

## Press Release

### **UPDATE ON WAKASHIO VESSEL AS AT NOON** **ON SATURDAY AUGUST 22, 2020**

1. The planned sinking of the stem (forward) section of the casualty had to be temporarily stopped during the night due to rough sea conditions. The Chief Salvage Master is also initiating other alternatives for self-filling of cargo holds to take place. The operation is being monitored by the National Coast Guard.
2. Pumping operations regarding the remaining diesel oil in the engine room of the aft (back) section will be completed by this evening. All other floating items and pollutants including 3.3 metric tons of paint have been removed.
3. An international Invitation To Tender (ITT) for the removal of the aft (back) section of the casualty has already been floated by the Special Casualty Representative.
4. The National Crisis Committee took note of:

- a.** the progress of cleanup of ongoing exercises at Riviere des Creoles, Bois des Amourettes and Vieux Grand Port.
  - b.** the oil slick accumulated at the Mahebourg Waterfront was not due to a further spill from the engine room in the aft (back) section of the casualty but, as a result of trap oil being swept out with the tides.
  - c.** the arrangements made for a more rapid response for cleanup of the affected areas which will now be conducted by two (2) service providers who will each be responsible for specific zones under the supervision of International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation Ltd (ITOPF).
  - d.** the findings of the joint survey conducted by Polyeco at the oil impacted regions will be instrumental for lagoon depollution in a systematic manner by way of daily monitoring.
- 5.** Upon removal of all oil from the aft (back) section, the strategy for the deployment of booms will be reviewed for them to better serve their purpose especially in sensitive locations.

6. Daily assessment of the level of contaminants and other nuisance is ongoing in the affected areas. The National Environmental Laboratory reported that, the Volatile Organic Compound level was below the Lowest-Observed-Adverse-Effect-Level (LOAEL) of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA).

7. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and local stakeholders including NGO's is in the process of conducting consultations with the local community in view of the collection of data for the socio-economic survey. Twelve (12) village councils areas are being targeted.

**National Crisis Committee**

**Saturday August 22, 2020**