

# **NATIONAL MARINE OIL SPILL CONTINGENCY PLAN**

**Australia's  
“National Plan to Combat  
Pollution of the Sea by  
Oil and Other Noxious and  
Hazardous Substances”**

**January 2011**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1. Background .....	1
1.2. Threat .....	2
1.3. Aim of the Plan .....	2
1.4. Scope of Plan .....	2
1.5. Geographical Area .....	2
1.6. Designed Spill Size .....	3
1.7. Chemical and Other Incidents .....	3
1.8. Legislation .....	3
2. PREPAREDNESS .....	7
2.1. Plan Support .....	7
2.2. Division of Responsibility .....	8
2.3. Cross Border Incidents .....	10
2.4. Response Policy .....	10
2.5. Levels of Response .....	10
2.6. Oil Industry Arrangements .....	11
2.7. Risk Assessment .....	12
2.8. Response Planning .....	13
2.9. Establishment of Response Organisations .....	14
2.10. Specialist Advice and Assistance .....	16
2.11. Equipment Availability .....	20
2.12. Financial Arrangements .....	20
2.13. Communications .....	21
2.14. Wildlife Response .....	21
2.15. Place of Refuge .....	21
2.16. Training and Exercises .....	22
3. RESPONSE .....	23
3.1. Measures to be Employed .....	23
3.2. Overall Protection Priorities .....	23
3.3. Incident Reporting and Response Activation .....	23
3.4. Incident Control .....	25
3.5. Response Plans .....	25
3.6. Response Options .....	26
3.7. Occupational Health and Safety .....	26
3.8. <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> .....	26
3.9. Cultural and Heritage Issues .....	27
3.10. Obtaining Samples for Evidence and Analysis .....	27
3.11. Disposal of Oil and Oily Debris .....	27
3.12. Equipment .....	28
3.13. Termination of a Response .....	28
4. RESPONSE SUPPORT .....	29
4.1. Oil Spill Response Atlas .....	29
4.2. Oil Spill Trajectory Modelling .....	29
4.3. Automated Data Inquiry for Oil Spills .....	30
4.4. Marine Oil Spill Equipment System .....	30
4.5. Charter and Hire Arrangements .....	30
4.6. Defence Force Assistance .....	32
4.7. Salvage Arrangements .....	32
4.8. Updating the Plan .....	33

## **ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS & DEFINITIONS**

AAT	Australian Antarctic Territory
ADIOS	Automated Data Inquiry for Oil Spills
AIP	Australian Institute of Petroleum
AMOSOC	Australian Marine Oil Spill Centre
AMOSPlan	Australian Industry Cooperative Oil Spill Response Arrangements
AMR	Australian Maritime Resources
AMSA	Australian Maritime Safety Authority
ATC	Australian Transport Council
CC	Casualty Coordinator
ChemPlan	National Marine Chemical Spill Contingency Plan
Combat Agency	Agency with operational responsibility to respond to an oil spill in the marine environment in accordance with the relevant contingency plan.
COWG	Chemical Operations Working Group
DIPE	Department of Lands and Planning (NT)
DPC	Darwin Port Corporation
DOT	Department of Transport (WA)
DPIPWE	Dept of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environment (TAS)
DSEWPC	Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, People and Communities
DTEI	Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure (SA)
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EMA	Emergency Management Australia
EPBC Act	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
ERD	Emergency Response Division (AMSA)
ESC	Environmental and Scientific Coordinator
EWG	Environment Working Group
FAO	Finance and Administration Officer
FWADC	Fixed Wing Aerial Dispersant Capability
GBRMPA	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
IAP	Incident Action Plan
IC	Incident Controller
ICC	Incident Control Centre
IGA	Inter-Governmental Agreement (on the National Plan to Combat Pollution of the Sea by Oil and Other Noxious and Hazardous Substances)
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IMT	Incident Management Team
INMARSAT	International Maritime Satellite
JPDA	Joint Petroleum Development Area
LO	Logistics Officer
MAC	Mutual Aid Contact

