Self-Propelled Semi-Submersibles (SPSS) – A Continuing Threat
SPSS: A Significant Threat
Current & Potential SPSS Threats

**SPSS CHALLENGES**

- Built in remote jungle regions
- Limited Intel on SPSS routes
- Low profile is very difficult to detect
- Support vessels monitor LE presence
- High frequency of scuttling
Actions to Counter the Threat

- Multi-prong response to SPSS challenge
  - Develop actionable intelligence through focused operations and investigative work
  - Create tailored boarding Tactics, Techniques & Procedures (TTP)
  - Legislation to enable prosecution of SPSS crew without the recovery of contraband
The Drug Trafficking Vessel Interdiction Act of 2008  
(P.L. 110-407; 18 U.S.C. 2285)

- Felony To Operate or Embark in Unregistered SPSS
- Immediate Impact on Operations:
  - Consequence Delivery Ensured
  - Improves Safety
- Must Prove at Time of Interdiction
  - SPSS is Without Nationality
  - Operating in International Waters
  - Intent to Evade Detection

U.S. Prosecution Results

- 11 US SPSS Prosecutions Since 12/31/08
  - 9 DTVIA Prosecutions
  - 2 MDLEA Cases
  - 43 Defendants
  - 28 Defendants Convicted
  - Remaining Cases Pend
  - DTVIA Cases Receive Average of 108 Months
  - MDLEA Cases Receive 135 Months +
Why is This Important?

- Stateless vessels
- Account for approximately 1/3rd of maritime cocaine flow
- No legitimate purpose
- Built for stealth
- Designed to scuttle
- Destroys evidence
- Dangerous to ALL personnel
- Hazard to navigation
- National security threat

May 2010: SPSS Interdiction
Conclusion/Recommendations

- Recommend Group of Experts on Maritime Narcotrafficking
  - Develop and Propose Model Legislation
  - Develop SPSS Tactics, Techniques & Procedures (TTP)