à la mer !", a reflection by Alain Merckelbagh on the shoreline management policy. Order on line at www.quae.com (352 pages - 16 x 24 cm - Price 30 €)



Fire brigade response



Damaged chromatograph



Inside the laboratory

Emergency response

Several spills required assistance from the Emergency Response Department: a leak of gasoline at the fuel station of the marina of Moulin-Blanc (Brest) while filling the tank, a member of Cedre's Pilot Response and Training team was sent onsite; a spill of herbicides (SURFLAN) into river in the Aube area resulting in fish mortality; a fire in a farm barn in the Indre area with a risk of ammonitrates being reached. Several information requests were made, including queries relating to a potential release of ethylene by a gas-carrier in the Mediterranean, the elimination of gas canisters collected over the years on a section of the south Finistère shoreline and regulations on the transport of dangerous goods. Météo France's drift model MOTHY was activated several times. Finally, within the framework the recent EMSA-CEFIC-Cedre convention (Mar-ICE), Cedre participated in an activation exercise launched by MRCC Dublin.

Interspill conference-exhibition

With nearly 700 confirmed participants, exhibitors and visitors so far, the conference-exhibition Interspill 2009, due to be held in Marseille from 12 to 14 May, is set to be the event of the year. If you have not yet registered, all the necessary information is available on the website www.interspill.com, where you will also find the programme, together with abstracts of the conferences and poster presentations to be given, as well as the full text of a white paper entitled "Are HNS spills more dangerous than oil spills?" which will act as a guiding thread throughout the event.

Demonstrations at sea

As a prelude to the conference-exhibition Interspill, from 12 to 14 May in Marseille, SYCOPOL, in collaboration with the French Navy, Marseille Marine Fire Battalion, the Bouches-du-Rhône Fire Brigade and the berthing company of Marseille-Fos, will hold demonstrations on Prado north beach on Monday 11 from 2 pm. These demonstrations are to include the deployment of at-sea response equipment, coastal protection means and on land clean-up worksites. The programme is as follows: 2 pm – 2:30 pm: welcome of participants, Prado north beach; 2:30 pm – 6 pm: demonstrations at sea; 3 pm - 6 pm: demonstrations on land and on water. For more information, please contact MERCLEAN on +33(0)4 42 18 02 18.

"Grenelle de la Mer" summit

The French Minister of Ecology, Energy, Sustainable Development and Land Planning announced, on 27 February 2009, the organisation of a summit entitled "Grenelle de la Mer", an opportunity for widespread national reflection on the sea and shoreline. The work is divided into 4 simultaneously conducted work groups, whose reports will be summarised to provide a basis for a national forum in June. The Director of *Cedre* is taking part in work group 1 on the theme "The precarious meeting of sea and land" and will also contribute to the work of group 2 entitled "Between threats and potentials, a fragile sea and promise of the future".

Europe: EMSA pollution report

The EMSA 2008 report on its pollution preparedness and response activities is now available. This 35-page document includes a chapter on operational assistance (network of stand-by oil spill response vessels, CleanSeaNet satellite service, support to coastal States), a chapter on co-operation and co-ordination and a chapter on information (including the establishment of the Mar-ICE network).

Spain: first judgment for the *Prestige*

The judge of the Court of Corcubion submitted her conclusions to the Supreme Court of Justice of Corcubion on 20 March: she charges the captain of the *Prestige*, the chief mechanic and the first lieutenant of an offense against the environment, and rejects the accusations made against the director of the Merchant Navy, based on the conclusion that moving the vessel away did not constitute an aggravating factor for the risk generated by the situation.

Lebanon: a new angle

The Lebanese Daily Star published an article on 15 April expressing a very different view from that of the majority since the bombing of the Jiyeh power plant. The author puts into perspective the spill of 15,000 tonnes of oil due to the bombing (a figure far lower than estimations given at the time) against the 3,000 tonnes of solid waste with a high heavy metal content and the half million cubic metres of untreated waste waters, rich in bacteria, certain pathogenic, that the country releases on a daily basis into its coastal waters, despite the existence of some fifty-odd wastewater treatment plants, most of which are out of use.

Forum in China

An engineer from the Training Department was sent to Qingdao, China from 20 to 23 April, where she ran 3 training sessions as part of the IOC/WESTPAC International Training Workshop on Monitoring Techniques and Emergency Response of Marine Oil Spills. This workshop was organised by the First Institute of Oceanography (Qingdao) and funded by the Sub-commission for the West Pacific of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (UNESCO), KORDI (Korean Ocean Research and Development Institute), FIO and CKJORC (China-Korea Joint Ocean Research Center). It brought together around 30 participants from 12 different countries. Our colleague also participated in the Yellow Sea Forum, a Sino-Korean exchange forum dedicated this year to marine oil pollution, in which all the participants of the IOC/WESTPAC training workshop took part. The research presented at the forum related to real case studies, monitoring techniques and bioremediation after an oil spill.

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