

## Press Advisory 2.02.06:

# Tanker aground in Cook Inlet prompts calls for better 'extreme ice' safety measures

## Shipping Safety Partnership, Alaska

Contact: Rick Steiner, University of Alaska Marine Advisory Program, Anchorage  
907-786-4156, < afrgs@uaa.alaska.edu >  
Shelley Johnson, Alaska Oceans Program, 907-929-9375  
< shelley@alaskaoceans.org >  
Bob Shavelson, Cook Inlet Keeper – 907-299-3277  
< bob@inletkeeper.org >

This morning's grounding of the petroleum product tanker "Seabulk Pride" in Alaska's Cook Inlet prompted calls from the Shipping Safety Partnership for improved safety measures in extreme ice conditions in Cook Inlet. The US Coast Guard had just imposed new "extreme ice rules" Monday (attached), but obviously these were not enough to avert a serious vessel casualty. The Seabulk Pride was pushed off its mooring by severe ice-flows in the Inlet.

Today at approx. 6:00 AM the oil tanker 574-foot long "Seabulk Pride" was pulled off the KPL dock in Nikiski while loading, and now rests hard aground a half mile from the dock. USCG reports product in the water; amount undetermined but no significant hull breaches identified at this time.

The tanker is double hulled....Specs: <http://www.seabulkinternational.com/fleetlist/marinespec2.cfm?id=10&pg=ab>  
<<http://www.seabulkinternational.com/fleetlist/marinespec2.cfm?id=10&pg=ab>>  
<<http://www.seabulkinternational.com/fleetlist/marinespec2.cfm?id=10&pg=ab>>

This is a very dangerous situation, one that should have been avoided with better oversight and rules.

The Shipping Safety Partnership immediately called for improved extreme ice condition protocols including:

1. **tug escorts on stand-by and tethered to loading and transiting tankers if necessary, and**
2. **suspension of loading and navigation in the Inlet when ice conditions preclude effective rescue or spill response.**

For reference, the US Coast Guard's 1/30/06 Extreme Ice Condition rule letter is attached.

Also, for reference, a previous incident not mentioned in the 1/30 Coast Guard letter is discussed briefly below:

### **Cook Inlet -- Chesapeake Trader**

**Spill Date:** February 6

**Product/Quantity:** Approximately 420 gallons of crude oil

**Cause:** Hull damage

Due to ice conditions, the vessel master of the Chesapeake Trader decided to cease transfer operations and pull away from the dock at Nikiski. While headed south in Cook Inlet, vessel crew observed a sheen trailing from the tanker. A crack was discovered in the #1 starboard wing tank near the water line. Damage to the hull was likely caused by collision with a heavy ice floe. The oil in the damaged tank was transferred to other undamaged tanks on the vessel. No shoreline or wildlife impacts from the leaked oil have been observed. As a result of this incident, Tesoro Maritime Company, Mormac, Attranco Ship Management Company and the Southwest Pilots developed guidelines to assist vessel Masters when prolonged periods of sub-zero temperatures increase the amount of ice coverage and the hardness of the ice. The Guidelines were approved by ADEC and the U. S. Coast Guard.