



## Cedre NEWSLETTER

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by the Centre of Documentation, Research and  
Experimentation on Accidental Water Pollution

### N° 195 E – News from October 2011

#### Emergency response

In addition to various requests unrelated to real incidents, October was marked by the participation in an **ICE** exercise (ethyl acrylate) but moreover by the accident involving the Liberian-flagged container ship **Rena** in New Zealand.

In the early hours of the morning on 5 October, the ship grounded some twenty kilometres off the coast of Tauranga with 1,370 containers and 1,700 tonnes of fuel oil onboard. It is currently sitting on the Astrolabe Reef, renowned for its flora and fauna (many colonies of dolphins, whales, seals and penguins). Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) declared the accident a Tier 3 emergency, the highest level of pollution risk.

The day after the incident, dispersant spraying operations, following efficiency tests on this type of pollutant, began on the oil around the ship. Supplies of booms and response equipment arrived onsite to be deployed. An exclusion zone was set up around the grounded ship and pollutant recovery operations began at sea on 9 October. The first arrivals of oil were discovered on 10 October and in total 60 km of shoreline was oiled. An engineer from *Cedre* was sent onsite on 21 October, upon invitation by Maritime New Zealand, in an observatory and advisory capacity.

The authorities currently estimate that around 360 tonnes of fuel oil have been released at sea, while the remainder of the initial 1,700 tonnes is being pumped from the wreck.

Shoreline clean-up operations are currently in progress and particular attention is being paid to protected species. The containers do not appear to be posing major problems, as only 11 of them have been identified as potentially hazardous.

#### In short

##### VISITS

- ▶ On 4th, 16 officers from the Turkish Undersecretariat for Maritime Affairs
- ▶ On 7th, a delegation from Florida Gulf Coast University

##### TRAINING

- ▶ On 4th: session 2 of the basic **CEPPOL** pollution response course, 10 participants
- ▶ From 3rd to 7th: session 4 of the practical shoreline response training course, 18 participants
- ▶ From 10th to 13th: session 2 of the maritime pollution crisis management course, 11 participants
- ▶ From 17th to 21st: session 5 of the practical shoreline response training course, 15 participants

##### DATES FOR THE DIARY

- ▶ **Arcopol** project final conference, Vigo, 9 and 10 November

##### CEDRE PUBLICATIONS

- ▶ Operational guide

"**Conteneurs et colis perdus en mer**" - 73 p.

This guide provides advice and recommendations to manage risks related to the loss of containers at sea. Soon available in English.



#### EGEMP meeting

On 5 and 6 October, the Italian Coastguard hosted the 15th meeting of the European Group of Experts on Satellite Monitoring of Sea-based Oil Pollution (EGEMP) in Rome. This meeting gathered experts in this field from several member States and European organisations. It was the opportunity to exchange information on recent events and current scientific and industrial projects, as well as to focus on the working group's future and the desired changes to its mandate. *Cedre* was represented at this meeting by its Director.

#### Preparatory meeting for the winter season of State action at sea

On 12 October, the French Navy organised an information and discussion meeting at Paris Military School for maritime authority agents involved in State action at sea, in preparation for the winter season, during which the risk of incidents at sea is higher. This meeting was the chance to review background evolutions, in particular in terms of regulations and equipment, and to exchange experiences in the case of recent incidents. In addition to French Navy participants, including **CEPPOL**, several of the Navy's partners in State action at sea were present. *Cedre* was represented by its Director and the head of the Emergency Response Department.

#### Visit from the Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

On 27 October, His Excellency Mr Duong Chi Dung, Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in France, visited *Cedre*, accompanied by several staff members and Vietnamese press correspondents in France. This visit was part of a wider programme to set up cooperation between economic players in Brest and their Vietnamese counterparts, as well as to prepare for Vietnam's participation in the maritime festival "Tonnerres de Brest 2012".

## Visit by Mrs Christine Boutin

On 13 October, *Cedre* received a visit from Mrs Christine Boutin, former Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs, and a declared candidate in the 2012 presidential election. The theme of her visit to Brest was the environment. *Cedre* was one of the organisations visited, alongside other stakeholders in the field.

