

Headlines: UK – safety bulletin re fire on ro-ro ferry; Texas – tar balls discovered along coast; Lake Pontchartrain – oil sheen and tar balls; Shipping Coordinating Committee; Senate – bill introduced to resolve oil spill claims; House – bill introduced to extend liability for oil pollution; EU – Parliament approves uniform reporting formalities; EU – Parliament approves passenger rights regulations; Paris MOU – 2009 Annual Report; Canada – investment in Marine Atlantic; Hong Kong – dredging off Hung Hom Fairway; New Zealand – review of offshore oil and gas decommissioning policy; and New Orleans – towing company and owner charged in collision/spill – errata.

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Bryant's Maritime News

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Note: This newsletter is one section of the [Bryant's Maritime Consulting](http://brymar-consulting.com) website. Visit the site for more extensive maritime regulatory information. Individual concerns may be addressed by retaining [Dennis Bryant](mailto:dennis.l.bryant@gmail.com) directly. Much of the highlighted text in this newsletter constitutes links to Internet sites providing more detailed information. Links on this page may be in PDF format, requiring use of Adobe Acrobat Reader. Comments on these postings are encouraged and may be made by email to the editor or by going to the blog page on the website and clicking the envelope that appears at the end of each posting. Be aware that the daily newsletter is a single posting, even though it contains a number of individual items. Exposure to this newsletter has been known to cause cancer in mice.

UK – safety bulletin re fire on ro-ro ferry



The UK Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) issued a **Safety Bulletin** regarding a vehicle deck fire on a ro-ro ferry. Preliminary findings indicate that the fire was caused by an electrical fault involving the power supply from the ship to the refrigeration unit on a truck trailer on the vehicle deck. Although the ship's electrical breakers were found to be working correctly, they did not trip before the fire started. It is recommended that operators of vehicular ro-ro ferries carrying refrigerated trailer units take immediate action to ensure that all power supply cables and fittings are in good condition and that electrical protection devices will activate at an appropriate level. It is further recommended that, until such time as the exact causes of this fire have been established, crew members make additional checks of refrigerated trailers powered by ships' electrical systems to provide early warning of any overheating. (7/7/10).

Texas – tar balls discovered along coast



The National Incident Command (NIC) issued a **news release** stating that a number of small tar balls were discovered along the Texas coast. Analysis indicates that these tar balls are associated with the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. It is unclear, though, how the tar balls arrived in Texas. They do not show the weathering that would be expected if they had drifted from the spill site. It is possible that they were carried to the Texas coast by a ship, such as one of the many response vessels. (7/5/10).

Lake Pontchartrain – oil sheen and tar balls



The National Incident Command (NIC) issued a **news release** stating that oil sheen and tar balls, presumably from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, have been reported in the Rigolets and Lake Pontchartrain. Additional boom is being placed at natural choke points in the Rigolets to trap the oil. (7/5/10).

Shipping Coordinating Committee – meeting



The Shipping Coordinating Committee, sponsored by the US Department of State (DOS), will meet in Washington, DC on July 22 to prepare for the upcoming session of the IMO Subcommittee on Safety of Navigation. Topics on the agenda include routing of ships, ship reporting, guidelines for safety zones larger than 500 meters around offshore structures, and updating shipborne navigation and communications equipment. [75 Fed. Reg. 39089](#) (July 7, 2010).

Senate – bill introduced to resolve oil spill claims



Senator Murkowski (R-AK) introduced the **Oil Spill Compensation Act of 2010** (S. 3542) to create a fair and efficient system to resolve claims of victims for economic injury caused by the Deepwater Horizon incident, to establish a Commission to investigate and report on corrective measures to prevent similar incidents, to improve the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund and Federal oil spill research, and for other purposes. Official text of the bill is not yet available. (6/29/10).

House – bill introduced to extend liability for oil pollution



Representative Connolly (D-VA) introduced the **Stand by your Oil Pollution Act** (STOP Act) (H.R. 5686) to amend the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 to extend liability to corporations, partnerships, and other persons having ownership interests in responsible parties, and for other purposes. (7/1/10).

EU – Parliament approves uniform reporting formalities



The European Parliament issued a **press release** stating that it approved a new directive requiring all Member States to recognize a standard form for merchant vessels to submit with regard to port calls. The Member States will also be required to implement a shared electronic system for fast and easy exchange of information between ships and ports. All reporting formalities should be accepted in electronic format by no later than 1 June 2015. (7/6/10).

EU – Parliament approves passenger rights regulations



The European Parliament issued a **press release** stating that it approved a regulation providing increased rights to passengers on boats and ferries. The new rules, which will come into effect in 2012, provide for assistance and compensation in cases of delays, as well as free assistance to disabled passengers. (7/6/10).

Paris MOU – 2009 Annual Report



The Paris MOU released its **2009 Annual Report**. The detention percentage reached 4.4%, an all-time low. General dry cargo ships had the highest detention rate (6.8%). The New Inspection Regime enters into force on 1 January 2011. Ships will be divided into high, standard, and low risk categories, with the frequency and intensity of inspections varying accordingly. (7/6/10).

Canada – investment in Marine Atlantic



Transport Canada issued a **media release** stating that the Government of Canada is investing \$521 million in the revitalization of Marine Atlantic Inc., which provides a ferry link between Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia. The funds will be used to upgrade terminal and port infrastructure and to charter two ferry vessels. (7/5/10).

Hong Kong – dredging off Hung Hom Fairway



The Hong Kong Marine Department issued a **notice** stating that for a period of approximately three months dredging operations will be carried out in waters off the Hung Hom Fairway. (7/6/10).

New Zealand – review of offshore oil and gas decommissioning policy



Maritime New Zealand issued a **news release** stating that it is beginning a consultation process with stakeholders aimed at developing a national policy for decommissioning offshore oil and gas installations. (7/6/10).

New Orleans – towing company and owner charged in collision/spill - errata



The Department of Justice issued a **news release** stating that a US towing company and its owner have been charged with violations of the Ports and Waterways Safety Act (PWSA) and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (FWPCA). A co-owner of the company has been charged with obstruction of justice. The company is charged with assigning employees without proper Coast Guard licenses to operate vessels resulting in the manning levels on those vessels to be below mandated levels; paying licensed captains to operate vessels for 24 hours a day without relief captains resulting in fatigue; and negligent discharge of oil on July 23, 2008, when the towing vessel *Mel Oliver* and its tank barge collided with the tanker *Tintomara* on the Mississippi River. The co-owner of the company is charged with deletion of electronic payroll sheets in an effort to impede the Coast Guard investigation of the collision. The **Bill of Information** was also released. (7/2/10). *Note: Several of my long-suffering readers gently advised me of an error in the name of the towing vessel, which has now been corrected.*

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

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