

Trip Report of the Second Meeting of the US/USSR Working Group on
Pollution from Shipping

The Joint US/USSR Working Group on Marine Pollution from Shipping met in the Soviet Union during the period 19 August through 2 September 1973. The purpose of this meeting was to examine various Soviet facilities concerned with marine pollution problems and to discuss future joint efforts for the program.

ITINERARY

The U. S. delegation arrived in Moscow on 19 August and checked in at the "Moscow Hotel." Two days of meetings at the Ministry of the Merchant Marine, beginning 20 August, were held in order to give the U. S. delegation a general overview of marine pollution control in the Soviet Union. On the first day of meetings, the principal speaker was Mr. V. F. Kostin from the Ministry of Water Resources, which is the primary law enforcement agency in this particular field. Other speakers included Mrs. A. V. Tsybul from HYDROMET, Mr. F. L. Ryzhov of the Ministry of the River Fleet, Mr. V. P. Volokhov of the Ministry of Fisheries, and Captain K. V. Bannov of the Ministry of the Merchant Marine. Mr. Aleksandr P. Morozov, chairman of the Soviet delegation, was the official host of the U. S. delegation and chairman of the meetings in Moscow.

Sightseeing during the initial stay in Moscow included a visit to Lenin's Tomb and a tour of the Armoury Chamber within the Kremlin. Additionally, the U. S. delegation toured the "Metro" subway system in Moscow under the guidance of Mr. Morozov.

On 22 August the U. S. delegation, Mr. Morozov and Captain Bannov departed for the port of Odessa. Upon arrival in Odessa, the contingent was met by Mr. Sergei Nunuparov, the Director of the Black Sea Design Bureau, Captain Yuriy B. Dimov, a member of the initial Soviet delegation to the U. S. and a Division Manager of the Black Sea Designing Bureau, and Mr. V. V. Philipenko, the Manager of the External Relations Department of the Black Sea Shipping Company. The Working Group was housed in the Krasnaya Hotel.

Two days of discussions took place at the Sailor's Rest Home of the Black Sea Shipping Company. During these discussions, additional papers were presented by the Soviet side explaining, in general terms, the technological program of the Shipping Company for removing discharged oil and preventing the discharge of oil from vessels.

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Sightseeing included a guided tour of the city of Odessa, a demonstration of an oil/garbage collection vessel, a performance of the Odessa Ballet Company, a tour of the offices of the Black Sea Design Bureau, a tour of a Soviet-flag dry cargo vessel, and a tour of the fifteen mile oil port of Illyitchovsk.

On the evening of 26 August, the Working Group departed Odessa for Novorossiysk aboard the M/V "Shota Rustaveli", a passenger cruise ship of the Black Sea Steamship Company. The trip lasted two days and included a twelve hour stopover in Yalta. A working session was held aboard ship after departure from Yalta.

On 27 August, the Working Group arrived in Novorossiysk and was met by Mr. Leonid Krystyn, the General Technical Manager of the Novorossiysk Shipping Company and a member of the first Soviet delegation to the U. S.

The first day in Novorossiysk included a tour of a Soviet-flag tanker of approximately 40,000 DWT, and a demonstration of the port's oil spill response equipment and capabilities.

On 28 August, the Working Group examined a "shore-reception facility" for treating dirty ballast water from tankers calling at the port to load oil. After lunch, the Working Group toured the winery at Abrau-Dyurso.

The Working Group departed Novorossiysk on 29 August and sailed on board a "Kometa" type hydrofoil craft to Tuapse where another shore-reception facility was toured. This facility utilizes a different treating system and provided the American delegation the opportunity to compare the two methods of oil-water separation.

After a short stay in Tuapse, the Working Group continued on to Sochi for the flight to Moscow the next day.

On 30 August, the Working Group returned to Moscow for the purpose of negotiating an agreement on the program for 1974 and preparing a Protocol. The Protocol was signed on 31 August by Morozov for the Soviet Union and Captain Wallace for the U. S. (see attachment 1).

Social and Cultural Activities

In addition to sightseeing in each of the cities visited, the U. S. delegation attended performances of the Odessa Ballet Company in Odessa and the Tashkent Ballet Company at the Palace of Congresses in Moscow, and received tours of the site of the "Yalta Conference" and the Abrau-Dyurso Winery near Novorossiysk.

Three official dinners were given in honor of the U. S. Delegation. While these dinners were extremely lavish, it was noted that there was little difference between unofficial dinners and official dinners, all of the dinners would qualify as feasts.

