The Task Force honors 2002 Legacy Award Winners

The Pacific States/British Columbia Oil Spill Task Force Members awarded their 2002 Legacy Awards for Oil Spill Prevention, Preparedness, and Response at their Annual Meeting in Tacoma, Washington on July 23rd. The following persons were honored for their accomplishments with a 2002 Legacy Award:

- Kim Beasley, General Manager of the Clean Islands Council, Honolulu, HI;
- Jerry McMahon, Vice-President, Pacific Region, American Waterways Operators;
- Stephen Ricks, President, Clean Bay Incorporated, Concord, CA;
- SeaRiver Maritime, Incorporated, Houston, TX; and
- The Turn Point Standard of Care Development Team, which includes the Canadian Coast Guard, Marine Programs; the British Columbia Coast Pilots; and the US Coast Guard Vessel Traffic Services, Puget Sound.

Legacy Award categories include industry, non-profit or public agency organizations, individuals, and team efforts. The Task Force gives Legacy Awards in these categories for projects, accomplishments, or leadership that demonstrates innovation, management commitment, and improvements in oil spill prevention, preparedness, or response resulting in enhanced environmental protection. Efforts to promote partnerships and involve the public are also considered. Organizations or individuals nominated for the Legacy Award must be located or primarily operating in the Task Force jurisdictions of Alaska, British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, California, and Hawaii. Organizations or individuals representing a regulated industry must demonstrate a satisfactory history of compliance with state or provincial as well as federal oil spill regulations.

Tom Fitzsimmons, Task Force member from the State of Washington, characterized these Legacy Award winners as “…models for others in industry, government, and the public to emulate; we are pleased to honor their commitment to effective oil spill prevention and preparedness, efficient spill response, and collaborative teamwork.” More details on the five 2002 Legacy Award winners and photographs from the awards ceremony are available on the Task Force web site at http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/eeeb/taskforc/tfhome.htm

Stakeholders participate in the 2002 Annual Meeting

Eighty-four people attended the 2002 Annual Meeting, which was hosted at the Tacoma Sheraton Hotel by the Washington Department of Ecology. Task Force Members or their delegates included Harlan Henderson (California), Michele Brown (Alaska), Tom Fitzsimmons (Washington), Jim McCracken for Derek Thompson (British Columbia), Gary Gill (Hawaii), and Mike Zollitsch for Paul Slyman (Oregon). Coordinating Committee members Scott Schaefer, Larry Dietrick, Curtis Martin, Stan Norman and Heather Taylor also participated.

Michele Brown, Commissioner for the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, presented the keynote address. She explained the meeting’s theme, “Doing It Right; Balancing Regulatory and Non-Regulatory
Approaches,” which has been Alaska Governor Tony Knowles’ message to both regulators and the regulated community. She stated that “Governor Knowles decided resource development had to be done right or not at all. He defined “doing it right” by three components:

- Sound science – requiring the latest and best scientific information about resources and best technologies;
- Prudent management – ensuring conservation and sustainability through adaptive management, field monitoring, assessment, and verification; and
- Responsible, meaningful public involvement and decision making.”

The full text of Ms. Brown’s keynote address is available on the Task Force website as part of the Summary Notes of the 2002 Annual Meeting. You will also find the text of the Members’ updates on activities in their oil spill programs in Hawaii, California, Oregon, Washington, British Columbia, and Alaska in these meeting notes.

Following the Legacy Awards ceremony, Jean Cameron, Task Force Executive Coordinator, explained that the Task Force member agencies and their staff are NOT eligible for the Legacy Awards, so with the approval of the Coordinating Committee, she had created a new award category this year, called the Outstanding Service Award. She explained that this award need not be given each year, but it is intended to honor outstanding service to the Task Force by one of its Members. That being said, Jean proudly presented the 2002 Pacific States/British Columbia Oil Spill Task Force Outstanding Service Award to Michele Brown, Task Force Member from Alaska, in appreciation of her vision that the ideals of regional cooperation, open communication, and continuing improvement would be the operative values of the Pacific States/British Columbia Oil Spill Task Force.

In addition, Certificates of Appreciation were awarded to Tom Fitzsimmons of the Washington Department of Ecology and to Mike Zollitsch of the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality in recognition of five or more years of exceptional support for the Task Force.

