



KIMO RESOLUTION 1/06

Presented by KIMO UK and KIMO Denmark

SHIP-TO-SHIP TRANSFERS.

The volume of crude oil and petroleum products being transported from the Baltic and Barents Seas has dramatically increased since 2000. Exports from the Baltic alone have risen from 67.7mt to 158.7mt¹ today a 250% increase and a further three fold increase is expected by 2015, resulting in an estimated 16,825 tanker movements per year². Due to the shallow draught in the Baltic Sea VLCC's (Very Large Crude carriers) are unable to enter Baltic ports and therefore the oil must be transported by smaller shuttle tankers through the Baltic before being transferred in Ship-to-Ship (STS) operations to VLCC's in the North Sea. The vast majority of STS operations occur in open water within a few miles of the coast and only have contingency plans that cover a small-scale spill. Further more there are no International regulations relating to STS, only guidelines, and few national regulations. For example, in the UK, Government does not have the power to ban STS operations in its territorial waters and can only ask for improvements in the contingency planning.

Therefore the risk of a major accident involving a STS operation will increase over the coming years. If an accident does occur it will be exacerbated by the fact that the crude oil involved is REBCO (Russian Export Blend Crude Oil) and HVFO (Highly Viscous Fuel Oils), similar in consistency to the oil carried by both the Erika and Prestige. These heavy crude oils pose a significant threat to the marine environment and a large spill would be economically devastating for any coastal community affected. For example, the ultimate cost from the Prestige spill is expected to reach around €5 billion, however only €175 million was paid out in compensation from the IOPC Fund³.

The increasing number of transfers also increases the probability of the introduction of more non-native invasive species into the North Sea region. Invasive species can be transported in ships ballast water and released when

¹ HELCOM RESPONSE 6/2005, Document code: 4/1

² HELCOM SEA 5/2002, 3.2/4

³ The Prestige: one year on, a continuing disaster. WWF-Spain

the ships deballast during loading. They can cause extreme ecological and economic damage as in the case of the Zebra Mussel in North America, which costs an estimated \$100 million per year in damage and control measures⁴.

Therefore KIMO, in recognition of the need to improve the regulation and safety of Ship-to-Ship transfers in Northern Seas and to protect the marine environment and coastal communities, and having regard to KIMO Resolution 1/03;

Urges

Northern Seas States to act in unison at the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and within the European Union to establish regulations for Ship-to-Ship transfers in all waters, incorporating the basic principles below:

- **Port States should have the power to refuse applications for ship-to-ship transfers within their territorial waters**
- **Applications to carry out ship-to-ship transfers must include a Environmental Impact Assessment**
- **Applications for ship-to-ship transfers must have a contingency plan to cover a worst-case scenario spill**
- **Tugs and emergency response vessels, with the capacity to deal with a worst case scenario spill, must be on station for the duration of the transfer**
- **Provision of a local pilot for the duration of the transfer and berthing operations**
- **Set minimum requirements for the moorings, fenders and stability of the vessel during transfer.**
- **Restrictions on operations in poor weather conditions**
- **A ban on deballasting in coastal waters**
- **The restriction of ship-to-ship transfers to designated harbour areas, where appropriate**
- **Local Authority(s) involvement in the approval process at the earliest opportunity**

KIMO members:

Agree to submit this Resolution to all National Governments, the European Commission and other relevant organisations.

*This Resolution was agreed unanimously by Delegates at the 16th KIMO International Annual General Meeting in Helsingborg, Sweden on October 8th, 2006 and became KIMO policy upon that date.

⁴ PIMENTEL et al, Environmental and Economic Costs of Nonindigenous Species in the United States *January 2000 / Vol. 50 No. 1. BioScience* 53