



N° 229 E – News from November 2014

Emergency response

Over and above a few enquiries relating to pollution observation and reporting procedures and the possibility of dating a spill, November was marked by two on-site assignments by Cedre agents. On 9th November, the torrential rain which lashed down in the south of France (locally up to 160 mm in a few hours) caused a storm tank to reach maximum capacity leading to an overflow of oily water into a channel of the Etang de Berre (Var, near Marseille). The permanent containment system composed of booms already in place was immediately reinforced, enabling the personnel mobilised by the operator to recover the majority of the oil (estimated at 5 m³). Oil was however observed on the lagoon and some was washed up on the shores of Châteauneuf-les-Martigues (Var), calling for detailed surveys to be conducted and clean-up sites set up.

In another incident, on 22nd November an agent from Cedre was mobilised upon request by EDF following a heavy fuel oil spill caused by a local company. EDF agents reported observations of fuel oil mixed with plant debris on the banks of the Arc river (Savoie). The quantity spilt was estimated at between 10 and 20 m³, released into the river upstream of the dam at Saint-Martin-la-Porte (Savoie). This response was characterised by the specificity of the environment, with sites spread across two valleys, and of the hydroelectric power production facilities (dam, pipe, flow regulation...).

In short

DATES FOR THE DIARY

► 20th [Cedre Information Day](#), 10th March 2015, Paris La Défense.

[Registration](#) is now open!

► [Interspill 2015](#), 24 - 26th March 2015, Amsterdam, Netherlands.



TRAINING

► "Chemical spill response principles" course, 24-26 Nov., 15 participants

40th Strategic Committee meeting

The members of Cedre's Strategic Committee met in Brest (Finistère) on 14th November for the committee's 40th session. Following an opening discussion on the implementation of a strategic analysis of Cedre's medium-term objectives, the meeting was mainly devoted to the presentation of 45 proposals for the 2015 technical programme. Alongside the permanent activities and the continuation of projects in progress, a few new research projects and the production of a few new operational guides were put forward in concordance with the priorities previously defined by the committee members. A review of Cedre's activities over the past 6 months gave rise to exchanges on the observed and expected evolution of certain activities, including for instance the confirmed difficulty in developing actions in the field of HNS spills.

12th Technical Day

Cedre's 12th Technical Day, held the day before the Strategic Committee meeting, was the opportunity for the Research Department and a few of its external partners to present their ecotoxicology work applied to accidental pollution and to discuss future prospects. The speakers included representatives of Ifremer, [UBO](#) and [IUEM](#), as well as two PhD students at Cedre, one of whom defended his thesis last spring. This meeting, intended for the Strategic Committee members together with a wider audience, gave rise to constructive debates between Cedre's team and its partners. This confirmed interest in pursuing research in this field and demonstrated the benefit drawn from this partnership between teams with varying skills and approaches.

In situ burning trial at INERIS

As part of our work on in situ burning (ISB), Cedre conducted an experimental study at the [INERIS](#) fire test gallery. These trials were performed partly under the 2014 technical programme and partly under [Arctic JIP](#). Various quantities of a crude oil were released into a large volume of salt water and the burn efficiency was measured after having recovered the floating burn residues at the end of the trial. INERIS, having provided its facilities and personnel, took advantage of these trials to study the gases present in the smoke cloud.

Training course for the ports of Paris

From 5th to 7th November, Cedre ran a crisis management training course in Brest for 6 representatives of the Paris ports. This course was a sequel to an initial practical course run in 2011 on oil spill response in waterways. Since this first course, the ports of Paris have purchased equipment and introduced new response procedures.

Training course for Total Exploration & Production Congo

From 10th to 13th November, two Cedre engineers were present in Pointe-Noire in the Congo to run a spill response training course for Total E&P Congo's offshore teams as part of the Moho Phase 1 bis development project for the MOHO Nord licence area. The aim of this training course, also involving an exercise, was to test the Total E&P Congo Oil Spill Contingency Plan Bridging Document, developed to respond to any spills caused by drilling or related activities. This was also the opportunity for the main agents involved in on-shore and offshore crisis units to familiarise themselves with their duties and the main strategic frameworks.

POLMAR plan in Mauritania

From 17th to 20th November, Cedre ran a workshop in Nouakchott on Mauritania's oil and HNS spill contingency plan (POLMAR plan). This workshop, organised by the Merchant Navy Directorate with support from Tullow Oil, began with two days of lectures followed by a one-day crisis management exercise and an equipment demonstration for personnel working for administrations and organisations involved with the Mauritanian POLMAR plan. This was a follow-up to a first workshop run from 27th to 31st October on the establishment of a national dispersant use policy.

Seminar in Tromsø (Norway)

On 25th and 26th November, Cedre attended a seminar on the fate and toxicity of black carbon contained in smoke within Arctic marine ecosystems. Black carbon is an unwanted by-product of the combustion of many sources of fuel and is released during the burning of oil slicks. The northward expansion of the oil and gas industry and the increase in related pollution risks provided the incentive for an assessment project on the potential impact of black carbon deposits on ice-infested waters. This seminar, held in Tromsø (Norway), was organised by the [Norwegian Polar Institute](#) and the company [Akvaplan-niva](#) and aimed to review knowledge in this field and appoint a group of experts. It was held at the [Fram Center](#), which gathers together 20 scientific institutes involved in multidisciplinary research projects on the Arctic environment.

SPRES project: final conference

The final conference of the European project [SPRES](#) (*Oil Spill Prevention and Response at Local Scales*) (Newsletters [205](#), [211](#), [216](#), [220](#)) was held in Santander (Spain) on 7th and 8th October. One of the days was devoted to the public presentation of the project results and in particular the web platform via which local partners in charge of spill response for the 4 study sites can use the oil drift forecast modelling tool coupled with the risk assessment results (pollution sources and site vulnerability). The head of [Sasemar](#)'s Santander Coordination Centre as well as representatives of the Santander and Tarragone (Catalonia) port authorities presented the spill response resources and organisation within their sites.

Perenco Cameroon: 2014 exercise

Perenco Cameroon invited Cedre to take part in organising and running a large-scale exercise during the last week of November in Douala and in the Moudi field. This initiative came following the completion of the [OSCPs](#) for the firm's four offshore sites in September 2014. The exercise was preceded by 3 training/awareness-raising sessions intended to improve knowledge of the content of these OSCP's and to use the tools available to crisis management units. Feedback from this exercise was very constructive; the Mutual Aid assistance agreement between Cameroon oil companies was able to be tested, pinpointing documentary and organisational adjustments to be made, as well as the need to reposition certain response resources.

A year on: Honolulu molasses spill

The company Matson, responsible for a 1,400-tonne molasses spill in the port of Honolulu in September 2013 ([Newsletter n°216](#)), has agreed, in addition to covering clean-up costs, to pay out \$1 million, comprising a \$400,000 fine and a \$600,000 community service payment (divided equally between the Waikiki Aquarium and Sustainable Coastlines Hawaii). This spill killed 26,000 fish and many species of coral by suffocation. It also highlighted the lack of a spill plan and oversight of the underground pipes.