A panel discussion in the afternoon continued the focus on the Annual Meeting’s theme. The panel was moderated by Jim McCracken, Director of Regional Operations and Environmental Protection for the Province of BC. Speakers included Jack Buono, Vice President for Operations, SeaRiver Maritime, Inc.; CAPT Dave Westerholm, Chief, US Coast Guard Office of Response; Dr. Mike Ziccardi, Program Coordinator for California’s Oiled Wildlife Care Network; and Bruce Wishart, Policy Director for People for Puget Sound. The question, said Jack Buono, is not whether to “Do It Right” but how to do it better. As a 2002 Legacy Award winner, his company has proven that he’s found the answer to that challenge. Within the USCG, noted CAPT Westerholm, there has been a shift away from a prescriptive approach to one more focused on partnerships with key constituencies, such as AWO and APICOM. CAPT Westerholm speculated, however, that this collaborative approach may be challenged by the post 9/11 security pressures on the Coast Guard.

Bruce Wishart observed that the need for regulations is a function of the circumstances and the players, but he
acknowledged that incentives are always there to circumvent regulations, as was the case with the oil/water separators found disconnected on so many vessels lately. So having strong regulations is only one issue; other issues are whether regulations are meaningful and/or enforced, he said.

Dr. Mike Ziccardi of California’s Oiled Wildlife Care Network (OWCN) described how the OWCN serves as an example of a successful public, private, not-for-profit partnership. The mission of OWCN is to provide the best achievable treatment to wildlife exposed to oil. This involves both establishing and maintaining facilities, conducting oiled wildlife response and training programs, and administration of a competitive grant program. The Network is recognized as one of the most advanced and innovative public/private partnerships worldwide. Its protocols and programmatic structure are being used for national and international standards documents, and it is currently being modeled by Washington, N. Carolina, Texas, Japan, the United Arab Emirates, Germany, Austria and Brazil. The Oiled Wildlife Care Network was a recipient of the Legacy Award in 2000, Mike added.

For more information on this and other discussions and presentations, please see the 2002 Annual Meeting Summary Notes on the Task Force website.

More photos....

Anil Mathur (far right) and other Alaska Tanker Company executives pose with Tom Fitzsimmons and Stan Norman of the WA Department of Ecology after receiving Ecology’s prestigious ECOPRO award in a ceremony following the Task Force’s Annual Meeting

From left to right: Harlan Henderson, Administrator, California Office of Spill Prevention and Response; Scott Schaefer, OSPR Deputy Administrator; CAPT Dave Westerholm, Chief, USCG Office of Response

Task Force Members approve and adopt the final report and recommendations from the West Coast Offshore Vessel Traffic Risk Management Project Workgroup

Also at the Annual Meeting, the Task Force Members were given a presentation by Rick Holly of the California Office of Spill Prevention and Response, and CDR Steve Dansuck and LT Patricia Springer of the US Coast Guard Pacific Area regarding the findings and recommendations of the West
Coast Offshore Vessel Traffic Risk Management Project Workgroup.

The West Coast Offshore Vessel Traffic Risk Management Project was co-sponsored by the Pacific States/British Columbia Oil Spill Task Force and the US Coast Guard, Pacific Area. Rick Holly served as the Task Force co-chair. USCG Pacific Area co-chairs over the three year duration of the project included CAPT Ed Page, CAPT Frank Whipple, and CAPT Glenn Anderson.

They co-chaired a workgroup of representatives of the following interests: the oil spill agencies in Alaska, Washington, Oregon, and California, and the Province of British Columbia; the US Coast Guard Districts 17, 13, and 11; the Canadian Coast Guard, Pacific Region; NOAA (both Hazmat and National Marine Sanctuaries); Environment Canada; the US Navy; the Canadian Maritime Forces; the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens’ Advisory Council; the BC Chamber of Shipping; the BC Council of Marine Carriers; the Puget Sound Steamship Operators’ Association; the Puget Sound Marine Exchange; the Portland Merchants Exchange; the Port of Portland; Save Our Shores; the California Coastal Commission; the Western States Petroleum Association; the Council of American Master Mariners; the American Waterways Operators, Pacific Region; Teekay Shipping (for INTERTANKO); and the Pacific Merchant Shipping Association.

Here’s a brief summary of the key recommendations from the Workgroup:

Regarding collision hazards, the recommendations included expedited AIS carriage and one regional ballast water exchange standard.

Regarding historic casualty rates by vessel type, recommendations included expedited replacement of single hull tankers, implementation of the US Coast Guards’ Fishing Vessel Safety Program, and regional adoption of the Puget Sound Standard of Care for entering vessels.