MARPOL	International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships
MED	Marine Environment Division (AMSA)
MEP	Marine Environment Pollution (AMSA)
MLO	Media Liaison Officer
MOD	Maritime Operations Division (AMSA)
MOSES	Marine Oil Spill Equipment System
MPC	Marine Pollution Controller
MSQ	Maritime Safety Queensland
TSV	Transport Safety Victoria
National Plan	National Plan to Combat Pollution of the Sea by Oil and Other Noxious and Hazardous Substances
nm	Nautical Mile
NPMC	National Plan Management Committee
NPOG	National Plan Operations Group
NRT	National Response Team
NT	Northern Territory
OCS	Offshore Constitutional Settlement
OO	Operations Officer
OOWG	Oil Operations Working Group
OPRC	International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response & Cooperation, 1990
OSRA	Oil Spill Response Atlas
OSRICS	Oil Spill Response Incident Control System
OSR	Oil Spill Response
OSTM	Oil Spill Trajectory Model
P&I	Protection and Indemnity
PO	Planning Officer
POLREP	Emergency Response Centre (AMSA)
REEFPLAN	Marine Pollution Contingency Plan for the Great Barrier Reef
SA DoT	South Australia Department of Transport
SITREP	Situation Report
SMPC	State Marine Pollution Committee
State Waters	For the purposes of this Plan the State/NT jurisdiction does not extend beyond the original Territorial Sea and OCS limit of 3 nautical miles.
Statutory Agency	The Agency responsible for overseeing response action for oil spills, institution of prosecutions and the recovery of cleanup costs on behalf of all participating agencies.
UHF	Ultra High Frequency
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea
VHF	Very High Frequency

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The incident involving the grounding of the Oceanic Grandeur in the Torres Strait in 1970 led to the development of a national capability to ensure that Australia would be prepared to respond to ship-sourced pollution incidents. This document relates to the oil spill component of The National Plan to Combat Pollution of the Sea by Oil and Other Noxious and Hazardous Substances (National Plan).

## 1.1. Background

The National Plan has been in operation since 1973 and brings together the combined resources of the:

- Commonwealth Government
- State and Northern Territory (State/NT) Governments including emergency services
- the oil, shipping, ports, chemical and petroleum exploration and production industries.

The National Plan sets out a clear definition of the responsibilities of the participants, formalised in an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA). The IGA details such matters as:

- the divisions of responsibilities
- contingency planning
- access to Commonwealth equipment
- the management and control of financial affairs (Appendix 1).

Based on the IGA, the prescribed role of the Commonwealth, through the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA), is one of:

- coordination
- provision of technical advice
- logistic and maintenance support
- provision of materials and equipment
- training.

Additionally, AMSA and the Australian Institute of Petroleum (AIP) have entered into an agreement for mutual assistance and access to the National Plan and Australian Marine Oil Spill Centre (AMOSC) equipment stockpiles.

The national contingency plan hierarchy, outlined in Figure 1, consists of:

- National Marine Oil and Marine Chemical Spill plans
- the Marine Pollution Contingency Plan for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (REEFPLAN)
- State/NT plans
- port, and industry plans.

This Plan, the National Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan, prescribes procedures and provides information required to implement the National Plan.

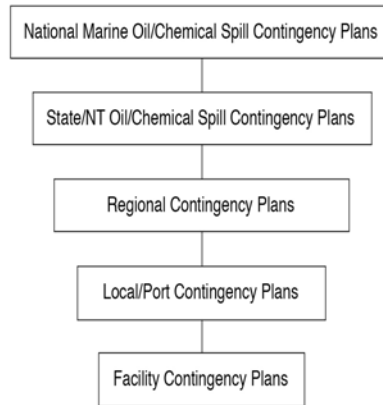


Figure 1 - National Plan Contingency Plan Hierarchy

## 1.2. Threat

Australia depends almost exclusively on shipping to transport its exports and imports and has, in terms of tonnes of cargo shipped and kilometres travelled, the fifth largest shipping task force in the world.

There are approximately 22,000 port arrivals each year, by more than 4,000 foreign flag ships. Ship-sourced oil spills may result from either accidental or illegal operational discharges. Accidental discharges may involve the escape of bunker fuel or oil cargo resulting from a marine incident.

Oil spills may also be caused by accidental discharges from petroleum terminals and facilities and the offshore petroleum exploration and production industry.

The threat is largely a function of the types of oil and bunkers and operational issues such as the degree of navigational hazards, the weather and shipping density.

