

ACTIVITIES IN STATES AND THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

VICTORIA



SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS

There were no major spills in Victoria during the reporting period. However, the following five responses were mounted:

- July 2001, the vessel *Tasman* spilt 4,000 litres of unleaded petrol into the Yarra River at Holden Dock.
- August 2001, the container vessel *Maersk Tacoma* experienced engine failure and drifted between islands in Bass Strait in gale force winds. The vessel was initially towed to a place of refuge in Sealers Cove off Wilson's Promontory where damage to the engine was evaluated. The vessel was then towed to the Port of Melbourne where extensive repairs were undertaken.
- December 2001, heavy fuel oil was washed up on to the southern beaches of Phillip Island adversely impacting the penguin colony. A protracted shoreline clean up operation was required.
- December 2001, heavy fuel oil washed up at Moonlight Head, west of Cape Otway.
- December 2001, heavy fuel oil, which washed up on the back beaches of the Mornington Peninsula from Portsea to Gunnamatta, required a protracted shoreline clean up.

In all cases, Marine Safety Victoria's Incident and Pollution Coordination Centre was activated. The Regional, State and National Plans were activated and achieved extremely successful responses.

Other incidents of significance that required a coordinated response were:

- January 2002, bunker fuel washed onto the beaches of Portsea and Sorrento.
- February 2002, marine fuel oil and sewage spilled from the vessel *MV Corriedale Express* into Portland Harbour.
- February 2002, fuel oil washed up at Sealers Cove, on Wilson's Promontory.
- February 2002, lubricant additive washed up on Smiths Beach, Phillip Island.

There were 47 marine pollution incidents reported throughout the state during the reporting period. It was established that 19 spills originated from vessels, although in most cases, the offending vessel could not be identified. Eight of these were identified. A further 13 spills originated from land, with oil being carried into the marine environment by drains or other means. In the other 15 cases, the source was not identified.

LOCAL TRAINING

Marine Safety Victoria implemented an ongoing training program to support the nationally endorsed Incident Control System for managing marine pollution responses. This included developing an Oil Spill Response Incident Control System manual under licence to the Australasian Fire Authorities Council. The training program further streamlined and integrated marine pollution response with mainstream emergency management arrangements.

During the year Marine Safety Victoria trained over 180 personnel from a wide variety of agencies. Courses and workshops included - Introduction to Marine Pollution Response Arrangements, Oil Spill Response Management, Equipment Operator Training, Oil Spill Response Incident Control Training, Oil Spill Response Atlas Training, Equipment Operator Refresher Training, Shoreline Clean Up Training, Media Management Training, State Marine Pollution Controllers Workshop and Marine Pollution Exercise Management.

OIL SPILL RESPONSE ATLAS (OSRA)

Work continued on the development of OSRA for the Victorian coastline. The Atlas now provides details of geographical and environmental features, local infrastructure, coastline access, etc to assist planning, responses and protection of the environment in the event of an oil spill. The datasets were maintained and additional maps and datasets included. This was achieved with funding support from the National Plan.

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ENVIRONMENT & SCIENTIFIC COORDINATOR

The agreement with the Marine and Fresh Water Research Institute to provide Marine Safety Victoria with an Environment and Scientific Coordinator (ESC) continued this year. This enabled Victoria to further develop the Oil Spill Response Atlas (OSRA) and have representation on scientific and environmental issues at the national level. The ESC was also utilised in a number of the responses during the reporting period.

NEW SOUTH WALES



SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS

There were no significant incidents during the year.

LOCAL TRAINING

Newcastle Port Corporation (NPC) conducted a three-day Oil Spill Response Course, which incorporated a tabletop exercise and a half-day Equipment Deployment exercise during May 2002. NPC also ran two Shoreline Assessment and Clean up courses in Port Macquarie and Newcastle during the reporting period.

All operators at the Shell Terminal at Gore Bay have now completed an Advanced Fire Fighting training course held in Brisbane.

EXERCISES

Port Kembla Port Corporation (PKPC) conducted an Equipment Deployment exercise in October 2001 and a tabletop exercise at Port Kembla in November 2001.

