



**GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND ENERGY INDUSTRIES**

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Media Release



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## **OPERATIONS MOVE TOWARDS HYDROCARBON REMOVAL PHASE**

The Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries advises that steps have been taken to progress operations to the hydrocarbon removal phase of the overturned vessel off the coast of Cove, Tobago. Investigations inclusive of a tank-by-tank analysis to determine both the product and volume onboard the overturned vessel is currently underway. This tank-by-tank approach was selected as it is believed to be the least likely to cause further environmental impacts.

The vessel has twelve (12) cargo carrying tanks, some of which are surface accessible, while others are partially or fully submerged. The vessel also has a double hull structure which requires the creation of a manhole in the outer hull before attempts can be made to access each inner tank. Thus far, six manholes in the outer hull have been completed using a mobile water jet cutter. Additional manholes in the outer hull to facilitate access to the remaining tanks are ongoing with operations to penetrate the inner cargo tanks to follow. This tank-by-tank strategy will continue until all tanks are assessed.

Required equipment for this exercise were locally acquired, where available, with support personnel also sourced from Trinidad and Tobago.

A two-vessel configuration utilizing the NOFI Current Buster system continues to patrol the affected area as an added layer of protection for any incidental releases as weather conditions and rough seas have proven to be a limiting factor in the execution of operations. A solar powered position and motion system has been installed on the wreck to monitor any movement 24/7 during this critical phase.

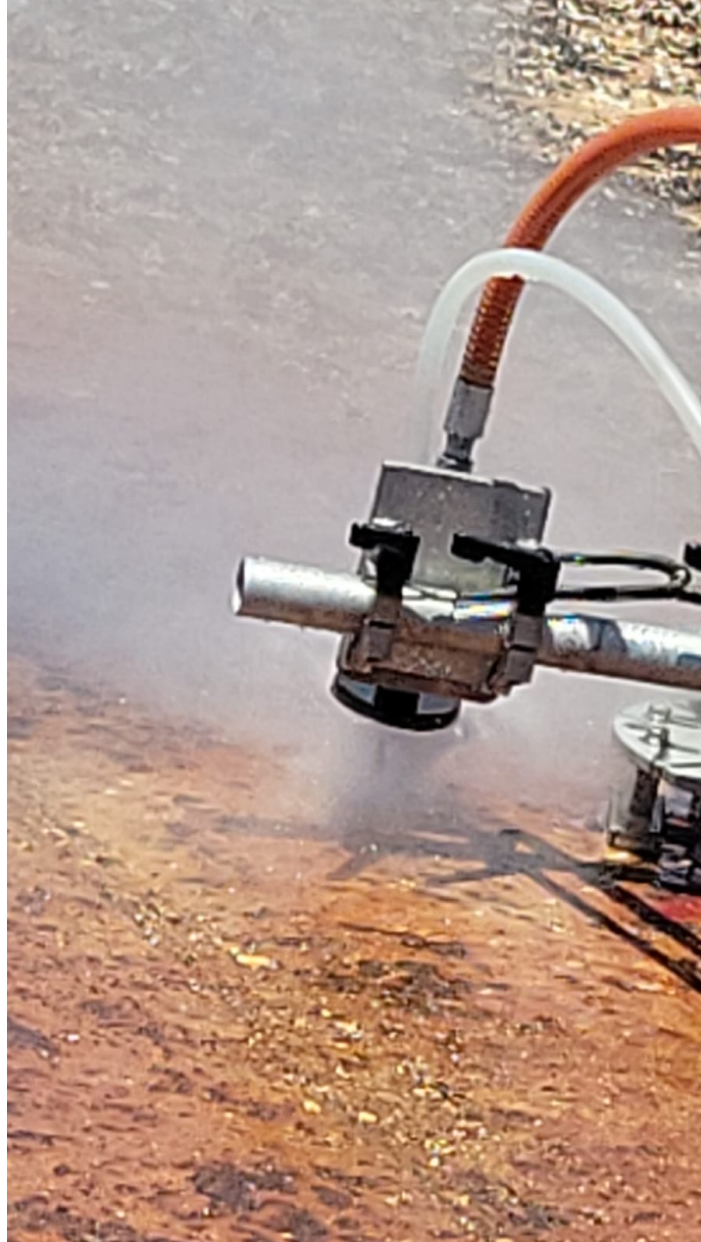
TT Salvage/ QT Environmental, retained by the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, remains onsite in Tobago. The salvage and response team comprising of naval architect, commercial salvage divers and other salvage and response personnel is led by an internationally recognized salvage master and project management team.

The technical staff at the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries continue to provide support to all stakeholders. Maintaining the safety of all response personnel remain paramount during these operations.

END



The locally acquired mobile water jet cutter used to penetrate the hull.



The mobile water jet cutter used to penetrate the hull.



The successful penetration of the first tank.