## 1.3. Aim of the Plan

The National Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan outlines Australia's arrangements for responding to oil spills in the marine environment, with the aim of protecting against environmental pollution as a result of oil contamination and where this is not possible, minimise the effects.

## 1.4. Scope of Plan

This Plan outlines combined stakeholder arrangements designed to allow a rapid and cooperative response to marine oil spills within the defined area. The Plan is complemented by Government and industry contingency plans prepared at State/NT, regional, port and facility levels. Matters of detail are contained in local, site specific, contingency plans. This Plan also coordinates the provision of national and international support.

## 1.5. Geographical Area

The geographical area covered by the National Plan includes all Australian Territorial Seas including those offshore islands and territories, Australia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and the High Seas, as detailed in Figure 2, where an oil spill has the potential to impact on Australian interests. (Note: Includes Australian Antarctic Territory, not shown on map).

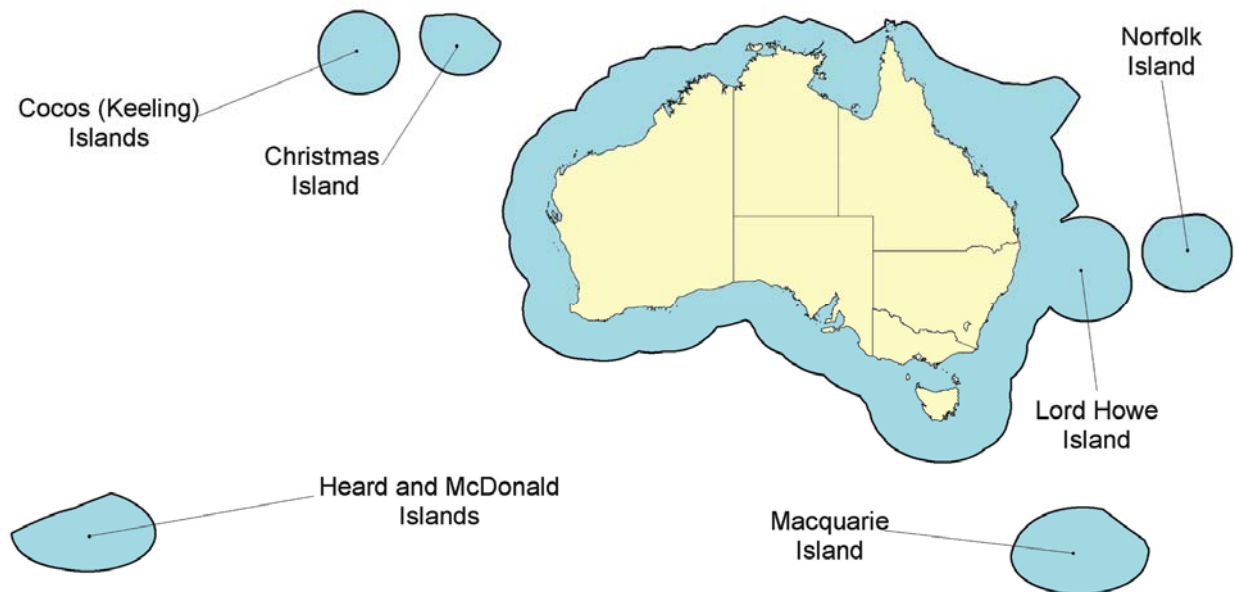


Figure 2: National Response areas

## 1.6. Designed Spill Size

The National Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan was established in order to facilitate the national response to oil spills of any magnitude within Australian waters as specified in Figure 2. For planning and operational reasons a designed spill size of 21,000 tonnes exists. This spill size was determined by National Plan stakeholders after researching current ship types and equipment holdings and is endorsed by the Australian Transport Council (ATC) as the appropriate level for which to plan equipment and other resource requirements. Additionally, arrangements are in place to augment this capacity from overseas equipment stockpiles should any incident exceed Australia's resource capability.

## 1.7. Chemical and Other Incidents

Incidents involving pollution by other substances could fall into two categories:

- (i) chemicals released at sea from a chemical tanker's cargo tank as a result of collision, grounding, fire, and operational or illegal discharge
- (ii) packages or containers lost at sea and washed ashore or sinking to the seabed.