Sydney Ports Corporation (SPC) exercised the Sydney Harbour Marine Disaster Plan during December 2001. SPC also conducted an Equipment Deployment exercise with Caltex at the Kurnell refinery during April 2002.

Port of Eden conducted an Equipment Deployment exercise during February 2002.

Shell conducted three exercises during the reporting period. These were a desktop tank fire

exercise with NSW Fire Brigades and SPC in July 2001, a major disaster exercise with NSW Police, Fire Brigades and SPC in September 2001 and a confined space rescue exercise held with NSW Fire Brigades in May 2002.

Caltex ran a desktop exercise to test the Sutherland Shire Local Emergency Plan.

EQUIPMENT ACQUISITION

The Sydney Ports Corporation purchased the following equipment:

- 500m of GP750 boom.
- 300m of Vikoma Hi-sprint boom.
- One Vikoma minivac system.

Newcastle Port Corporation repositioned the Waterways Authority oil spill response trailer from Coffs Harbour to Port Stephens.

OIL SPILL RESPONSE ATLAS (OSRA)

In accordance with the Data Preservation Plan the NSW Oil Spill Response Atlas (OSRA) underwent its annual upgrade and included:

- Shoreline birds theme upgrade using data collected by the National Parks and Wildlife Service and various bird study groups was continued and included Lord Howe Island sea birds;
- Roads theme for Lord Howe Island; and
- Updating of subtidal and intertidal habitats for estuaries in the Sydney region.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA



SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS

There were no major incidents during the reporting period. However, South Australian personnel responded to 36 minor incidents.

LOCAL TRAINING

A three-day Advanced Oil Spill Response course was conducted in Adelaide in December 2001. Twenty people attended the full course while an additional 15 people attended the course on the third day as a refresher.

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Eighteen people attended a one-day Oil Sampling workshop in Adelaide. The workshop was run to demonstrate procedures for sampling.

A one-day Oil Spill Response workshop was conducted in Adelaide for the Finance and Administration staff of Transport SA in May 2002.

EXERCISES

In July 2001, a desktop and practical deployment exercise was conducted in Thevenard for the staff from the SES, Country Fire Service, Flinders Ports, Wildlife, Police and Transport SA.

A desktop and practical deployment was conducted at the One Steel Wharf in Whyalla in November 2001. A total of 35 personnel attended. Equipment from Santos, One Steel and Transport SA was used during the exercise.

Santos, Transport SA and local emergency groups conducted a desktop and practical deployment of Santos/Transport SA equipment in March 2002 at Port Bonython. Forty-five personnel attended. The deployment exercise was well planned and organised. The desktop exercise recorded issues and highlighted problems when dealing with marine oil spills.

The exercises provided the opportunity:

- To familiarise/educate people both in the theoretical and practical aspects of an oil spill response.
- For overcoming problems in equipment failure when deploying gear and in recovery of equipment.
- For hands on experience for local industry personnel in the use of the response equipment.
- To inspect regional plans and update them where necessary.

EQUIPMENT ACQUISITION

The following equipment was acquired during the reporting period:

- One response truck fitted with a crane and other oil response equipment. This truck is to be used anywhere in the State for a tier 1 response.
- Ten portable VHF sets.

- One oil surface response bag - 5 tonne capacity.
- Two oil surface response bags - 2.5 tonnes capacity.
- One salvage kit consisting of two scuba diving kits and one surface hooker kit.

Two new sheds were erected, one in Wallaroo and the other in Adelaide North Arm marina for storage of response equipment.

NEW OR UPDATED CONTINGENCY PLANS

The South Australian Marine Spill Contingency Plans (SAMSCAP) have been revised and updated. Copies will be distributed to all relevant agencies.

TASMANIA



SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS

On 8 August 2001, the container vessel, *Maersk Tacoma*, suffered engine failure and began drifting in an easterly direction in Bass Strait. The vessel was taken in tow to Wilson's Promontory and then to Melbourne for repairs. There was no spillage of oil from the vessel as a result of this incident.

