



**Workshop Report**

2<sup>nd</sup> EMSA Workshop on Dispersants:  
"Towards a harmonised approach in  
dispersant usage in the EU"

Lisbon, 19-20 May 2008

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## Report of the 2<sup>nd</sup> EMSA dispersants workshop: "Towards a harmonised approach in dispersant usage in the EU"

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### Background

In accordance with the *EMSA Action Plan for Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response*, the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) is to address the issue of the usage of oil spill dispersants and their implications. With this in mind, a first EMSA workshop on dispersants was held in Brussels in December 2005. In the conclusions of the first workshop, as well as in subsequent meetings, the desire for standardisation and harmonisation among Member States with respect to dispersant testing and approval methods has been emphasised as an important issue for further discussion.

In order to discuss this issue with the EU/EFTA Member States, EMSA organised its second workshop "*Towards a harmonised approach in dispersant usage in the EU*", held on 19-20 May 2008 in Lisbon, Portugal. In view of supporting the discussion during the workshop, a Strategy Paper was prepared and presented during the workshop, addressing in more detail the topic of EU-wide harmonisation of dispersant testing procedures, including the potential benefits of a harmonised approach and possible ways forward.

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### Workshop Objectives

The workshop had the following main objectives:

- 1) To present and discuss recent developments in dispersant usage in the EU;
- 2) To discuss the need for and determine ways forward to reach a harmonised approach for dispersant testing procedures in the EU;
- 3) To present and discuss the results from specific dispersant-related R&D projects addressing among other the dispersibility of Heavy Fuel Oils (HFOs) and weathered oils.

In addition to the experts from the EU Member States, EFTA countries and candidate countries, representatives from Russia, the Black Sea Commission and ITOPF attended the workshop (35 participants in total from 20 European coastal states).

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### Workshop Programme

The workshop was hosted and chaired by the EMSA Unit for Pollution Response. According to the agenda the workshop included three sessions:

Session 1 – Recent Developments in the EU,  
Session 2 – Harmonisation Experiences & Round Table Discussion,  
Session 3 – Results of Research and Development.

1) The first session addressed the recent developments in the EU in the field of dispersant usage:

- Mr Sjon Huisman (Dutch Ministry for Transport, Public Works & Water Management) presented the outcome of the Dutch workshop on "The application of dispersants in the North Sea", which was held in October 2007 in the Hague, as well as the current policy in the Netherlands regarding dispersant use.
- Ms Kirsti Natvig (Norwegian Pollution Control Authority) made a presentation on the 2008 review of the Norwegian dispersant use approval scheme. She referred to the 2001 Norwegian dispersants Regulation and its 2008 update, as well as to the Norwegian guidelines and checklist related to dispersant use.
- Mr Mark Kirby (Cefas) presented an overview of the main issues discussed during and the final outcome of the 2007 review of the UK oil treatment products approval scheme. He also addressed the current dispersant approval requirements and test methods used in the UK.
- Mr Edvard Molitor's (EMSA) presentation included an overview of the current national dispersant use policies in the EU, based on the 2007 update of the EMSA "Inventory of national policies regarding the use of oil spill dispersants in the EU Member States". He also referred to the main changes made since the 2005 inventory.
- Mr Ahmet Kideys (Black Sea Commission Secretariat) presented an overview of the national policies regarding dispersant usage in the Black Sea region, including information on the Black Sea ecosystem, the oil transport in the Black Sea, the regional legal framework for dispersant use and the recent dispersant-related actions in the region.

2) The second session covered two parts:

- a) Similar harmonisation experiences and efforts in the field of dispersants:
- Mr Ronny Schallier (MUMM, OTSOPA Chairman) presented the harmonisation experience which was undertaken within the North Sea area by the Bonn Agreement in the early '80s, regarding a common approach for dispersant product approval and selection; his presentation included the main focus of this effort, its results and the Bonn Agreement's current approach to this issue.
  - Mr Gennady Semanov (CNIIMF, Russia) presented the experience of harmonisation of oil spill dispersants application policy by the NOWPAP (Northwest Pacific Action Plan) member states (China, Japan, South Korea and the Russian Federation).

b) A round table discussion on the subject: "Towards a harmonised approach of dispersant testing procedures in the EU", chaired by Mr Alun Lewis (independent oil spill consultant). During this discussion, the current challenges and possible ways forward in harmonisation were presented and discussed, on the basis of the EMSA Strategy Paper, by a panel of three scientists (Mr Francois Merlin from CEDRE, France, Mr Per Daling from SINTEF, Norway and Mr Mark Kirby from Cefas, UK).