Procedures dealing with the response to chemicals incidents are outlined in the National Marine Chemical Spill Contingency Plan (ChemPlan), which can be found at: [www.amsa.gov.au/Marine\\_Environment\\_Protection/National\\_Plan/Contingency\\_Plans\\_and\\_Management/Chemical\\_Spill\\_Contingency\\_Plan.asp](http://www.amsa.gov.au/Marine_Environment_Protection/National_Plan/Contingency_Plans_and_Management/Chemical_Spill_Contingency_Plan.asp).

## 1.8. Legislation

### 1.8.1 International Conventions

Australia has been a member of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) since its inception in 1948, and was active in the development and implementation of many of the IMO Conventions that specifically address pollution from ships. These conventions are implemented in Australia by the "Protection of the Sea" package of legislation listed in the table below.

## National Legislation

Act	Objectives	Complementary State/NT legislation
Protection of the Sea (Civil Liability) Act 1981	Implements International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage 1992, requiring the owners of oil tankers to have insurance for pollution damage  Cost recovery for AMSA National Plan activities	No  Yes
Protection of the Sea (Civil Liability for Bunker Oil Pollution Damage) Act 2008	Implements International Convention on Civil Liability for Bunker Oil Pollution Damage 2000	No
Protection of the Sea (Harmful Anti-fouling Systems) Act 2006	Implements International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-fouling Systems on Ships 2001	No
Protection of the Sea (Powers of Intervention) Act 1981	Implements International Convention Relating to Intervention on the High Seas in Cases of Oil Pollution Casualties and the 1973 Protocol to that Convention.  Sets out intervention powers for territorial waters	Yes  Yes
Protection of the Sea (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) Act 1983	Implements International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) setting operational and construction standards for ships to prevent pollution.	Yes
Protection of the Sea (Shipping Levy) Act 1981 and Protection of the Sea (Shipping Levy Collection) Act 1981	Imposes levy on shipping to fund Australia's National Plan and sets out how the levy is collected.	No
Protection of the Sea (Oil Pollution Compensation Fund) Act 1993, Protection of the Sea (Oil Pollution Compensation Fund - Customs) Act 1993, Protection of the Sea (Oil Pollution Compensation Fund - Excise) Act 1993, Protection of the Sea (Oil Pollution Compensation Fund - General) Act 1993	Implements International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage 1992 providing compensation for oil spill damage above the limits available under the Civil Liability Convention, funded by levies on oil companies.	No
Australian Maritime Safety Authority Act 1990	Sets out functions of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, including "the combating of pollution in the marine environment"	No

### 1.8.2 Jurisdiction

An agreement between the Commonwealth and the States/NT, known as the Offshore Constitutional Settlement (OCS) effectively gives the States/NT jurisdiction over the first three nautical miles (nm) of the Territorial Sea, and the Commonwealth jurisdiction over waters seaward of this point (although in some cases the Commonwealth has jurisdiction over the whole of Australia). One feature of the OCS was recognition by all parties that a mechanism was required to enable Australia to become a party to key international maritime conventions in the event that the legislation in each Australian jurisdiction was not in compliance with convention requirements at the time of ratification. The concept of the "roll back clause" was agreed, whereby Commonwealth law giving effect to the Conventions would apply in

all jurisdictions, but would “roll back” if and when a State/NT enacted the necessary provisions itself.

In accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the Commonwealth’s jurisdiction encompasses the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) - that is, up to 200nm seaward of the territorial sea baseline - and the Territorial Sea extends to twelve (12) nm from the coastline. However, for the purposes of this Plan, the State/NT jurisdiction does not extend beyond the original Territorial Sea and OCS limit of three (3) nm.

### **1.8.3 Joint Petroleum Development Area (JPDA)**

An area of the Timor Sea lying between Australia and Timor-Leste is subject to overlapping territorial claims by Australia and Timor-Leste. This area contains substantial resources of petroleum. In this situation, Australia and Timor-Leste have agreed that a joint development regime, pending final delimitation of the seabed, is the best approach to permit development of petroleum resources to the benefit of both countries.

The Timor Sea Treaty (‘the Treaty’) came into force on 2 April 2003. The Treaty establishes a Joint Petroleum Area (JPDA). Australia and Timor-Leste have developed detailed regulatory and fiscal regime to apply to future petroleum activities in the Area.