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES TO STATE RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

The *Pollution of Waters by Oil and Noxious Substances Amendment Act 2001* received Royal Assent and commenced on 17 December 2001.

This legislation extends the immunity under Section 31 of the Principal Act to an authorised officer, or to a person acting with the authority of, or on the direction of, an authorised officer acting in good faith in relation to pollution response and clean up following a maritime casualty or similar incident.

The State Marine Pollution Committee has agreed that, subject to finalisation of details, the designated tier 1 equipment should be transferred to the port companies of this State and the tier 2 and 3 regional equipment stockpiles for Tasmania should be located at the port of Bell Bay in northern Tasmania. The Committee is to consider

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whether some of the tier 2 and 3 equipment should also be stored at an existing facility in Hobart used by the Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment.

Through the Minister for Infrastructure, Energy and Resources, Tasmania signed the Inter-Governmental Agreement on the National Plan to Combat the Pollution of the Sea by Oil and other Noxious and Hazardous Substances on 28 June 2002.

NEW OR UPDATED CONTINGENCY PLANS

The revised Tasmanian Marine Oil Pollution Contingency Plan was approved by the Tasmanian Minister for Primary Industries, Water and Environment on 12 November 2001.

Work is to be undertaken to review the Tasmanian Marine Resources Fisheries and Aquaculture Oil Spill Contingency Plan to ensure consistency with the Tasmanian Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan.

The State Marine Pollution Committee has agreed to sign off the National Marine Chemical Spill Contingency Plan.

TRAINING

The State has organised a number of stakeholder training programs to support the objectives of the National Plan.

Shoreline workshops were conducted in Hobart and Devonport and an Equipment Operators workshop was conducted in Hobart.

Communications and spill notification exercises were held at the major Tasmanian ports and one oil terminal during 2001-2002.



Deployment of boom during a training exercise

QUEENSLAND



SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS

During 2001-2002 Queensland Transport received reports of 96 oil spills in Queensland waters. Whilst this represents a 19 per cent increase on last year's total and is above the five-year average of 75 incidents per year, it is indicative of improved reporting methods, which were introduced in 2001.

Fortunately most spills did not cause serious marine pollution. However, the mitigation of two incidents required the deployment of significant resources.

The first and most serious incident was the sinking of the *Ji Chong Lee* (a 30m ex long line fishing vessel) in the Fitzroy River on 27 July 2001. A response team, made up of personnel from Queensland Transport's Gladstone region and Marine Environment Protection Unit worked for approximately one month to contain and recover pollution from the vessel. A salvage contractor removed the ship from the river on 22 August 2001 and it was eventually scrapped in Mackay in October 2001.

In another incident the Panamanian registered bulk carrier *La Pampa* grounded in Gladstone Harbour on 27 March 2002. The ship was carrying 3000 tonnes of fuel and posed a significant threat to the State's marine environment. Queensland Transport coordinated efforts to refloat and relocate the ship to deeper waters to prevent any oil pollution. The operation was completed on 29 May 2002, with no pollution and only minimal damage to the ship.



Sinking of the Ji Chong Lee

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PROSECUTIONS

Queensland Transport initiated four prosecutions for marine pollution offences during 2001-2002. To date only one of these prosecutions has been concluded.

The owner of the vessel *Saphire* were fined \$7,500 for spilling between 35 and 50 litres of diesel oil at Mandalay Beach in February 2000.

Whilst not large, the fine is consistent with previous penalties and sends a clear message to potential polluters.

LOCAL TRAINING

In total, 171 people attended oil spill response training conducted by the Queensland Transport's Maritime Division during 2001-2002. The year's priorities were the revalidation of skills for equipment and advanced equipment operators.