There were few opportunities to speak with Soviet citizens other than those people associated with the program. When the opportunities did arise, however, the U. S. delegation was quick to take advantage of the situation. As a result, those people were given an opportunity to see Americans in real life situations. Interestingly enough, the inability to speak Russian by the Americans and English by the Soviets did not hamper the ability to converse with the people. The exchange of thoughts was usually made through sign language and a significant number of toasts.

Negotiations for the Program

Negotiations for the development of a Protocol for this meeting of the Working Group began when the delegations returned to Moscow from the Black Sea area. It became apparent at the first meeting that in order to develop an agreement which would provide for a meaningful program, a significant amount of work would have to be accomplished. This was in sharp contrast to the meeting in the U. S., where there was no true negotiating, merely acceptance of U. S. proposals. One of the reasons for this was that the U. S. side was now in a position to know more about marine pollution control activities in the Soviet Union and was therefore more precise in its proposals for the program.

The first proposal for the 1974 program was made by the Soviet side. It was actually in the form of a counter-proposal to the Soviet Arctic test program made at the meeting in the U. S. The proposal, made by Mrs. Tsybul of HYDROMET, was basically to study the effects of oil in low temperature conditions. The U. S. side studied this proposal and indicated that it might be an acceptable exchange for a Soviet technician to take part in U. S. tests of oil spill containment and recovery equipment in low temperature conditions. However, after additional consideration, the U. S. side determined that the proposal was outside the purview of the Working Group and strongly recommended that it be transmitted to the Working Group on Effects of Pollutants on Marine Organisms for their consideration. This was accepted by the Soviet side, but it did leave the Arctic project in jeopardy. The Soviet side was willing to send a technician to the U. S. test, but they could not make any firm commitments regarding similar Soviet tests. This was acceptable to the U. S. after the Soviets agreed to investigate the feasibility of U. S. participation in their testing program.

For the most part, the development of the Protocol was left with the U. S. side. Apparently, the Soviets felt more comfortable about passing judgment on proposals rather than developing their own. It was an obvious mistake then for the U. S. delegation to go to the Soviet Union without firm proposals worked out in the U. S. Time was lost in developing original proposals and little opportunity was given to the U. S. side to work out proposals. It must be stated however that the Soviet side had no proposals prepared in advance, other than the aforementioned Arctic test.

The Protocol that was finally agreed upon is the culmination of long hours of work on the last two days of the visit. The Soviets were quite amenable to accepting the Protocol as written by the U. S. side, with some minor modifications and additions.

The Protocol lists some joint projects for 1974, but they are couched in general terms. What specific terms for these projects could be established by project leaders who will head-up each individual project in consultation with the co-chairmen. The principle thrust of the Protocol is again oriented towards data and information exchanges.

General Observations

There were no major problems encountered during the visit, but there are some observations worthy of note.

It was obvious to all members of the delegation that we were kept under surveillance, both electronic and visual, while at least in Moscow. This may have been limited to this delegation because of the large number of military personnel. It was felt that the Soviets do not clearly understand the position of the Coast Guard in the military structure and may have been quite concerned about unescorted U. S. military presence in Moscow.

The itinerary proposed by the Soviet side allowed sufficient time for working sessions but, as it evolved in reality, the time allotted for working sessions was reduced by overruns of other events. This seriously hindered the amount of work which would be accomplished and resulted in extreme exhaustion on the part of all participants. When asked if an event could be cancelled or cut short, Mr. Morozov would reply that he too was only a guest and we were in the hands of other hosts. It was felt that this situation could be alleviated in the future by insisting well in advance on keeping to the schedule, particularly work sessions.

As previously stated in "Negotiations for the Program" the fact that neither side had firm proposals for the Protocol caused considerable difficulty in the final negotiations.

The overall attitude of the U. S. delegation at the end of the trip was pessimistic. The Soviets appear to be far behind the U. S. in the technical aspects of marine pollution control and seem to be interested in receiving as much technical information as possible while giving as little as they can. Documents received from the Soviets thus far have been superficial and general and foretell of the tenor of their future input to the program. It must be kept in mind that the Soviet side is represented by the Ministry of the Merchant Marine which is the "regulated", while the Coast Guard, on the U. S. side is the "regulator"

which may hinder gathering information on research programs conceived by other Ministries. The quality and quantity of information received in the next six months and the level of Soviet participation in joint programs heretofore agreed to, will establish the direction of the program for the future.

Report on First Meeting of US/USSR Working Group on Marine Pollution
from Shipping

The Joint US/USSR Working Group on Marine Pollution from Shipping met in the United States during the period 14 May through 27 May 1973. During this period discussions were held to identify areas of mutual interest for future projects and field trips were made to a variety of facilities in the U. S. dealing with marine pollution matters.