The water column aspects of Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) jurisdiction within the JPDA is subject to the jurisdiction of Timor-Leste. This is confirmed by the Certain Maritime Arrangements in the Timor Sea Treaty (CMATS). Australia has not declared an EEZ in that area.

The petroleum aspects of seabed jurisdiction within the JPDA are covered by the Treaty. Article 10 of the Treaty provides the Australia and Timor-Leste will “cooperate in the protection of the marine environment so as to prevent and minimise pollution from petroleum activities.” The Designated Authority under the Timor Sea Treaty (encompassed in the Timor-Leste National Petroleum Authority – ANP) “shall establish a contingency plan for combating pollution from petroleum activities in the JPDA”.

The following therefore applies to pollution incidents within the JPDA;

- In a situation where a pollution incident could be contained by the operator, under arrangements approved by the ANP, the operator has responsibility for responding to the incident. The operator would normally inform ANP of the incident and continuously update ANP on progress.
- In situations where the oil spill is identified as a significant incident and beyond the capability of the operator, operators or the ANP/Timor-Leste Government may contact AMSA to seek assistance from Australia.

These arrangements are consistent with Annex C paragraph (e) of the Timor Sea Treaty “Powers and Functions of the Designated Authority”, which provides that “The powers and functions of the DA shall include: requesting assistance with pollution prevention measures, equipment and procedures from the appropriate Australian and East Timor authorities or other bodies or person;”.

The coordinates of the JPDA are set out in Annex A of the Timor Sea Treaty. <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/dfat/treaties/2003/13.html>.

### **1.8.4 Pacific Islands Regional Marine Spill Contingency Plan (PACPLAN)**

1. Australia is a member of SPREP, and is a party to the Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region (SPREP Convention). The Convention includes a Protocol Concerning Co-

operation in Combating Pollution Emergencies in the South Pacific Region (SPREP Pollution Protocol). The Protocol provides a formal framework for co-operation when responding to marine spills.

2. Consistent with the SPREP Convention and Protocol, in 2000 SPREP member countries adopted the Pacific Islands Regional Marine Spill Contingency Plan, known as PACPLAN. PACPLAN provides a framework for co-operative regional responses to major marine spills in the Pacific Island region, including linkages and mechanisms for accessing regional and supra-regional assistance.
3. One of the key mechanisms within PACPLAN is the provision for the 22 SPREP island members to seek assistance from one of the so-called "SPREP Non-island Governments" of Australia, France, New Zealand and the United States. Australia is listed as the "primary source of assistance" for Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Kiribati and, along with the other non-island members, is a "secondary source of assistance" for all other island members.

## **2. PREPAREDNESS**

### **2.1. Plan Support**

As outlined in part 1.1, the National Plan is underpinned by the IGA. The IGA aims to:

- provide a basis for continued Commonwealth/State/NT Government commitment and support for the National Plan
- provide a stable reference point whereby those unfamiliar with this Plan can readily ascertain the obligations placed on their organisation
- be used to set out agreed minimum activities, allowing participants' performance against those minimums to be more readily assessed.

The IGA ensures that the national approach to preparedness and response to oil and chemical spills in the marine environment is continued and strengthened. It provides a mechanism to ensure decision-making under the National Plan is cooperative and that the obligations of all parties are met.

The IGA also outlines a management structure for the National Plan that covers all elements of this Plan and ChemPlan. The management structure consists of:

#### **2.1.1 Australian Transport Council**

The Australian Transport Council (ATC), made up of Commonwealth, State/NT Ministers with responsibility for transport, is the Ministerial body responsible for National Plan matters.

#### **2.1.2 National Plan Management Committee**

Under the IGA, the National Plan Management Committee (NPMC) was established to provide advice to the ATC on the strategic policymaking and funding direction for the National Plan.

#### **2.1.3 National Plan Operations Group**

Under the IGA, the Parties also established the National Plan Operations Group (NPOG) to support the NPMC by considering the overall operational aspects of the National Plan.

Three working groups further support NPOG. These are:

- the Oil Operations Working Group (OOWG), which considers issues such as the National Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan, oil spill response equipment and training, fixed wing aerial dispersant spraying and contingency plan audits
- the Chemical Operations Working Group (COWG), which considers issues such as ChemPlan, and chemical spill response equipment and training
- the Environment Working Group (EWG), which addresses research, development, technology and the environmental and wildlife interests of all the parties to the National Plan.