One major achievement was the completion of training for indigenous rangers from the various communities from northern Queensland. To date 34 indigenous rangers have completed training in various aspects of marine oil spills response.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA



SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS

On 14 January 2002, a sudden and unexpected gust of wind estimated at 100 knots caused the after berthing lines securing the oil tanker *Australian Pride* to pay out and the vessel moved away from the BP refinery jetty at Kwinana. The after loading arm parted, spraying about 200 litres of oil onto the deck. This was followed by torrential rain and about 100 litres escaped the deck and entered the water. A light slick about 30m wide by 500m long moved into Cockburn Sound and was broken up by strong S/SE winds and rough seas.

On 3 June 2002, as a result of storms and torrential rain in the Exmouth region a flash flood entered the Exmouth Boat Harbour via a storm drain and swamped two trawlers, one of which sank and

created a minor but visible diesel spill in the harbour. Absorbent and general purpose booms were deployed and the spilled diesel was recovered by suction truck.

During the year, there were 17 spills reported from vessels and five from the offshore petroleum and exploration industry during the year.

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES TO STATE RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

The WA Government has combined the functions of the WA Departments of Transport and Planning into a new Department for Planning and Infrastructure (DPI). Marine safety and environmental protection functions now reside in the Marine Safety Directorate of the DPI Service Delivery Division.

A Memorandum of Agreement between DPI and the WA Ports on responding to spills outside of port waters has been formalised by most of the port authorities. The agreement provides that so long as port operations are not adversely affected, the ports will respond to spills outside of their port waters until DPI can relieve them.

LOCAL TRAINING

During the year WA DPI conducted nine National Plan training courses along with an AMSA Oil Spill Management Course. Two hundred and five people received training.

EQUIPMENT ACQUISITION

The National Plan has provided:

- The Fremantle stockpile with a submersible pump and salvage pump together with the associated power pack suitable for use with towable storage bladders and other salvage applications.
- Albany, Onslow, Dampier, Port Hedland, Bunbury and Geraldton each with a Foilex skimmer and spate pump.
- Exmouth, Onslow, Port Walcott and Albany each received two Flexidam recovered oil containers.
- A Metanza boat spray dispersant application system together with two tonnes of dispersant concentrate for deployment to Cape Cuvier and Derby.

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EXERCISES

The WA State Response Team (SRT) was exercised on eight occasions using the Fremantle National Plan stockpiled equipment. The SRT also participated in a two day major equipment deployment exercise conducted in June by the Dampier Port Authority and in May, Apache Energy/TK Shipping assisted in conducting a desktop exercise associated with a new well head and FSO operation near Varanus Island.

NORTHERN TERRITORY



SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS

There were no significant oil spills in NT waters over the 2001-2002 reporting period.

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES TO NORTHERN TERRITORY RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

Progress is being made towards signing Memorandum of Agreements (MOA) between the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment, Darwin Port Corporation, Alcan Gove Pty Ltd (formerly Nabalco) and Gemco Pty Ltd. The MOAs will formalise arrangements for

response to marine pollution incidents outside port limits by the port operators.

Regulations for the Northern Territory *Marine Pollution Act (1999)* are expected to be enacted. The Act will commence by October 2002.

LOCAL TRAINING

Equipment Operator training was conducted in Darwin, Nhulunbuy (Gove) and Alyangula (Groote Eylandt). The training was conducted by AMSA in conjunction with the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment (DIPE), Darwin Port Corporation, Alcan Gove and Gemco. Staff from NT Emergency Service, NT Fire Service, Darwin Port Corporation, DIPE, Alcan Gove, Gemco and Seafood & Maritime Industries Training attended the courses. A total of 70 persons were trained.

NEW OR UPDATED CONTINGENCY PLANS

The NT Marine Oil Pollution Manual and Contingency Plan are in the final stages of update. They are expected to be endorsed by the NT Committee and circulated in 2002.

The Darwin Port Corporation Contingency Plan and Alcan Gove Contingency Plan are similarly in the final stages of completion.



Equipment Operator Course at Tipperary Waters, Darwin



The June 2002 Darwin course was the last Equipment Operator course conducted by AMSA's Greg Beck, prior to his retirement. Garry Mayer, NT Committee Chairman, presented a memento to Greg in appreciation of his assistance to the Territory over many years.