

Headlines: NIC – BP officials invited to meeting with President Obama; NIC – latest estimates of oil spill flow rate; USGS - EA of Arctic Ocean Marine Geophysical Survey; USCG – cancellation of obsolete NMC guidance documents; Senate – bill introduced re oil spill economic damages; House – bill introduced to give subpoena power to National Commission; Senate – bill introduced to give subpoena power to National Commission; Senate – bill introduced to require restitution for FWPCA violations; Senate – bill introduced to remove oil spill limits of liability; Senate – bill introduced and passed re OSLTF advance payments; House – briefing on Gulf of Mexico oil spill; House – hearing on oil spill research and technology needs; House – hearing on liability and financial responsibility for oil spills; UN – Security Council imposes sanctions against Iran; EU – European bathing water quality remains high; EU – GBP 250 million loan for London Array wind farm; South China Sea – two piratical attacks (one successful); Spain – support expressed for Atalanta anti-piracy operation; North Atlantic – chemical tanker rescues yacht crew; and Panama Canal – May 2010 operations summary.

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Bryant's Maritime News

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NIC – BP officials invited to meeting with President Obama



The National Incident Commander (NIC) sent a **letter** to the Chairman of the Board of BP inviting him and other appropriate officials from BP to meet on June 16 with senior Administration officials to discuss efforts to stop the Gulf of Mexico oil spill and to contain the damage. President Obama will participate in a portion of the meeting. (6/10/10).

NIC – latest estimates of oil spill flow rate



The National Incident Commander (NIC) issued a **news release** stating that government scientists, led by the US Geological Survey, have analyzed the Gulf of Mexico oil spill and their best estimate of the flow rate between 25,000 and 30,000 barrels per day. The actual amount could be as low as 20,000 barrels per day or as high as 40,000 barrels per day. (6/10/10).

USGS – EA of Arctic Ocean Marine Geophysical Survey



The US Geological Survey is seeking comments on its **draft Environmental Assessment** (EA) of a marine geophysical survey of the Arctic Ocean, scheduled for August – September 2010. Comments must be submitted within 30 days. 75 Fed. Reg. 33325 (June 11, 2010).

USCG – cancellation of obsolete NMC guidance documents



The US Coast Guard National Maritime Center (NMC) issued a **notice** stating that, effective June 30, it will be cancelling numerous Policy Letters and Guidance Documents related to the Mariner Credentialing Program that have been either superseded or made obsolete by regulation, time, or other policy documents. Website links to these documents will be deactivated on June 30. (6/9/10).

Senate – bill introduced re oil spill economic damages



Senator Vitter (R-LA) introduced the **Acceptance of Offer of Liability and Expedited Claims at Mississippi Canyon 252 Act** (S. 3461) to create a fair and efficient system to resolve claims of victims for economic injury caused by the Deepwater Horizon incident, and to direct the Secretary of the Interior to renegotiate the terms of the lease known as "Mississippi Canyon 252" with respect to claims relating to the Deepwater Horizon explosion and oil spill that exceed existing applicable economic liability limitations. (6/7/10).

House – bill introduced to give subpoena power to National Commission



Representative Capps (D-CA) introduced a bill (**H.R. 5481**) to give subpoena power to the National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling. (6/8/10).

Senate – bill introduced to give subpoena power to National Commission



Senator Shaheen (D-NH) introduced a bill (S. 3462) to provide subpoena power to the National Commission on the British Petroleum Oil Spill in the Gulf of Mexico, and for other purposes. (6/8/10).

Senate – bill introduced to require restitution for FWPCA violations



Senator Leahy (D-VT) introduced a bill (S. 3466) to require restitution for victims of criminal violations of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, and for other purposes. Official text of the bill is not yet available. (6/9/10).

Senate – bill introduced to remove oil spill limits of liability



Senator Menendez (D-NJ) introduced a bill (S. 3472) to amend the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 to require oil polluters to pay the full costs of oil spills, and for other purposes. Official text of the bill is not yet available. (6/9/10).

Senate – bill introduced and passed re OSLTF advance payments



Senator Reid (D-NV) introduced a bill (S. 3473) to amend the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 to authorize advances from Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund for the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. The bill was immediately considered by the Senate and passed. It will now go to the House of Representatives for consideration. Official text of the bill is not yet available. (6/9/10). *Note: Unofficial reports indicate that the bill has been adopted by the House and is being sent to President Obama for signature.*

House – briefing on Gulf of Mexico oil spill



The Subcommittee on Energy and Environment of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce held a briefing entitled “**Beneath the Surface of the BP Spill: What’s Happening Now, What’s Needed Next**”. **Mr. Tadeusz Patzek**, University of Texas, Austin, testified that the organizational structures and human behavior have not kept pace with the technologies utilized in deepwater drilling. **Mr. Thomas Leschine**, University of Washington, testified concerning the poor risk assessment and contingency preparation regarding deepwater drilling. **Dr. Samantha Joye**, University of Georgia, testified concerning the role of hydrocarbons in the Gulf of Mexico ecosystems. **Dr. Richard Haut**, Houston Advanced Research Center, testified concerning areas for

research identified as a result of the Gulf of Mexico oil spill. Mr. Philippe Cousteau, EarthEcho International, testified, but his testimony has yet to be posted. (6/9/10).

