

SUMMARY

This quarterly report is the 53rd in a series concerning safety and environmental protection matters related to ports and shipping. Highlights include:

1. The 43rd session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC 43) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) was held at IMO Headquarters in London from June 28 through July 2, 1999. Significant actions taken at MEPC 43 include: (a) adoption of amendments to regulation 13G of Annex I of the 1973 International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, as modified by the Protocol of 1978, as amended, (MARPOL 73/78); (b) acceptance, with minor amendments, of the draft treaty text submitted by the United States to serve as the basis for further development and negotiation of the draft legal instrument on anti-fouling paints for ships; (c) a decision not to seek approval from the Council for a diplomatic conference in the 2000/2001 biennium to adopt a ballast water management legal instrument; (d) approval of a draft Assembly resolution with new procedures for the identification of particularly sensitive sea areas (PSSAs); (e) approval of an MEPC resolution on guidelines for monitoring the sulfur content of residual fuel oils used on board ships; and (f) approval of a draft Assembly resolution concerning the development of guidelines for the provision and utilization of adequate waste reception facilities in ports around the world. (Item 1-A)
2. On August 17, 1999, President Clinton signed the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1999 (P.L. 106-53). WRDA 1999 provides for the conservation and development of water and related resources and authorizes the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States. The new law has six titles concerning water resources projects, general provisions, project-related provisions, studies, miscellaneous provisions, and terrestrial wildlife habitat restoration. (Item 2-A)
3. The Marine Board of the National Research Council has published a report titled *Spills of Nonfloating Oils: Risk and Response*. This report was developed at the request of the U.S. Coast Guard. According to the report, maritime accidents that result in oil spills are high on the list of public environmental concerns. These spills are difficult to control and can contaminate the marine environment. Furthermore, some oils with specific gravity greater than 1.0 (and some other oils in certain circumstances) may be neutrally buoyant or sink when spilled on water, depending on the salinity of the water. The report contains 21 significant findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The recommendations are intended to improve the capability of the spill response community to respond to spills of nonfloating oils. (Item 4-C)
4. The U.S. Department of Transportation has published a report to the U.S. Congress titled *An Assessment of the U.S. Marine Transportation System*. The U.S. Marine Transportation System (MTS) consists of waterways, ports and their intermodal connections, vessels, vehicles, and system users. Each component is a complex

