



N° 179 E – News from April 2010

Emergency response

Two events kept the Emergency Response Department busy throughout the past month.

In mid-April, the marina in Martigues-Jonquières faced the arrival of weathered heavy oil, possibly due to dredging work being carried out nearby. The harbour, located south of the Etang de Berre, accommodates some 300 boats. A technical adviser from Cedre's EPIF (Pilot Response and Training Team) was sent onsite to assist responders and provide advice on response equipment and strategies.

From 20 April, the accident on the *Deepwater Horizon* oil rig, which suffered a blowout and then sank in the Gulf of Mexico, triggered attentive daily monitoring of the situation, involving analyses and simulations to determine the risks and potential consequences of this major accident (see article below).

A dozen enquiries, requests for remote assistance and for drift simulations of pollutant at sea were also dealt with by the department.

Gulf of Mexico: oil rig sinks

On 20 April, the oil rig *Deepwater Horizon* suffered a blowout, in which 4 people were injured and 11 reported missing. The rig sank 2 days later 80 km off the coast of Louisiana. The well began to leak directly into the ocean, releasing an estimated 800 m³ of crude oil every day and generating a surface slick, spreading further every hour. A vast mobilisation of response resources was rapidly organised. By 30 April, 75 OSRVs were working onsite, 66 km of floating boom had been deployed, 528 m³ of dispersants spread and 3,230 m³ of an oil/water mixture had been recovered. Despite efforts, the first patches of oil began to reach the mouth of the Mississippi on the evening of the 29th. Fishing has been banned in federal waters and four coastal States bordering the Gulf of Mexico (Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida) have declared a state of emergency.

In short

TRAINING

► From 12th to 14th, as part of the Europe / Egypt twinning (Newsletters n° 169, 171, 176, 177), training course on spill preparedness and response on the Nile and Lake Nasser, Cairo, 23 participants

► From 26th to 28th, first training session on "Aerial observation of pollution at sea", for aviation personnel in the French Navy and Customs, 17 participants

PUBLICATIONS

► New laboratory: to complete the article in Newsletter 178, a few [images](#) looking back over the different phases of operations: from the fire to the completion of the new premises

► Information Bulletin n°26, focusing on "Cedre's 30th anniversary", has just been released. It can be [downloaded](#) from our website.



MOTHY model: version 3.1 now operational

The Météo France Marine and Oceanography branch's Forecast Department informs us that a new update to the MOthy system was released on 30 March 2010, **MOTHY 3**. It offers two improvements. On the one hand, collaboration between Mercator Océan and Météo France resulted in the definition of a new method of integrating currents from the Mercator model, which more accurately interprets the transfer of wind energy into the oceanic mixed layer. The use of results from Mersea experiments (deployment of floating buoys) conducted in the Mediterranean in 2007 shows that accuracy has improved by around 10%. On the other hand, this version offers a wider range of exchange and graph formats. The prediction map therefore contains more information. The range of data input formats has also been extended to encompass all floating objects, including **SAR** targets.

Guadeloupe POLMAR training

Upon request by the Guadeloupe Public work Directorate (DDE), a shoreline spill response training course was organised by Cedre, from 26 to 29 April 2010, on the DDE's premises in Pointe-à-Pitre. The 26 participants were from various organisations: DDE, fire brigade and the local government's technical services for Guadeloupe, Marie-Galante and La Désirade. This theory and practical course was preceded by a half-day information session with the councillors of coastal communities. This opportunity was taken to present the mayor's responsibilities and his role in the event of pollution on different scales. Advice on spill preparedness was provided to help them to prepare themselves to face such events. Finally, a discussion session was held to answer all the questions bordering on the issue of "accidental pollution". Some twenty-odd councillors of coastal communities in Basse-Terre and Grande-Terre were present.

France: contingency plan for the *Compagnie Pétrochimique de Berre*

The *Compagnie Pétrochimique de Berre* (CPB), previously owned by the Shell group, is now an affiliate of the LyondellBasell group. This change of ownership has various consequences for the company in terms of spill response organisation. This, along with the feedback from the spill CPB recently faced, made it crucial for the site to revise its organisation, response strategies and equipment to be implemented in the event of a spill. LyondellBasell contracted *Cedre* to draw up its new contingency plan, for the management of oil and chemical spills occurring at the interface between the site facilities and a water body. An engineer from the Contingency Planning Department visited the company's sites and met the port authorities and various staff members involved in response, in the week beginning 19 April.

European project: ARCOPOL

The ARCOPOL project (Atlantic Regions' COastal POLLution response and preparedness), part of a European territorial cooperation effort (Interreg IVB) within the Atlantic area, was approved for funding, in 2009, by the Monitoring Committee for the Atlantic Area European Territorial Cooperation Programme 2007-2013. This project aims to further the results of the previous project EROCIPS (Newsletters 148, 149, 174) through a similar partnership. ARCOPOL is set to work on the themes related to maritime safety which have so far not been addressed, in particular HNS spills, the problems of compensation and the allocation of damages (mainly ecological) as well as the involvement of sea professionals (fishermen). In late 2009, *Cedre* was contracted through a tender by the two French regions of the Atlantic area involved in ARCOPOL (Brittany and Aquitaine) to provide technical assistance for the thematic workshops. Two technical agents from *Cedre* therefore took part in the third project coordination meeting and in a workshop entitled "New tools for better planning, response management and damage assessment in HNS, inert and oil spills" held at EMSA on 29 and 30 April.

Spillcon 2010

The organisers reported some 475 participants from 43 countries at the conference Spillcon 2010, held in Melbourne, Australia, from 12 to 16 April. Several recent accidents in Australian waters no doubt helped to attract both local and international participants, and, in particular, the main spill response industry stakeholders, seeking potential markets to fill any gaps which had become apparent through these spills. The IMO boosted the presence of representatives of the South Pacific Islands, by holding a working meeting in Melbourne, thus compensating for the reduced participation of South-East Asian States. The pollution caused by the eruption of a well on the offshore oil field of *Montara*, lasting 10 weeks, was the focus of two specific sessions and several other presentations, which highlighted the major monitoring, observation, measurement, sampling and analysis programme, for which some of the results are still to be processed. The strategic, logistical and technical aspects, as well as media-related issues, relating to the remote location of the spill area were also emphasised. Arrivals of heavy fuel oil on the beaches of a national park following the incident involving the container ship *Pacific Adventurer* were also problematic in terms of access to polluted sites and evacuation of collected waste. Thankfully Australia was luckier with the incident involving the coal carrier *Shen Neng 1*, refloated on the morning of the conference opening after grounding on the Great Barrier of Reef. *Cedre* presented a conference on the evolution of at sea recovery over the past 10 years on the final day, which gathered together a vast majority of speakers from outside of the region. All the presentations are now available on the [Spillcon website](#). It is now over to the organisers of the [International Oil Spill Conference](#), which will be held in Portland, USA, in May 2011.

IPIECA Oil Spill Working Group

As usual during major spill industry conferences, the IPIECA Working Group took the opportunity to meet in Melbourne, alongside Spillcon, thus also promoting the participation of oil industry representatives in the conference. However, the European companies were poorly represented at this meeting which particularly focused on examining the IPIECA publications currently under review or to be reviewed in the near future. The presentation of IPIECA/IMO joint activities as part of the Global Initiative, which aim to improve States' preparedness in terms of spill response, provided the opportunity to consider such needs in the region from South Asia to the West Pacific. The review of emerging issues highlighted pollution problems related to the development of biofuels.

[Unsubscribe from the Cedre Newsletter](#)

Think green - don't print out your emails!

[Legal information](#)

[Contact us](#)