



Australian Government

Australian Maritime Safety Authority

Media Release

26 October 2009

CLEAN-UP EFFORTS REMAIN FOCUSED AS LEAK CONTINUES

As the leak from the Montara wellhead platform continues, AMSA remains focused on coordinating clean-up operations in the Timor Sea.

Consistent with requirements under *the National Plan to Combat Pollution of the Sea by Oil and Other Noxious and Hazardous Substances*, AMSA took the reins when PTTEP Australasia handed over responsibility on the first day. Since then we have managed the clean-up operations and have coordinated daily briefings with all associated government departments, including our Indonesian counterparts.

Clean-up activity has included:

- daily observation flights to monitor movement of the oil and to target vessel operations;
- spraying dispersants on heavier concentrations of oil by both aircraft and surface vessels to enhance the natural degradation process;
- containment and recovery operations using booms and skimmers;
- testing the oil to establish the likely effectiveness of dispersants;
- using an ultra violet infrared line scanner (on our Dornier) to identify oil on the surface that would not otherwise be visible to the naked eye;
- undertaking oil trajectory modelling;
- undertaking gas plume modelling to determine the safe area of operations;
- using satellite tracking buoys to track the oil;
- using satellite imagery to help verify the extent of the slick; and
- consulting with our international colleagues.

During the operation a significant number of assets and people from across Industry and government have been involved and milestones achieved:

- some 17 vessels and 9 aircraft have been utilised;
- there are currently around 300 people working off-shore in the area of operations and at support bases at Truscott in WA and Darwin in NT; and
- some 598,052 litres of product (oil/water mix) has been recovered during the containment operations of which an estimated 348,042 litres is oil.

Our work has drawn international attention as a clean-up operation of this kind so far off-shore is highly unusual. The support AMSA has had from across industry and government from response personnel has been exceptional.

The priority for AMSA at the outset of operations was to mitigate risk to the marine environment by keeping the majority of the oil contained to within the vicinity of the platform. This has been successfully achieved to this point and remains our focus. Oil remains a significant distance from the West Australian coast, Indonesia and marine parks.

AMSA operations will be ongoing until such time as the leak has been stopped by PTTEP Australasia and AMSA is satisfied that the clean-up and monitoring of the area is no longer necessary.

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