Regarding Rescue Tug Availability, recommendations covered steps to create a coast wide system of information on tug locations, as well as consideration of various strategies for improving tug availability.

Regarding distances offshore, the Workgroup recommended voluntary minimum distances of 50 nautical miles (nm) offshore for all vessels carrying crude oil or persistent petroleum products as cargo, and 25 nm for all other vessels 300 GT or larger.

Recommendations were also made to address data quality and availability, as well as for the Task Force and the US and Canadian Coast Guards to review the implementation status of these recommendations in five years.

Following the presentation and public comment, the Task Force Members signed a formal Agreement acknowledging the accomplishments of the Workgroup and its Co-chairs, and agreeing to accept and endorse the Final Report and Recommendations. They further agreed to work with the US Coast Guard, the Canadian Coast Guard, the maritime industry, and local governments to implement these recommendations.

More information on this project and the final recommendations can be found on the Task Force web site under the 2002 Annual Report.

**The Year Past and the Year Ahead:**

- **2002 Annual Report Available on the Web**

As noted above, information on the Offshore Project and all other projects of the Task Force for the past year are covered in detail in the 2002 Annual Report, available on our web site. The report also provides annual overviews of the activities of the Task Force member agencies.

- **Highlights of the 2002-2003 Annual Workplan**

Under the Task Force’s Spill Prevention objective, more emphasis will be put on the database project by creating a workgroup of representatives of the member agencies to develop both short and
long-term strategies to implement the task. The Task Force also plans to provide leadership for a collaborative project involving the US Coast Guard and tanker operators in defining voluntary management and operating standards for tanker charters. Implementation of the WCOVTRM recommendations, participation in the Pacific Oil Spill Prevention Education Team, monitoring TAPS tanker double hull conversions, and tracking developments on a number of “Topics of Concern” will be ongoing activities.

Under the Task Force’s Spill Preparedness and Response objective, the Coordinating Committee plans to generate a “prototype” of key contingency planning elements for a public roundtable discussion in the Winter of 2003. Other activities are primarily ongoing, such as maintaining the Integrated Vessel Response Plan guidance matrix and the 1-800-OILS-911 spill reporting number, and tracking Topics of Concern.

Under the Task Force’s Communications objective, there will continue to be a strong emphasis on stakeholder outreach through events like the Annual Meeting and the Winter Roundtable. The Task Force’s Quarterly Report is now made available on the Task Force web site rather than mailed. The Legacy Awards program will be continued, as will an emphasis on regular meetings with US and Canadian officials. A new project under the Internal Communications task will involve development of a long-term management strategy for Task Force staff in conjunction with the next round of strategic planning, which will be kicked off with a planning retreat this Fall.

And in other Task Force news,

• The Task Force submitted comments on the US Coast Guard’s proposed rules on salvage and firefighting; these are available on our web site.

• The Task Force Coordinating Committee, joined by Task Force Member Harlan Henderson, met with Steve Benz and Mike LaTorre of the Marine Spill Response Corporation and Bob Aldag of the Marine Preservation Association to discuss proposals for MSRC mergers with several West Coast spill response cooperatives. The notes from this discussion are available on our web site as part of our Summary Notes from the July 2002 Coordinating Committee meeting.

• Jean Cameron, Task Force Executive Coordinator, was awarded a Certificate of Merit by US Coast Guard Vice Admiral Terry Cross, Commander, Pacific Area, for her leadership on the West Coast Offshore Vessel Traffic Risk Management project.

The Task Force Member Agencies:

• The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
  Contact Larry Dietrick at 907-465-5255

• The British Columbia Ministry of Water, Land, and Air Protection
  Contact Heather Taylor at 250-952-4870

• The Washington Department of Ecology
  Contact Stan Norman at 360-407-7465

• The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
  Contact Mike Zollitsch at 503-229-6931

• The Office of Spill Prevention and Response, California Department of Fish and Game
  Contact Scott Schaefer at 916-445-9326

• The Office of Hazards Evaluation and Emergency Response in the Hawaii Department of Environmental Health;
  Contact Curtis Martin at 808-586-4249

Task Force member agency web sites may be accessed through the Task Force web site.

For more information on any topics noted above, please contact Jean Cameron, Task Force Executive Coordinator, at 503-392-5860 (phone/fax), or through email at: JeanRCameron@OregonCoast.com
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