House – hearing on oil recovery research and technology needs



The Subcommittee on Energy and Environment of the House Committee on Science and Technology conducted a hearing on **Research and Technology Needs** for Oil Recovery and Effective Cleanup of Oil Spills. **Committee Chair Bart Gordon** (D-) made an opening statement. **Subcommittee Chair Brian Baird** (D-) made an opening statement. **Mr. Douglas Helton**, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), testified that NOAA is providing scientific information regarding oil spill trajectory and conducting natural resource damage assessments. **Captain Anthony Lloyd**, US Coast Guard, testified concerning the National Incident Command's efforts to respond to the ongoing oil spill. **Ms. Sharon Buffington**, Minerals Management Service (MMS), testified concerning the agency's oil spill response research program. **Dr. Albert Venosa**, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), testified concerning the agency's oil spill research program. **Dr. Jeffery Short**, Oceana, testified concerning oil spill cleanup capacity. **Dr. Samantha Joye**, University of Georgia, testified concerning gaps in the oil spill response research program. **Dr. Richard Haut**, Houston Advanced Research Center, testified concerning areas for research identified as a result of the Gulf of Mexico oil spill. **Dr. Nancy Kinner**, Coastal Response Research Center, testified concerning oil spill research and technology needs. **Mr. Kevin Costner**, Ocean Therapy Solutions, testified concerning contributions that might be made through use of innovative technology in response to oil spills. (6/9/10).

House – hearing on liability and financial responsibility for oil spills



The House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure conducted a hearing on **Liability and Financial Responsibility for Oil Spills** under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 and Related Statutes. **Chairman James Oberstar** (D-MN) made an opening statement regarding the need for a comprehensive review of oil spill liability laws. **Dr. Robert Hartwig**, Insurance Information Institute, testified concerning the potential market reaction to changes in limits of liability. **Dr. Michael Greenstone**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, testified concerning the arguments for and against raising the limits of liability. **Ms. Kate Gordon**, Center for American Progress Action Fund, testified that the liability cap for damages should be raised and other measures put in place to account for the actual cost of oil spills. **Mr. Jack Gerard**, American Petroleum Institute, testified that changes to the liability limits require thoughtful consideration. **Mr. Charles Anderson**, Skuld North America, testified that targeted, but not sweeping changes to OPA 90 are warranted. **Mr. Brian McAllister**, American Waterways Operators, testified that OPA 90 has proven successful in greatly reducing oil spills in US

waters and that significant changes are unnecessary. **Mr. Tom Perrelli**, US Department of Justice, testified concerning the Administration's proposed amendments to OPA 90. **Mr. Bob Abbey**, Minerals Management Service, testified the agency's efforts to enforce OPA 90. **Mr. Craig Bennett**, National Pollution Funds Center, testified concerning the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund. (6/9/10).

UN – Security Council imposes sanctions against Iran



The United Nations issued a **news release** stating that a fourth round of economic sanctions against Iran has been adopted by the UN Security Council. The sanctions resolution, among other things: calls upon all States to inspect all cargo to and from Iran in their territory if the State concerned has reasonable grounds to believe the cargo contains illicit items; authorizes States to inspect vessels on the high seas for illicit cargo with the consent of the flag State; and directs States to prohibit provision by their nationals or from their territory of bunkering services to Iranian-owned or –contracted vessels if there are reasonable grounds to believe the vessels are carrying illicit cargoes. **Resolution 1929 (2010)** (6/9/10).

EU – European bathing water quality remains high



The European Union (EU) issued a **press release** stating that 96% of coastal bathing sites and 90% of sites in rivers and lakes in the EU complied with minimum standards in 2009. In 1990, when monitoring commenced, the numbers were 80% and 52% respectively. (6/10/10). *Note: Ballast water discharge standards are generally more stringent than bathing water standards.*

EU – GBP 250 million loan for London Array wind farm



The European Union (EU) issued a **press release** stating that the European Investment Bank signed a GBP 250 million loan facility for partial financing for construction of the London Array wind farm. The first phase of the wind farm will have a capacity of 630 MW and is expected to begin operation in 2012. Once completed, it will be the world's largest offshore wind farm. (6/10/10).

South China Sea – two piratical attacks (one successful)



The ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre issued an **Incident Alert** stating that pirates launched two separate attacks against ships in the South China Sea near Subi Besar, Indonesia on 10 June. The first attack, on a chemical tanker, was by six armed pirates, who stole property belonging to the crew and the ship before departing. The second attack, about an hour later, involved a

speed boat approaching a general cargo ship. The ship's crew noticed the speed boat and sounded the alarm. After a 25-minute chase, the speed boat turned away. (6/10/10).

Spain – support expressed for Atalanta anti-piracy operation



The European Union (EU) issued a **press release** stating that Spain is stepping up its contribution to the Atalanta anti-piracy mission off the coast of Somalia by sending an amphibious assault ship and an ocean-going patrol craft. The Spanish Minister of Defence acknowledged the need to focus more efforts on the main Somali ports from which the pirates leave and to improve the legal framework to make it easier to arrest and try pirates. (6/10/10).

North Atlantic – chemical tanker rescues yacht crew



The UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) issued a **press notice** stating that a chemical tanker rescued the crew of a yacht that had lost its steering and began taking on water in the North Atlantic 300 miles northwest of Spain. The MCA received the distress signal and EPIRB alert and then vectored the tanker to the yacht. (6/10/10).

Panama Canal – May 2010 operations summary



The Panama Canal Authority issued an advisory summarizing operations during May 2010. It also includes a one-year schedule of locks maintenance work. **Advisory 08-2010** (6/8/10).

If you have questions regarding the above items, please contact the editor:

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