## AMOP 2011

From 4 to 6 October, the 34th Arctic and Marine Oilspill Program (**AMOP**) Technical Seminar was held in Banff (Canada). The aim of this event is to promote discussions based on thematic presentations on oil spill response in Arctic environments. Two agents from *Cedre* took part in the seminar, with notably a presentation on the study of the behaviour of chemicals at sea using the organisation's experimental means (floating cells). In addition to the themes addressed annually, this edition was the opportunity for a session entirely devoted to the shoreline clean-up operations implemented and still in progress locally following the spill in the **Gulf of Mexico** in April 2010.

## GI WACAF 2011

The 2011 Regional Conference and Workshop organised within the framework of the Global Initiative for West, Central and Southern Africa were held in Lagos from 10 to 14 October. One of *Cedre's* Deputy Managers took part in this event as a principal consultant. See [here](#) for details.

## Arctic Oil Spill Conference

On 4 and 5 October, *Cedre* took part in the Arctic Oil Spill Conference in London, which aimed to review the question of oil pollution in the Arctic.

## Spill response exercise in Gabon

On 20 September, Total Gabon organised an incident management exercise in Port-Gentil, which aimed to test and validate its oil spill contingency plan, revised during the summer with support from *Cedre's* Contingency Planning team. *Cedre's* project leader took part in preparing the scenario for this exercise, then in running it and in coordinating feedback.

## October training courses

This month, over and above the 4 training courses run as part of the annual training schedule (see "In short" section), *Cedre* was involved in 5 training programmes. From 10 to 14, a practical training course on response in inland waterways was run for **ANVN** (formerly **VNF**), for 5 agents. The hands-on exercises were conducted using equipment from *Cedre* brought on site. From 17 to 19, in the run-up to the departmental **POLMAR-Land** exercise for Southern Corsica, 27 participants from local authorities, ports and State services took part in the **ORSEC** / **POLMAR-Land** training course organised by the **DDTM** for Southern Corsica. On 24, *Cedre* contributed to the "Emergency veterinary medicine" training day by ONIRIS in Nantes, followed by the **ORSEC** / **POLMAR-Land** training course from 25 to 27, this time organised by the Verdon **POLMAR** stockpile, for the local authorities and State services of Gironde and Charente-Maritime. On 27 and 28, 12 participants received practical training on oil spill response on land and in inland waters held in Vert-le-Grand. *Cedre* ran this course on behalf of Total EP France.

## Science Festival

The 20th edition of the Science Festival, held each year under the auspices of the French Ministry of Higher Education and Research, took place across France from 12 to 16 October. It was the opportunity for the general public to meet scientists on the theme of chemistry. In Brest, *Cedre* took part in the event at the Faculty of Science alongside more than twenty other organisations, where it ran a stand entitled "Oil and the Sea". The festival took place in a fun and friendly atmosphere, and the first figures indicate a rise in participation compared to the previous year, with some 3,500 visitors.

## Discharge of the captain of the *Tian Du Feng* (cont.)

On 20 September 2011, the high court of Brest delivered its verdict, discharging the captain of the *Tian Du Feng*, accused of deliberate pollution (**Newsletter n°192**). The court concluded that doubt remained, despite photographic evidence provided by the French Customs. Vigipol, a civil claimant in the case, contests the decision and is appealing, on the basis that since the *Traquair* case (**Newsletter n° 49**) in 1996, photographic evidence has been accepted, setting a legal precedent.

## Deepwater Horizon: a minor victory for BP

A sum of 4 billion dollars to contribute to the costs of the **oil spill** in the Gulf of Mexico is to be paid to BP by the US firm Anadarko, co-owner of the Macondo well. The Japanese firm Mitsui (also part owner of the well) already paid BP one billion dollars in May. These payments, which will form part of the 20 billion dollar compensation fund, mark the settlement of all claims between BP and Anadarko. Furthermore, the US authorities have recently granted BP permission to resume drilling in the Gulf of Mexico, but have sanctioned the group, along with Halliburton and Transocean, through a series of violations issued by the new Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE). In total, around 15 incidents of non-compliance were issued and are likely to lead to hefty fines.