

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION**  
**Division of Spill Prevention and Response**  
**Prevention and Emergency Response Program**

**SITUATION REPORT**

**INCIDENT NAME:** Empress of the North Grounding      **SITREP #:** Sitrep 1

**SPILL NUMBER:** To be assigned      **LEDGER CODE:**

**TIME/DATE OF SPILL:** At approximately 12:35 AM on May 14, 2007, the vessel sent a radio report to the U.S. Coast Guard reporting the incident.

**TIME/DATE OF SITUATION REPORT:** 9:30 AM, May 14, 2007.

**TIME/DATE OF THE NEXT REPORT:** 2:00 PM, May 14, 2007

**TYPE/AMOUNT OF PRODUCT SPILLED:** Unknown at this time. Light sheen has been observed in the immediate area that may be due to the vessel. The vessel's crew reported there was approximately 25,000 gallons of diesel fuel oil on board the vessel at the time of the grounding. One empty fuel tank was breached during the grounding.

**LOCATION:** The vessel grounded on Hanus Reef, a charted and marked reef, near the intersection of Icy Strait and Chatham Strait (Southeast Alaska) about 25 air miles southwest of Juneau.

**CAUSE OF SPILL:** The vessel struck Hanus Reef resulting in significant damage to the vessel's hull.

**POTENTIAL RESPONSIBLE PARTY (PRP):** Majestic America Cruise Line or American West Steamboat Co

**RESPONSE ACTION:**

The Empress of the North, a 360-foot stern-wheeler style cruise ship, struck Hanus Reef at the southern end of Icy Strait at approximately 12:35 AM on May 14, 2007. The U.S. Coast Guard received a radio report from the vessel which had 281 passengers and crew aboard. Passengers were safely evacuated to other vessels in the area. These include the tug Tiger, USCG Cutter Liberty, Spirit of Endeavor, personal watercraft, fishing boats and the state ferry Columbia. No life rafts were reportedly used during the evacuation and passengers were transferred ship to ship. All passengers were transferred to the state ferry Columbia. The Columbia will bring all passengers to the Auke Bay Terminal. The double-bottomed vessel is less than 400 gross tons and therefore not regulated by the Department's non-tank vessel regulations.

The vessel began taking on water upon striking the charted and marked reef and began listing 8 degrees. The vessel floated free of the reef on the incoming tide and is no longer taking on water. Currently at Pt. Retreat, the vessel is en route to the Marine Highway Dock in Auke Bay under its own power. Estimated time of arrival is 10 AM this morning. Divers are being located and enlisted to survey the vessel hull and assess damage. Preliminary reports are that one empty fuel tank was breached during the grounding.

The vessel owners intend to fly all passengers to Seattle today. The City and Borough of Juneau has opened their command post to coordinate passenger needs when they come ashore. The USCG aerial overflight to monitor for possible pollution is currently ongoing.

**SOURCE CONTROL:** Water is entering the double hull but not the vessel's interior. Southeast Alaska Petroleum Resource Organization (SEAPRO), one of several Alaska spill cooperatives, has been notified and is ramping up. The oil spill response vessel (OSRV) Neka Bay and one 249-barrel barge are on standby in Juneau. SEAPRO also has a barge in Gustavus.

**RESOURCES AFFECTED:** Unknown at this time. Light sheen was reported in the immediate area of the stricken vessel possibly related to the vessel.

**FUTURE PLANS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:** The vessel owners are currently evaluating plans for management and disposition of the vessel with salvors.

**WEATHER:** Southeasterly winds 20 knots, becoming southerly at 10 knots in the afternoon. Seas four feet in the morning, then subsiding in the afternoon. Rain likely, decreasing in the afternoon, highs around 51 degrees.

**UNIFIED COMMAND AND PERSONNEL:**

Incident Commander:  
F.O.S.C.: CPT Mark Guillory, USCG Sector Juneau  
S.O.S.C.: Scot Tiernan, ADEC  
Field S.O.S.C.:

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Scot W. Tiernan at 907-465-5378  
Photographs and other spill information are available for viewing at:  
<http://www.state.ak.us/dec/spar/perp/index.htm>

**AGENCY/STAKEHOLDER NOTIFICATION LIST**

This sitrep has been distributed via email to the Governor's office, ADF&G, ADNR, SECC, USEPA, USDOJ, NMFS, USFWS, and USFS in addition to the following.

Agency	Name	Sent Via	Additional Info	Telephone	Fax
Senate Dist. A	Senator Bert Stedman	E-mail	senator_bert_stedman@legis.state.ak.us	465-3873	465-3922
Senate Dist. B	Senator Kim Elton	Fax		465-4947	465-2108
Senate Dist. C	Senator Al Kookesh	Fax		465-3473	456-2827
House Dist. 2	Representative Peggy Wilson	Fax		465-3824	465-3175
House Dist. 3	Representative Beth Kerttula	Fax		465-4766	465-4748
House Dist. 4	Representative Andrea Doll	Fax		465-3744	465-2273
House Dist. 5	Representative Bill Thomas	Fax		465-3732	465-2652
USCG (MSD Ketchikan)	LT Jason Boyer	Email	jason.a.boyer@uscg.mil	225-4496	225-4499
USCG (Sector Juneau)	Lt. Chris Williammee	Email	Christopher.J.Williammee@uscg.mil	463-2470	463-2445
USDA Forest Service - Tongass Env. Engineer	Michele Marie Parker	Email	mmparker@fs.fed.us	772-5850	772-5895
NMFS	Jon Kurland	Email	jon.kurland@noaa.gov	586-7638	586-7358
ADF&G	Tom Schumacher	Email	tom_schumacher@fishgame.state.ak.us	465-4346	
ADNR Petersburg	Jim Cariello	Email	jim_cariello@dnr.state.ak.us	772-5224	772-9336
Angoon Community Association	President Edward Gamble, Sr.	Fax		788-3411	788-3412
Organized Village of Kake	President Heinrich Kadake	Fax		785-6471	785-4902
Petersburg Indian Association	President Michael Lopez	Fax		772-3636	772-2991
City and Borough of Juneau	Manager Rod Swope	E-mail	city_clerk@ci.juneau.ak.us	586-5240	586-5385
City of Kake	Mayor Henrich Kadake	E-mail	violette_a@hotmail.com	785-3804	785-4815
City of Petersburg	Manager Bruce Jones	E-mail	clerk@ci.petersburg.ak.us	772-4519	772-3759
SEAPRO	Dave Owings	E-mail	dave@seapro.org	225-7002	247-1117
City and Borough of Juneau	Mike Patterson - Emergency Response Coordinator	E-mail	michael_patterson@ci.juneau.ak.us	586-0221	586-5385

