

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

On behalf of the National Plan Management Committee, I have pleasure in presenting the Annual Report of activities of the National Plan to Combat Pollution of the Sea by Oil and other Noxious and Hazardous Substances.

No major spills of oil or other substances occurred in Australian waters during the year. However, the National Plan was called upon to respond to nine oil spill incidents.

The National Plan also participated in the responses to two significant incidents overseas.

In February 2002, National Plan equipment and AMSA technical personnel assisted New Zealand authorities in the response to the grounding of the *Jody F Millennium* in Poverty Bay, Gisborne. The National Plan also provided equipment and technical support to assist Singaporean authorities in responding to an oil pollution incident off the port of Singapore.

Through the year, work continued in implementing the recommendations of the 2000 National Plan Review Report. Twelve of the seventeen recommendations contained in the Review Report have been implemented. The remaining five recommendations, generally relating to detailed funding arrangements, are currently being discussed in the National Plan Management Committee. Action on these recommendations is expected to be finalised in 2002-2003.

A key outcome of the 2000 National Plan Review was the decision to develop an intergovernmental agreement formalising the national approach to oil and chemical spill preparedness and response and cooperation between Federal, State and Northern Territory Governments. The agreement will strengthen the National Plan by providing a formal framework for cooperative decision making and ensuring that the obligations of all parties are met.

The National Plan Management Committee, in which Federal, State and Northern Territory authorities, shipping, oil and chemical industries and ports are represented, continued to provide advice to the Australian Transport Council on strategic and policy direction and funding arrangements for the National Plan. The Committee met in September 2001 and March 2002.

The National Plan Operations Group continued to support the Management Committee, addressing operational issues arising in the National Plan. The Group's activities are supported by three working groups - Oil Operations, Chemical Operations and Environmental - that continued to meet during the year.



Jim Starkey
Chairman
National Plan Management Committee
31 October 2002