Itinerary

After arriving in New York and proceeding to Washington on 13 May, the Soviet delegation met the U. S. delegation and departed on 14 May for the U. S. Coast Guard Academy at New London, Connecticut. At this time the two delegations, included participants in the Shipping group as well as the Working Group on Marine Pollution from Oil and Gas Well Drilling and Producing Operations. A 1 1/2 day joint conference was held at the Academy, during which background information was exchanged regarding such items as bureaucratic organization and state-of-the-art technology in pollution prevention. At the end of the joint conference, the Oil Production Working Group departed for New Orleans, while the Shipping group remained at the Academy for further discussions.

From 15 May through 17 May, the Shipping group met and discussed items for inclusion in the minutes of agreement (Protocol, see encl (1)).

On 17 May, the Shipping group departed New London and made a brief stop at Logan Airport in Boston, Massachusetts to observe a demonstration of the JBF Skimmer, an oil removal device. This demonstration was included in the itinerary at the specific request of the Soviet delegation.

The group then departed for U. S. Coast Guard Air Station Cape Cod where a reception was hosted by the Air Station in honor of the Soviet delegation. On 18 May, the group toured the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution at Woods Hole, Massachusetts and was given the opportunity to discuss the problems of marine pollution, particularly oil pollution, with the staff of the Institution. The group then departed the Cape Cod for a visit to Philadelphia.

On the morning of 19 May, the group toured the BP Refinery at Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania and observed the operation of a new tertiary treatment facility for oily wastewater. In the afternoon, the group toured the EPA Laboratory at Edison, New Jersey and viewed demonstrations of various oil discharge research projects.

During the period 20 May through 22 May, the group held a series of meetings at the Coast Guard Reserve Training Center at Yorktown, Virginia, and on 21 May toured the AMOCO Refinery to observe treatment facilities for oily ballast water.

On 23 May, the group returned to Washington and visited the facilities of Ocean Systems Incorporated at Reston, Virginia. On 24 May, a tour of Bethlehem Steel Shipyard and a boarding of two merchant vessels were conducted.

The minute of agreement was signed by the chairman of each delegation at Coast Guard Headquarters on 25 May.

The Soviet delegation departed Washington for the Soviet Union on 27 May.

Negotiations for Future Program

The U. S. side had prepared a draft version of the Protocol, which included only U. S. proposals, and presented it to the Soviet side near the end of the two week visit. The Soviet side reviewed it and, after some minor alterations, readily accepted it as the Protocol.

The Protocol was written in relatively vague terms because of a lack of knowledge on behalf of the U. S. side of Soviet expertise in the area. We were hesitant to propose any specific joint projects because it was not known in which direction their interests focused. The Soviet acceptance of the U. S. Protocol leads one to believe that they had similar concerns and that they were not ready to propose specific joint projects at that time.

The most significant aspect of the Protocol is the exchange of information. Once this exchange is underway on a regular basis, an understanding of the relative size of the pollution problem in each country can be ascertained and weighed against the efforts to combat it. This will also place both sides on equal footing with regard to the technical expertise of the other, and provide a basis for a worthwhile cooperative effort.

Problems Encountered and General Observations

There were two problem areas which arose in setting up the meeting and carrying it out. The first was caused by poor communications between the U. S. side and the Soviet side, and led to severe difficulty in establishing an itinerary and draft Protocol for the first meeting. Since the problem of marine pollution is extremely broad, it was difficult to focus on a particular subject area without knowing where Soviet interests lay. The problem was alleviated somewhat by the division of the Working Group on Marine Pollution into two subgroups; one for pollution from shipping sources and the other for pollution from petroleum industry sources, specifically offshore drilling and production operations. This enabled each subgroup to concentrate on more specific areas.

The second problem encountered dealt with poor communications within the U. S. government. It was the understanding of the U. S. delegation that approval of the proposed itinerary included review by other concerned agencies. This was apparently not the case, since the U. S. Navy expressed concern during the meeting about having Soviet citizens in the vicinity of the submarine base at Groton, Connecticut. Since the Defense Department is concerned about the whereabouts of Soviet citizens while in the U. S. it is felt that approval of all itineraries should include DOD review.

In general, it was felt that the first meeting went very well, and provided a valuable learning experience. In the future, as more information is obtained, the program will become more definitive and workable. Several joint programs are being considered on an informal basis by both delegations and will be discussed further at the next meeting of the Working Group.