



The Good Oil

Issue thirteen

May 2007

Welcome to The Good Oil – an e-newsletter designed to keep people in touch with what's happening in the oil spill response (OSR) area of Maritime New Zealand. Comment/contributions/feedback are welcome and can be emailed to: steve.corbett@maritimenz.govt.nz.

Latest news

- 1) Southland Regional On-Scene Commander, Dallas Bradley, says a spill from the Korean fishing vessel *Pantas No 1* was the most significant oil spill response in Bluff Harbour since the grounding of *Tai Ping* in 2002.

Around 400 litres of viscous, black fuel oil was recovered from Bluff Harbour. Most of the oil was suctioned or soaked up using a vacuum truck and absorbent materials.



Photos from E.S.

Mr Bradley said that the initial reports from the vessel's captain that only 40-50 litres had been spilt had proved to be considerably underestimated.



“Environment Southland is overseeing the response and we are pursuing the recovery of all costs involved in the clean-up. We will be discussing the issue of prosecution with Maritime New Zealand.”

- 2) In an innovative move aimed at increasing the experience and knowledge-base of MNZ's Marine Pollution Response Service (MPRS), two of the team will have the opportunity of spending 6 months each (a total of 12 months) in Singapore.

MPRS Planning and Training Manager Rob Service left in March for a secondment with East Asia Response Limited (EARL). In return, EARL will provide an experienced equipment technician for an equivalent period who would also be capable of assisting in the delivery of training in New Zealand. Rob will be replaced in September.

EARL is a leading member of the Global Alliance, a worldwide network of marine oil spill responders who respond to oil spills and are involved with training and consultancy work.

EARL deliver training to a wide range of organisations and countries throughout the Asia-Pacific Region and were looking for an experienced oil spill trainer and responder who would be employed in their Training and Consultancy Department for the planning, delivery and coordination of International Maritime Organisation (IMO) model training courses and other special training courses.

The opportunity arose after EARL staff attended a MNZ oil spill response course in Auckland and held discussions aimed at forging a closer relationship between the two organisations.

The Oil Pollution Advisory Committee recognised the potential benefits that this type of secondment presents and endorsed this initiative wholeheartedly.

MPRS General Manager Nick Quinn says this is the first time this type of secondment has been tried by MNZ.

“The number of oil spills is declining worldwide and while this is obviously a good thing it does provide us a challenge to get hands on experience. Thanks to EARL's proactive offer the benefits for everyone will be wide ranging and wide reaching.”

- 3) A record 400 delegates attended SPILLCON 07 - The 11th environmental pollution prevention and response conference for the Asia Pacific region that was held in Perth, Australia, in March.

The MNZ delegation was led by Director Catherine Taylor and regional representatives from Canterbury, Otago, Taranaki, Northland and Bay of Plenty also attended.

The week's excellent programme included presentations, an exhibit area, a poster display and an on-water display and kicked off with a wonderful keynote address by Fiona Woods - Australia's leading plastic surgeon, who pioneered the use of 'spray-on' technology for burns victims.

She explained and promoted oft-used philosophies such as 'dare to dream' and 'don't be afraid to ask for help' in an innovative and inspiring manner. She also had a specific message about preparation for those in the oil spill response field stemming from her experience with victims of the Bali bombings.

The conference's theme was *Global, Regional, Local* and this was covered well throughout other presentations. These included a summary of the *Napoli* incident earlier this year – with particular reference and discussion around places of refuge, some on managing risks from all levels and also on meeting community expectations and developing response capacity.

MPRS's Nick Quinn and Neil Rowarth gave excellent presentations that were both well received. Nick dealt with *Exercise Hard Rock* and the modern need to "burst the traditional bubble" when planning for OSR exercises.

He talked about the extensive build-up for *Hard Rock* and the involvement of RCCNZ and Security in the scenario. He also promoted the use of real time data which helps to take exercise participants out of their comfort zones and away from a pre-determined outcome.

Neil had a tough job following previous presentations on catastrophic spills with one on an incident that wasn't even a marine oil spill (*Tasman Trader*). However he did an outstanding job on explaining the parallels between any oil-related incident and on promoting MNZ's 'can-do' attitude.

Catherine Taylor says the highlight for her was the presentation on the *MSC Napoli* incident

"It's one of those maritime incidents that will be around for a long time yet, given the circumstances of this event.

"But the fact that the chosen place of refuge was a world heritage site certainly sets a world-wide precedent for the use of places of refuge. Most commentators have however agreed that environmental damage was minimised as a result."



4) 2007 shows every inclination of being a bad one for maritime casualties.

The loss of *MSC Napoli* in January was the major casualty in global OSR news but the loss (and subsequent 'looting') of 103 containers grabbed most of the attention rather than the spilling of around 200 tonnes of oil and the oiling of several hundred birds.



Elsewhere a refrigerator ship, *Sierra Nava*, ran aground on a Spanish beach resulting in 4km of coast being oiled; *Server*, a Cypriot-registered bulk carrier ran aground and broke in two on the Norwegian coast, spilling an estimated 290 tonnes of heavy fuel oil;

Two Singapore-registered bunker tankers, *Seafalcon* and *Frontek*, collided in Singapore resulting in a 200-tonne oil spill;

The spill resulting from a container vessel *Claudel* colliding with an oil jetty is believed to be the biggest the Port of Rotterdam has ever seen after around 800 tonnes of crude leaked into the harbour;

As well as these spills a very large ro-ro, *Repubblica di Genova*, capsized alongside a dock in Antwerp, a cruise ship, *Sea Diamond*, ran onto the rocks in the Greek Islands with the loss of two passengers and an Anchor Handling Tug Supply vessel, *Bourbon Dolphin*, capsized off Shetland with the loss of eight of her Norwegian crew.

Tragic reminders of how the 'couldn't/shouldn't happen' does happen – and all the time. All the more reason to be prepared and not let your guard down.

Comms lessons

- 1) The Police faced a barrage of attention and criticism after the release of the Bazley Report recently. Their reaction was a first-class example of crisis communications management. Largely due (I suspect) to The Commissioner himself, they adopted a proactive and front-foot response – facing all media and sending some strong messages from their own camp. Within hours the Police website had posted not only the full text of the report but their side of the story – in the form of statements and positive highlights from the report. They also did all they could to mitigate negative comment by posting video of the media conference and a full transcript of the Q&A session with reporters. It's a great example of not getting caught up trying to communicate with detractors but instead putting energy and thought into communicating with those you can influence. Check it out at www.police.govt.nz
- 2) In sharp contrast - the reaction from GlaxoSmithKline to their 'Ribena' crisis has been very good – but far too slow. The campaign to say sorry, explain the Court findings and restore faith in the brand says all the right things but because it has taken so long now runs the risk of bringing the issue (and the negativity) to the attention of people who had either missed it or forgotten about it. Speed is the key in a crisis and it's always better to be quick and a bit below par than to be slow but perfect. Try telling that to lawyers and chief executives though!
- 3) And finally a chilling 'did you know?' fact - According to the International Federation of Journalists, at least 196 journalists and media workers have died in Iraq since the US invasion four years ago.

Quotable quotes

"This has been completely and utterly limp by England, they're playing with all the intensity of my drunk aunt playing Cluedo at Christmas."

Jonathan Agnew on England's cricketers.

"It is not your aptitude, but your attitude, that determines your altitude."

Zig Ziglar

"I *****g hope so!"

Mick McCarthy, Wolves manager, when asked by a reporter if their 6-0 loss at home to Southampton was a one-off.

Thanks for reading Issue 13 of The Good Oil

Steve

Some information sourced from Lloyd's List.