



Cedre NEWSLETTER

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Emergency response

During February, the Emergency Response Department was called upon four shipping accidents.

From the 11th, the *Cedre* response centre concentrated its efforts on the case of the *Sichem Osprey*, a chemical tanker transporting foodstuffs as well as a cargo of 10,500 tonnes of xylene (flammable, toxic solvent) which had grounded the previous day on Clipperton Island in the Pacific Ocean, 1,300 km of the coast of Mexico.

On 22 February, *Cedre* was informed of an accident involving the container carrier *Angel'n*, off Saint Lucia in the Caribbean. In liaison with our onsite delegate, the cargo manifest was analysed in order to identify the hazardous substances among the 300 containers onboard and to examine the risk represented by the 104 tonnes of bunker fuel.

An inquiry was made to the response centre, on 23rd February, concerning the behaviour of batteries submerged in seawater, in the middle of the Atlantic, following a water influx in the hold of a container ship.

The main incident dealt with by the response centre, during the last week of February, was related to an oil spill in Italy. On 19 February, a tug lost engine power and hit the container ship *Strauss*, in the exit channel in the port of Genoa. This collision caused two breaches around twenty centimetres long in the hull, level with a bunker tank. The leak was controlled within two hours, but 180 tonnes of IFO 500 had time to escape. The Italian authorities mobilised considerable at sea response means and organised surveillance overflights.

In short

TRAINING

► From 21st to 23rd, as part of the Europe / Egypt twinning (Newsletters n° 169 and 176), training course on spill preparedness and response on Lake Nasser, Aswan, 25 participants

► On 10th, as part of the "Captain" training course, a half-day of marine pollution response training at the Merchant Navy training school in Saint-Malo, 6 participants

MEETINGS / SYMPOSIUMS

► From 1st to 5th: working visit of a representative of Transport Canada on the theme of HNS spills. Upon this occasion, several meetings with some of *Cedre's* French partners were organised as well as an aerial surveillance flight on the Polmar 3 plane.



Recovery operations in the Mediterranean - © Cedre

On 23 February, the French maritime authorities for the Mediterranean was alerted by the Italian authorities who wished to activate the RAMOGEPOL plan (cooperation agreement between Italy, Monaco and France on spill response and salvage at sea) so that their vessels could continue to respond to the pollution which had just reached French waters. A crisis centre was activated at the *Préfecture maritime*. An expert from *Ceppol*, appointed as onsite response operations coordinator, and an expert from *Cedre* were mobilised. The many overflights and drift predictions carried out helped to analyse the progress and evolution of two large trails of pollution, some 40 km long by 1 to 2 km wide, mainly comprising large areas of sheen with areas of accumulations of thicker patches and patties. These slicks, initially detected south of Cap-d'Ail and Monaco, some 20 km off

the coast, progressed south-westwards as far as Cap Camarat. The OSRV *Ailette*, supported by three other vessels, conducted recovery operations at sea but the pollutant proved to be very fragmented and scattered, making recovery difficult. A major coastal surveillance effort was also set up in the coastal waters and on land. The land authorities and local communities were alerted but to date no arrivals on the shoreline have been reported. Since 28 February, aerial observations have detected very little pollutant and the surveillance effort has been cut back.

Total Refining-Marketing contingency plans

An engineer from the Contingency Planning Department took part in technical visits to the oil depots of Lorient, Nanterre and Gennevilliers in order to contribute to groundwork on spill response strategies. These visits are part of the second phase of the implementation of Spill Contingency Plans (validation and control of equipment installed, training and full-scale exercise) in 2010 on six sites under the French Logistics Department of the Total R&M branch.

Information Day for communities bordering the Bay of Brest

Upon request by the community of Daoulas, *Cedre* played host, on 18 February, to a delegation of 10 representatives of the communities bordering the Bay of Brest and of Armorique regional nature park for an information day on the responsibilities of local authorities in terms of accidental water pollution. The morning's meeting was the chance to review the responsibilities of mayors in this field, to present the tools available to them and to focus in particular on risk assessment, the establishment of a local response plan and the French guide for local councillors produced by *Cedre*. In the afternoon, demonstrations of light-weight equipment for response to small-scale spills in ports or inland waters were organised.

AMPERA- France: progress meeting

A meeting was held at *Cedre* on 11 February to review the progress of work on the 4 Ampera projects for which the participation of French partners is partially funded by the ANR PRECODD 2008 programme, within the framework of the Ampera France project coordinated by *Cedre*. As part of the project *Drifter*, in which *Cedre* is taking part alongside Spanish and Portuguese partners, experiments have been conducted in the coastal waters of Galicia on the use of marker buoys and tracers to monitor pollution. Buoys will once again be lent by *Ceppol* for a new experiment programme planned for March. *Cedre* is also providing its contribution to the Ecoraid project piloted by the University of Exeter, which, based on previous European projects (Face-it, Pragma, Respil), is expected to shortly publish its recommendations on environmental impact assessment using biological methods. As for the project *Oilbeach*, it addresses the issue of oil buried on beaches due to sediment movements. The University of Montpellier's Gladys laboratory contributed its experience of modelling these movements and took part in measurement and sampling campaigns on two Galician beaches affected by the *Prestige* pollution. Finally, with support from the University of Bordeaux and the *Institut Pasteur* in Lille, *Ifremer* participated in the *Toxprof* project which mainly involves Norwegian (NIVA, University of Oslo) and British (CEFAS) partners. *Toxprof* aims to toxicologically profile oils and HNS transported by sea, mainly through effects-directed identification of chemical compounds by experimental work on bioassays and biomarkers. A meeting held on 22 February at *Ifremer* between the different partners confirmed that the project was progressing well and was on track to come up with recommendations for 2011.

DEThERPOLMAR: closure meeting

Cedre, *Cetmef* and *Ifremer* (on behalf of ANR) were invited by the *Detherpolmar* project partners to take part in the final meeting of this ANR project (PRECODD programme), held on 4 February 2010 in the premises of TREFLE laboratory in Bordeaux. This project, in which the companies Thermoconcept (project coordinator) and BEM as well as the shipping company Socatra took part, highlighted the potentialities and limits, of the use of infrared thermography to guide spill response vessels. Thanks to the development of a tool to reduce the impact of platform movements and considerable development work on image processing, an operational system was able to be established, which remains to be validated on a real spill or in experimental conditions. Several opportunities have been evoked for the continuation of the project, geared towards producing a marketable product.

Italy: oil spill on the Po River

On 23 February, at around 4 am, malicious hands opened then broke the valves of three tanks at a former Italian refinery, now an oil depot, in Villasanta, near Monza. Between 1,000 and 2,500 m³ of different types of oil were released into the Lambro, a tributary to the River Po, and were carried downstream, despite emergency boom deployment. When the slicks arrived at the confluence, they began to travel down the Po, Italy's longest river (650 km). After having covered almost 200 km, they reached, on 25 February, the region of Parma, a rich agricultural basin, with many water intakes. Booms deployed at Cremona helped to recover some of the oil, thus protecting natural sites and "valli" (fish farming ponds and water fowl hunting reserves) in the lower Po valley from potentially dramatic pollution. An inquiry has been opened to identify the parties responsible for what has been qualified as an act of "environmental terrorism".

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