#### **2.1.4 Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA)**

Under the IGA, AMSA is the managing agency for the National Plan and is responsible for maintaining the National Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan. AMSA is also responsible for:

- acting as both Statutory and Combat Agencies for incidents in Commonwealth waters
- providing, support to State/NT Statutory and Combat Agencies, as required during incidents in State/NT waters.

### 2.1.5 State/NT Responsibilities

Under the IGA, the Statutory Agencies in each State/NT/Commonwealth are responsible for coordinating the local administration and operation of the National Plan. This may be done in consultation with a State/NT Committee with due consideration to the relevant State/NT/Commonwealth emergency management arrangements.

### 2.1.6 National Plan Key Contacts

Contact details for key National Plan personnel are provided in Appendix 2.

## 2.2. Division of Responsibility

### 2.2.1 Statutory/Combat Responsibilities

The IGA defines the Statutory and Combat Agencies with responsibility for responding to oil spills in Australian waters.

It should be noted that in some cases the Statutory and Combat Agencies will be the same entity.

Responsibilities for responding to oil spills around Australia are shared between AMSA, State/NT Governments, Port Authorities and Corporations, and the oil industry.

In relation to the offshore territories of Cocos (Keeling), Christmas, Norfolk, Heard, Macquarie, McDonald and Ashmore Islands, and the reef territories, the Commonwealth Government will assume the role of a 'State' Government. The New South Wales Government accepts responsibility for Lord Howe Island.

Responsibilities are given in detail below and are summarised in Figure 3.

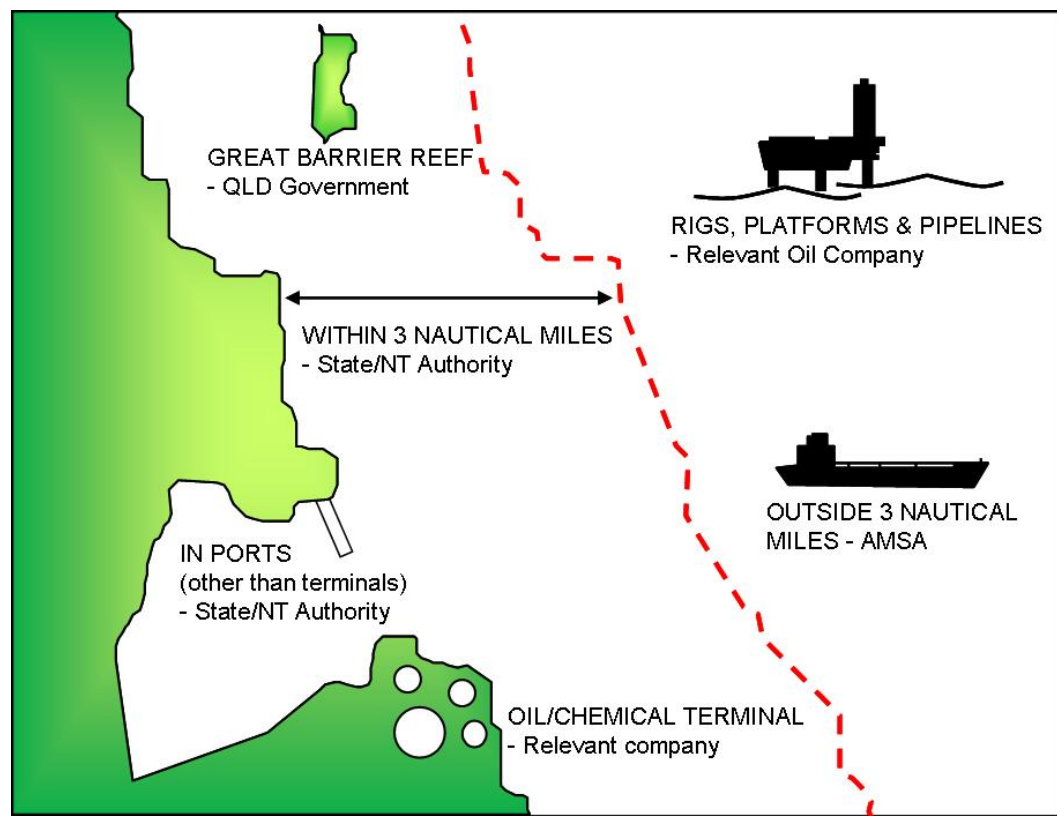


Figure 3: State oil spill responsibilities

### 2.2.2 Statutory Agencies

In accordance with the IGA (and the OCS jurisdictional arrangements), responsibility for overseeing response action for oil spills, other than those from offshore petroleum operations, is as follows:

- within the three (3) nm coastal waters and in foreshore areas - the State/NT designated Statutory Agency
- outside the three (3) nm coastal waters - AMSA, as the Commonwealth Statutory Agency.

