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- ◆ O'Briens Oil Pollution Service ("OOPS") and Ulysses Systems recently announced that they signed an agreement to jointly market OOPS maritime consulting services and Ulysses' Task Assistant applications software for the maritime industry. (Source: *Edie Weekly Summaries*)
- ◆ Rocky Mountain Laboratories ("RML"), a part of the National Institute of Health, is set to become the federal governments fourth Biosafety Level 4 research facility, handling the world's most dangerous microbes to help develop defenses against bioterrorism. Located in Montana's Bitterroot Mountains, RML pioneered research into Rocky Mountain spotted fever and Lyme disease. It has now been approved for a \$66 million expansion for bioterrorism research, including upgrades to the maximum security level. (Source: *AP*)
- ◆ The Research and Special Programs Administration ("RSPA") of the U.S. Department of Transportation is proposing new requirements to enhance the security of hazardous materials transported in commerce. Proposals include the requirement for motor carriers registered with the agency to maintain a copy of their current registration certificate in each vehicle, and the requirement for shipping papers to include the name and address of the consignor and consignee along with the shipper's DOT Hazmat Registration number. They are also proposing a requirement for shippers and carriers of certain highly hazardous materials to develop and implement security plans. RSPA is seeking comments on the proposals by June 3, 2002, and they should be sent to the Docket Management Service, U.S. Department of Transportation, Room PL 401, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington DC 20590-0001. Comments should identify docket number RSPA-02-12064 (HM-232), and submitted in two copies. Comments may also be submitted electronically by accessing the Docket Management System on-line at www.dms.dot. (Sources: *Federal Register* and *Maritime Items*)
- ◆ For the first time ever, a group of Finnish scientists have demonstrated the practical usability of satellite data for the simultaneous monitoring of water quality in large lake and coastal regions. Carried out by the Laboratory of Space Technology of the Helsinki University of Technology in cooperation with the Finnish Environment Institute, one of the interesting aspects of the project is that the methodology used to perform the monitoring also enables the detection of rapidly evolving phenomena such as algae blooms or oil spills. (Source: *spacer.com*) ***Editor's Note: We'd also like to note that satellite imagery was used on the recent spill on the Rouge and Detroit Rivers in Michigan. Space Imaging, a Denver area***

company that sells satellite images to real estate developers, media organizations, urban planners, and the government, began taking shots of the spill using the IKONOS satellite orbiting some 423 miles above the earth.

- ◆ Late last month, the U.S. Navy granted U.S.-based MH Systems \$1 million to fund further research into the development its American UnderPressure System (“AUPS”), an inert gas circulation technology. The San Diego naval architect firm has been a longstanding advocate of the AUPS, a controversial design that is comparable to the double hull concept in terms of oil spill prevention. The AUPS uses a vacuum to ensure that pressure inside and outside a

single hull tank is equalized at the line of rupture so that flow does not occur. The Coast Guard has, for the most part, been unwilling to look at alternatives to double hulls. The new funding will also be used in part to address the problem of volatile organic compounds emissions in transit (i.e., the evaporation of oil into the atmosphere). (Source: *Lloyd's List*)

- ◆ According to the Occupational Health and Safety Administration's ("OSHA's") recently released site specific targeting inspection plan, some 3,000 worksites that reported 14 or more injuries or illnesses resulting in lost work days or restricted activity for every 100 full-time workers for the year 2000 will be inspected by the agency in the near future. Worksites that reported between 8 and 14 lost-time injuries or illnesses will be placed on a secondary list for possible inspection. The average lost workday injury and illness rate for private industry in the nation is three cases per 100 workers. (Source: *SafetyNews*)
- ◆ The White House may make the Office of Homeland Security ("OHS") a cabinet level agency as Congress intensifies its demands to make Director Tom Ridge subject to oversight and to provide more statutory authority for the agency. Several Senators, including Senate Appropriations Chairman Robert Byrd (D-West Virginia) and Ranking Member Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) have increased calls for Ridge to testify before their committees. The OHS has been characterized as a "toothless tiger" because it lacks the budget authority to coordinate more than 40 federal agencies involved in homeland security. Some Republicans have argued, however, that making the OHS a cabinet level agency would create unnecessary complexity and could complicate efforts to give the office authority over other cabinet level departments. (Source: *Emergency Preparedness News*)
- ◆ The unemployment rate in the U.S. climbed to 6% in April, the highest point in nearly eight years. According to the Labor Department, the jobless rate rose despite the fact that U.S. companies added new jobs for the first time in months. Job growth in services, which is normally an engine of job creation in the U.S., rose by 87,000, somewhat recouping job losses that totaled 245,000 in October and November 2001. (Source: *New York Times/AP*)
- ◆ The International Tanker Owner's Pollution Federation ("ITOPF") has published its 2002/2003 Handbook, which can be downloaded free of charge at their website www.itopf.com. Several additional publications developed by the organization (e.g., Oil Spill Database Information Pack, Annual Review, Technical Information Papers, etc.) are also available for download free of charge, as are papers that their representatives have prepared for publication and/or presentation in recent years.
- ◆ **Work/Life/Health:** With spring here and summer fast approaching, chances are planning will begin in the near future for company picnics or outings. Take the following into consideration when planning your event to help keep the potential for lawsuits at a minimum: (1.) **Choose the locations and activities carefully.** Exotic locations and/or many activities may increase the risk of employee injury. (2.) **Check the site out**, particularly if its never been used by the company. (3.) **Reduce food related risks** by ensuring any caterer's are licensed and certified, and be sure employees are notified that they must inform management of any food-related allergies or dietary needs. (4.) **Grill duties**, if performed by employees, should be left to management. (5.) **Keep drinking to a minimum.** (6.) **Have a first aid kit available.** (7.) **Make attendance voluntary.** (8.) **Before the event**, remind employees of the company's harassment and behavior policies. (9.) **Take any and all complaints seriously**, and respond promptly and appropriately. (Source: *Manager's Legal Bulletin*)
- ◆ **Quote of the Week:** "A dwarf standing on the shoulders of a giant may see farther than a giant himself." – Robert Burton (1577-1640), *Democritus to the Reader*