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HNS Contingency Plans in Compliance With the OPRC-HNS Protocol*

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Abstract

With the entry into force of the OPRC-HNS 2000 Protocol on Preparedness, Response and Cooperation on 14th June 2007, numerous questions on its practical implementation remain unanswered and will have to be addressed by the Shipping and Chemical Communities in the immediate future.

One of the essential obligations for the States that have ratified the protocol (eight in Europe and two in Asia to date) concerns the development of contingency plans for spills of chemical substances. Unlike spills of oil into the marine environment, there is currently no recognized or agreed definition of a Tiered Response Concept which would allow defining the magnitude of HNS spills from ships, thus making it difficult to prepare contingency plans for these substances. In addition, there is up to now no model, methodology or guidelines that have been developed and made available to the parties concerned.

The fact is although spills of HNS are quite a rare event when compared with oil, the risk is non negligible and marine incidents of chemical tankers or container ships do happen (e.g. Ievoli Sun in 2000, Sahmo Brother in 2005)

The purpose of this paper is to identify the new challenges that are expected to be encountered in the contingency planning process for spills of HNS within the context of the International and European Legislations and to propose solutions to address them.

The paper will use practical examples and focus on a selection of scenarios that concerns the chemical and shipping industries. Risk Assessment, Modelling, Response Options, Health and Safety and Environmental aspects will also be presented in a planning perspective with the ultimate aim of enhancing and complementing response procedures for marine spills of HNS within the limits of a port.

The full paper can be retrieved from the Electronic Library of the Society of Petroleum Engineer at the following link:

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