The Statutory Agency for oil spills from offshore petroleum operations is the relevant Designated Authority.

The Statutory Agency is responsible for the institution of prosecutions and the recovery of cleanup costs on behalf of all participating agencies.

### 2.2.3 Combat Agencies

Combat Agencies have the operational responsibility to take action in order to respond to an oil spill in the marine environment in accordance with the relevant contingency plan.

The Combat Agency responsible for responding to marine oil spills in various locations is as follows:

<b>At oil terminals:</b>	The relevant oil company or terminal operator using industry arrangements as required, such as the Australian Industry Cooperative Oil Spill Response Arrangements (AMOSPlan) through AMOSC. Should a situation develop where the necessary response is beyond the oil company or terminal resources, responsibility for control will transfer to the Statutory Agency, with response assistance from other National Plan stakeholders as required. Statutory Agencies should enter into pre-designated response arrangements with oil terminal operators, which clearly specify the agreed division of responsibilities and terms and conditions for transferring control.
<b>In ports:</b>	The port operator or responsible State/NT authority as specified in the relevant contingency plan, with response assistance from other National Plan stakeholders as required.
<b>Within the three (3) nm:</b>	The responsible State/NT Statutory Agency with response assistance from other National Plan stakeholders as required.
<b>Beyond the three (3) nm:</b>	The Commonwealth via AMSA, with response assistance from other National Plan stakeholders as required. In incidents close to shore when oil is likely to impact the shoreline, the State/NT via the Statutory Agency will be the Combat Agency for protecting the coastline, whilst AMSA assumes responsibility for ship operational matters, for example, containing the spill within the ship, organising salvage, etc.
<b>In the REEFPLAN area:</b>	The Queensland Government via the Queensland National Plan State Committee, with assistance from

**Spills emanating from offshore petroleum operations:** other stakeholders as required. The relevant company with assistance from the Statutory Agency and other National Plan stakeholders as required.

The Combat Agency shall, as soon as possible, undertake preventive and cleanup action or may request another agency to act on its behalf.

Regardless of which agency has lead responsibility, other agencies shall assist as far as is practical, in accordance with requests from the Combat Agency.

In circumstances where the incident has exceeded, or is likely to exceed, the effective response capacity of the Combat Agency, or the response is not being conducted effectively, the Statutory Agency may assume control of the response. Refer to Appendix 4 - Combat Agency Transfer Operational Protocol for more information regarding spills emanating from the offshore petroleum exploration and production industry.

A response by a Combat Agency and/or Statutory Agency does not in any way indicate an admission of liability for the source of the spill or for acceptance of the costs of a spill. Liability for a spill is to be determined by due legal proceedings.

### **2.3. Cross Border Incidents**

In those incidents close to State/NT borders, it is essential that high-level consultation and cooperation between the two Statutory Agencies occur, with an objective to ensure a clear delineation of responsibility for the response.

It should be noted that some States have formal arrangements by way of Memorandum of Understandings that deal with cross border incidents.

### **2.4. Response Policy**

The primary aims of an oil spill response is to:

- protect human health and safety
- minimise environmental impacts
- restore the environment, as near as is practicable, to pre-spill conditions.

The environmental impact of an oil spill can be minimised by good management and planning, and by the response actions put into effect by the Combat Agency. Such actions will largely depend on several factors:

- the type of oil(s) involved
- the size of the spill
- the location of the spill
- the prevailing sea and weather conditions at the spill site
- the environmental sensitivity of the coastline/site impacted.

### **2.5. Levels of Response**

Under the National Plan arrangements, oil spills and their response requirements are categorised into three 'Tiers'. The concept of a tiered response links the credible spill scenarios to attainable scales of response and, by linking joint arrangements, enables escalation from one tiered response to another, should the need arise. It is a practical method of planning a spill response in terms of required resources and likely environmental impact.

