

SPILLCON

20 – 24 May 2019
Perth, Australia

SPEAKER

Dr Polly Hill

Dr Polly Hill is Wreck Environmental Scientist for the UK Ministry of Defence. Along with her Wreck Researcher colleague, Matt Skelhorn, she manages an inventory of around 5,000 military shipwrecks globally. The shipwrecks date from around 1900 onwards, with the majority sunk during the First and Second World War, and each potentially containing significant quantities of fuel oil and munitions. As the only scientist in the team, Polly uses data to prioritise high risk shipwrecks for further investigation, minimising harm to the environment whilst delivering value for money to the UK tax payer.

Polly started her career in academic research, studying how microbial ecosystems respond to different environmental pressures. She completed her bachelors and postgraduate training at the University of Southampton, UK, and did post-doctoral research at the National Oceanography Centre, Southampton. Polly left academia behind in 2013 to put her concern for the environment into practice, pursuing a career in oil spill preparedness and response at Oil Spill Response Ltd (OSRL). At OSRL she completed extensive oil spill response training, wrote oil spill risk assessments and contingency plans, and produced oil spill modelling reports for both response and preparedness projects, using the OSCAR and OILMAP models. In 2017 she accepted her unique position in the Salvage and Marine Operations team at the UK Ministry of Defence in Bristol, where she's been introducing a more scientific approach to shipwreck management.