

N° 241 E – News from December 2015



The Cedre team has had the pleasure of accompanying you throughout 2015. We wish you all the best for 2016 - may it be a year full of promise and success.

In short

Hot off the press

The operational guide on skimmers specially designed for spill response to recover floating oil (currently only available in French).



Check out our 2016 training course catalogue guidelines.

21st Cedre Information Day

"The involvement of volunteers in oil spill response"

20th April 2016 in Paris La Défense.

Sign up now!

[Provisional programme](#) and [Registration form](#).

Emergency response

December was a busy month for Cedre's emergency response team. Advice was requested from the DDTM for the Manche area after a tank of diesel fell onto a pontoon in the port of Granville, releasing several hundred litres of the substance. During an NRBC (Nuclear, Radiological, Biological and Chemical) exercise, the Finistère fire brigade requested information on the behaviour of arsine in the aquatic environment. Having recorded a high level of PAHs in a water supply, a water distribution company based in Eastern France called upon our expertise to interpret the results of the tests carried out. The local police for Talmont-Saint-Hilaire in the French department of Vendée requested the analysis of oil samples from a past spill, from which oil had been uncovered due to a receding dune. A representative of the Lower Normandy Regional Health Board contacted our duty engineer to enquire about detection and analysis procedures for potential traces of slurry in a well, used for various purposes, liable to have been contaminated. Cedre was informed of printer ink cartridges having washed up on the southern shores of the department of Finistère. The duty engineers were also involved in several exercises during December as part of the ICE and MAR-ICE networks, upon request by Norway and Finland. Cedre activated the ICE focal point for the Netherlands during an exercise.

Meetings of Cedre's Board of Governors and General Assembly

The meetings of Cedre's Board of Governors and General Assembly were held on 8th December in Paris upon invitation by *Armateurs de France*. During these meetings, the 2015 revised budget and the 2016 provisional budget were approved. The general assembly voted in its representatives on the Board of Governors and the board then elected members to key positions, re-electing François Cuillandre, President of Brest Métropole, as the association's

President. The agenda also included a review of the currently ongoing process to appoint a new Director for Cedre in the spring. Finally, the main conclusions of the latest meeting of the Strategic Committee, with a particular focus on Cedre's medium term strategy and the funding of its activities in 2016, were presented by the Committee's President, Frédéric Périé, from Total's Sustainable Development and Environment Division.

Training courses

Training of NASP (National Aerial Surveillance Program) crews – Montreal, Canada

From 1st to 3rd December, a trainer from Cedre ran a course, in cooperation with Cosse Consulting, on aerial observation of pollution at sea, for the Marine Aerial Reconnaissance Team (MART), composed of Transport Canada and Environment Canada staff. The aim was to present the Bonn Agreement Oil Appearance Code (which is not currently used in Canada), its scientific basis and how it is used to clamp down on illegal discharges at sea but also for operational purposes. The course was held in Montreal and was attended by 28 participants.

Maritime Experts University Diploma: As part of the French "Maritime Experts University Diploma", Cedre ran a 9-hour module on 14th and 15th December at the University of Le Havre for 6 future experts.

New course: Our 2016 training course programme includes a new course held on the [Sobegi](#) premises in Lacq (Pyrénées-Atlantiques) on spill response on industrial sites (ground, gutters, drainage systems, trenches) and in surrounding areas (water courses). Please [contact](#) us for more details.

Completion of several contingency plans

December saw several contingency plans come to completion: the Côte d'Ivoire national oil spill contingency plan developed in collaboration with [CIAPOL](#), the Total Mauritius oil spill contingency plan for the facilities at Port-Louis and the environmental contingency plan for the Induslacq industrial chemical platform in cooperation with [Sobegi](#).

Offshore exercises in Cameroon

Perenco Cameroon's HSE team organised exercises combined with practical training and awareness-raising sessions on oil trawling and recovery, one of the response strategies defined in the oil spill contingency plans, at its offshore sites RdR East and Ebomé. Two engineers from Cedre assisted the company in running theory sessions and advising site managers and their teams on the deployment and use of response equipment on the water by support vessels. These exercises were the opportunity to test and validate both existing and recently acquired equipment. This was the final step in the contract initiated in July 2013 to update the company's oil spill contingency plans.

Oil pollution from the *Prestige*: verdict to be overturned?

On 29th September, the prosecutors called for the Spanish Supreme Court to overturn the verdict delivered on 13th November 2013 at the trial in La Coruña, relating to the *Prestige*, which caused the largest oil spill known to Spain in November 2002. The original verdict had given rise to widespread indignation in Spain, as the captain, chief engineer and head of the Merchant Navy were found not guilty of causing damage to the environment and protected natural areas. The prosecutor's office of La Coruña and the French State decided to take the case to the Supreme Court in 2013 to appeal the acquittals. The reversal of this verdict recently called for by the prosecutors was based on the fact that in November 2013 the court did not take account of key documents such as a handwritten note from the captain clearly indicating the ship's poor condition. The prosecutors were also seeking €4.3 million in compensation for environmental damages. We await the outcome of this legal saga which is to be delivered soon by the Supreme Court.

Exxon Valdez (US): an end to legal proceedings

26 years on from the grounding of the single hulled oil tanker *Exxon Valdez* in Prince William Sound (Alaska), the US authorities announced on 15th October 2015 that they were ending judicial action against Exxon.

This legal epic, with its twists and appeals, comprised a "reopener" consisting in an additional \$100 million pledge as part of the 1991 settlement in case of loss or decline of the flora and fauna which could not be known or anticipated at the time of the spill. Scientists have recently concluded that the flora and fauna have recovered to pre-spill levels. This return to normal thus brings this legal case to a close.

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