The chairman presented a series of questions for consideration and discussion by each of the panellists in turn regarding dispersant testing procedures and possible harmonisation options, followed by opening up the floor to all the workshop participants for their views and supplementary questions and discussion.

3) The third session presented various research and development (R&D) projects in the field of dispersants:

- Mr Francois Merlin (CEDRE) presented an overview of the French projects on dispersant effectiveness on weathered oils and HFOs, as well as the *Discobiol* project regarding dispersant use in coastal areas and estuaries and the impact assessment of dispersed oil.
- Mr Per Daling (SINTEF), presented an overview of the recent dispersant R&D developments in Norway; this included SINTEF's projects regarding the use of dispersants in shallow waters, oil weathering and dispersibility methodologies, the use of oil spill modelling systems, as well as the use of dispersants on HFOs and RFOs. New boat dispersant application systems available in Norway were also presented.
- Ms Helen Chapman (ITOPF) presented relevant R&D developments worldwide in the field of dispersant usage, addressing the research needs in this field, recent/current studies and the ongoing innovation in this area.
- Mr Walter Nordhausen (EMSA) presented the planned update of the "EMSA Operational Manual on the Applicability of Oil Spill Dispersants", which is scheduled to take place in 2008, addressing the new features to be incorporated in the manual's software programme. In addition, he briefly mentioned the impact of REACH (EC Regulation regarding the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals) on oil spill dispersant testing and approval procedures.

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### Workshop Conclusions

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In addition to the individual discussions conducted after the various sessions, the round table discussion and the closing part of the workshop provided the main fora for determining ways forward towards a harmonised approach in dispersant testing procedures in the EU.

As a result of these very interesting and fruitful discussions, the following conclusions were reached from the workshop participants:

- Many EU countries/regions are considering the use of dispersants and discussions on this topic are being undertaken even in the previously more 'restrictive' areas;
- There are no real barriers to the harmonization of dispersant product approval testing procedures, but there are regional considerations (such as salinity levels and oils transported);

- Such a harmonization is in principle feasible, more likely at a regional level, but also at an EU-level;
- There is strong support from the majority of the workshop participants for the creation of a technical experts correspondence group to further address the topic of harmonisation at an EU-level; this group should be facilitated by EMSA;
- There is a large number of useful R&D projects and innovation being undertaken in the field of oil spill dispersants, within the EU and internationally.

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### **Possible Follow-Up Activities**

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The following possible ways forward and next steps to address the issue of EU-wide harmonisation were identified through this workshop:

- The Member States will discuss the workshop conclusions with their national administrations and within their Regional Agreements;
- EMSA will submit the workshop Strategy Paper and present the workshop conclusions to the upcoming CTG MPPR meeting in September 2008;
- EMSA will facilitate the exchange of information between the Regional Agreements on this issue, via the regular Inter-Secretariat meetings;
- EMSA will consider facilitating the establishment of a technical experts correspondence group to further address the topic of harmonisation.

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### **Attachments**

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- (1) Workshop Agenda
- (2) List of participants

All workshop-related documents and presentations are available on the EMSA website ([www.emsa.europa.eu](http://www.emsa.europa.eu)).

**2<sup>nd</sup> EMSA Workshop on Dispersants:  
Towards a harmonised approach in dispersant usage in the EU  
Lisbon, 19-20 May, 2008**

**Agenda**

**Day One: 19 May**

**09:00** *Registration and coffee*

**09:30** **Welcome address**  
(Mr Bernd Bluhm, EMSA)

**Session 1 – Recent developments in the EU**

**09:45** **Outcome of the workshop on the application of dispersants in the North Sea**  
(Mr Sjon Huisman, RWS)

**10:10** **Review of the Norwegian dispersants approval scheme**  
(Ms Kirsti Natvig, Norwegian Pollution Control Authority)

**10:35** **Outcome of the 2007 review of the UK dispersants approval scheme**  
(Mr Mark Kirby, Cefas)

**11:00** *Coffee Break*

**11:20** **2007 Inventory of national policies regarding the use of oil spill dispersants in the EU Member States**  
(Mr Edvard Molitor, EMSA)

**11:45** **Dispersants policy and usage in the Black Sea**  
(Mr Ahmet Kideys, Black Sea Commission)

**12:10** **Discussion**

**12:30** *Lunch Break*

**Session 2 – Harmonisation experiences**

**14:00** **Harmonisation experience within the North Sea area**  
(Mr Ronny Schallier, Bonn Agreement)

**14:25** **NOWPAP experience of harmonisation of dispersants application policy**  
(Dr Gennady Semanov, CNIIMF)

**Round table discussion – Towards a harmonised approach of dispersants testing procedures in the EU**

(Chair: Mr Alun Lewis / Panel: Mr Francois Merlin, Mr Per Daling, Mr Mark Kirby)

**14:50 Current challenges and possible ways forward in harmonisation**

(Mr Alun Lewis)

**15:20 *Coffee Break***

**15:40 Topics presented for discussion on the basis of the workshop strategy paper:**

- **Dispersant testing and approval procedures**
- **Dispersant usage criteria and pre-approval zones**

**17:30 Conclusions**

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**Day Two: 20 May**

**09:00 *Coffee***

**Session 3 – Results of Research and Development**

**09:30 French projects on dispersants effectiveness on weathered oil and the Discobiol project**

(Mr Francois Merlin, Cedre)

**09:55 Status of recent dispersant research and development (R&D) in Norway**

(Mr Per Daling, SINTEF)

**10:20 *Coffee Break***

**10:40 Relevant developments worldwide**

(Ms Helen Chapman, ITOPF)

**11:05 EMSA Dispersants Manual: Planned 2008 update**

(Dr Walter Nordhausen, EMSA)

**11:30 Conclusions & Closing remarks**

(Dr Walter Nordhausen, EMSA)

**12:30 *End of workshop***

**2nd EMSA Dispersants Workshop (19-20 May 2008)**  
**Final Attendance List**

Country	Title	First Name	Name	Organisation	E-mail
Bulgaria	Ms	Dariya Kostova	Pisheva	Bulgarian Maritime Administration	<a href="mailto:mep_bs@marad.bg">mep_bs@marad.bg</a>
Croatia	Mr	Matko	Basic	CIAN	<a href="mailto:more@cian.hr">more@cian.hr</a>
Croatia	Mr	Goran	Komazek	DEZINSEKCIJA	<a href="mailto:goran.komazec@dezinsekcija.hr">goran.komazec@dezinsekcija.hr</a>
Cyprus	Mr	Nicos C.	Attas	Department of Merchant Shipping	<a href="mailto:nattas@dms.mcw.gov.cy">nattas@dms.mcw.gov.cy</a>
Denmark	Mr	Peter	Soberg Poulsen	Søværnets Operative Kommando	<a href="mailto:pol.con.den@sok.dk">pol.con.den@sok.dk</a>
Estonia	Mr	Toomas	Liidja	Estonian Environmental Inspectorate	<a href="mailto:toomas.liidja@kki.ee">toomas.liidja@kki.ee</a>
Finland	Ms	Tuula	Kuusela	Finnish Environment Institute	<a href="mailto:tuula.kuusela@ymparisto.fi">tuula.kuusela@ymparisto.fi</a>
France	Mr	Renaud	Maldague	Commission d'Etudes Pratiques de Lutte Antipollution	<a href="mailto:ceppol@wanadoo.fr">ceppol@wanadoo.fr</a>
Germany	Mr	Dierk-Steffen	Wahrendorf	Federal Institute of Hydrology	<a href="mailto:wahrendorf@bafg.de">wahrendorf@bafg.de</a>
Iceland	Mr	Gottskalk	Fridgeirsson	Iceland Environment Agency	<a href="mailto:gottskalk@ust.is">gottskalk@ust.is</a>
Italy	Ms	Alessandra	Giuliani	ICRAM	<a href="mailto:giuliani.alessandra@minambiente.it">giuliani.alessandra@minambiente.it</a>
Malta	Mr	Richard	Gabriele	Malta Maritime Authority	<a href="mailto:richard.gabriele@mma.gov.mt">richard.gabriele@mma.gov.mt</a>
Netherlands	Mr	Bert	G. van Munster	Rijkswaterstaat	<a href="mailto:bert.van.munster@rws.nl">bert.van.munster@rws.nl</a>
Norway	Ms	Hilde	Dolva	Norwegian Coastal Administration	<a href="mailto:hilde.dolva@kystverket.no">hilde.dolva@kystverket.no</a>
Poland	Mr	Marek	Reszko	Maritime Search and Rescue Service	<a href="mailto:marek.rezsko@sar.gov.pl">marek.rezsko@sar.gov.pl</a>
Portugal	Mr	Rogério	Perreira Santana	DIRECÇÃO-GERAL da AUTORIDADE MARÍTIMA	<a href="mailto:pereira.santana@marinha.pt">pereira.santana@marinha.pt</a>
Portugal	Mr	Jorge	Silva Paulo	DIRECÇÃO-GERAL da AUTORIDADE MARÍTIMA	<a href="mailto:silva.paulo@marinha.pt">silva.paulo@marinha.pt</a>
Romania	Mr	Dumitru	Bucuresteanu	Romanian Naval Authority	<a href="mailto:dbucuresteanu@rna.ro">dbucuresteanu@rna.ro</a>
Spain	Ms	Laura	De La Torre	Sasemar	<a href="mailto:torre.lcc@sasemar.es">torre.lcc@sasemar.es</a>
Spain	Mr	Antonio	Ruiz Mateo	Ministry for Transport and Public Works	<a href="mailto:Antonio.Ruiz@cedex.es">Antonio.Ruiz@cedex.es</a>
Turkey	Mr	Burak	Aykan	Undersecretariat for Maritime Affairs	<a href="mailto:burakaykan@denizcilik.gov.tr">burakaykan@denizcilik.gov.tr</a>
UK	Mr	Kevin	Colcomb	Maritime and Coastguard Agency	<a href="mailto:Kevin.colcomb@mcga.gov.uk">Kevin.colcomb@mcga.gov.uk</a>
Lisbon Agreement	Mr	Tito	Cerqueira	Lisbon Agreement/Cilpan	<a href="mailto:cilpanlisboa@mail.telepac.pt">cilpanlisboa@mail.telepac.pt</a>
Speaker	Mr	Gennady	Semanov	CNIIMF	<a href="mailto:semanov@cniimf.ru">semanov@cniimf.ru</a>
Speaker	Ms	Kirsti	Natvig	Norwegian Pollution Control Authority	<a href="mailto:kirsti.natvig@sft.no">kirsti.natvig@sft.no</a>
Speaker	Mr	Sjon	Huisman	Min. for Transport, Public Works & Water Management	<a href="mailto:sjon.huisman@rws.nl">sjon.huisman@rws.nl</a>
Speaker	Mr	Ahmet	Kideys	Black Sea Commission Secretariat	<a href="mailto:Ahmet.Kideys@blacksea-commission.org">Ahmet.Kideys@blacksea-commission.org</a>
Speaker	Mr	François	Merlin	Cedre	<a href="mailto:francois.merlin@cedre.fr">francois.merlin@cedre.fr</a>
Speaker	Mr	Per	Daling	Sintef	<a href="mailto:per.daling@sintef.no">per.daling@sintef.no</a>
Speaker	Mr	Mark	Kirby	CEFAS	<a href="mailto:mark.kirby@cefass.co.uk">mark.kirby@cefass.co.uk</a>
Speaker	Mr	Ronny	Schallier	Management Unit of North Sea Math. Models	<a href="mailto:R.Schallier@mumm.ac.be">R.Schallier@mumm.ac.be</a>
Speaker	Mr	Alun	Lewis	Oil Spill Consultant	<a href="mailto:alun.lewis4@btopenworld.com">alun.lewis4@btopenworld.com</a>
Speaker	Ms	Helen	Chapman	ITOPF	<a href="mailto:helenchapman@itopf.com">helenchapman@itopf.com</a>
EMSA	Mr	Bernd	Bluhm	Head of Unit - Pollution Response	<a href="mailto:bernd.bluhm@emsa.europa.eu">bernd.bluhm@emsa.europa.eu</a>
EMSA	Mr	Walter	Nordhausen	Senior Project Officer - Pollution Response	<a href="mailto:walter.nordhausen@emsa.europa.eu">walter.nordhausen@emsa.europa.eu</a>
EMSA	Mr	Edvard	Molitor	Project Officer - Pollution Response	<a href="mailto:edvard.molitor@emsa.europa.eu">edvard.molitor@emsa.europa.eu</a>
EMSA	Ms	Lito	Xirotiri	Project Officer - Pollution Response	<a href="mailto:lito.xirotiri@emsa.europa.eu">lito.xirotiri@emsa.europa.eu</a>