The National Plan's three levels of tiered response are based on the following spill scenarios:

**Tier 1 - up to 10 tonnes** – a small spill requiring a local response:

The Combat Agency will generally be able to respond to and clean up a spill utilising local resources. In cases where additional resources are required, these will generally be available from the local port authority, or by utilising National Plan resources in the region, or from adjacent industry operators under mutual aid arrangements.

**Tier 2 - between 10 and 1000 tonnes** – a medium spill requiring regional and/or national assistance:

The resources of the Combat Agency will need to be supplemented by other resources from intrastate and possibly interstate. Interstate resources will be facilitated by the Statutory Agency through Marine Environment Pollution (MEP), AMSA.

**Tier 3 - above 1000 tonnes** – a large spill requiring national assistance:

The Combat Agency will require local, regional, national and possibly international assistance. Interstate and international resources will be facilitated by the Statutory Agency through MEP.

## 2.6. Oil Industry Arrangements

Combat Agency responsibilities of the Australian oil industry are set out in the IGA. In general, at oil terminals the relevant oil company or terminal operator has Combat Agency responsibility. Should a situation develop where the necessary response is beyond the oil company or terminal resources, the Combat Agency responsibility will transfer to the Statutory Agency. For offshore petroleum operations, the relevant oil company has Combat Agency responsibility, with assistance as required from the Statutory Agency.

Generally the oil industry subscribes to AMOSC, a subsidiary of AIP. AMOSC, located in Geelong, holds a Tier 3 stockpile and provides response training, and other services. Under an agreement between AMSA and AMOSC, AMOSC and industry resources (both equipment and personnel) can be made available to the Commonwealth and States/NT for incidents not involving companies that are subscribers to AMOSC. Access to this equipment is available through MEP.

Subscribers to AMOSC have access to the AMOSPlan, a mutual aid plan. AMOSPlan recognises that the response effort for an oil spill at an industry facility may require resources beyond those of the company itself and allows mutual aid to be provided from other industry company resources. AMOSPlan is administered by AMOSC and the legal arrangements facilitating AMOSPlan are a series of contracts and agreements which facilitate access to assistance and resources. To activate AMOSPlan, a request for assistance is made by the Mutual Aid Contact (MAC) of the affected company to the MAC of a company that is able to provide assistance. Under AMOSPlan arrangements, the MAC is expected to liaise with the local authorities to agree and maintain effective plans for the response to an oil spill. Non subscriber companies can access AMOSC resources at a significantly higher cost.

In the event that the Statutory Agency takes over the Combat Agency responsibility from the affected company, industry resources will continue to be available to the response.

Industry Advisers have been nominated from each AMOSC subscriber company. During an incident involving an AMOSC Member company, the Industry Adviser of the affected company provides a direct high-level linkage to the response organisation. Industry personnel have representation on NPMC, NPOG and the respective National

Plan State/NT Committees.

## 2.7. Risk Assessment

The location of National Plan resources is based on a risk profile of Australian waters. The risk profile was calculated based on data relating to the pollution of Australian waters by discharges of oil or chemicals from ships.

The following risk factors are recognised as important in Australian waters:

- risk of collision
- risk of grounding
- hazards to navigation
- seaworthiness of vessels
- negligence and competence of the owner/operator, Master or crew
- aging of the fleet of vessels at sea; chemical, bulk and container
- size/type of vessel
- stowage and control of cargoes
- type/amount of oil and/or chemical(s) carried
- traffic density
- environmental factors including tidal flow and weather, etc.

The risk assessment reports by location on the level of risk of pollution of the sea, coastline and ports of Australia, by oil and other noxious and hazardous substances, taking into account:

- environmental sensitivity
- industries (e.g. fishing, tourism) which would be most adversely affected ecologically or financially by a spill
- commercial cargo shipping size, frequency, trading patterns and amounts of oil carried as bunker fuel
- oil/chemical tanker frequency, sizes, shipping patterns and quantities shipped
- properties of oil/chemicals shipped as cargo
- type, density and movement of shipping including concentration of fishing vessels and tourist vessels
- areas that pose a high level of difficulty to safe navigation
- changes in the operation and construction of ships during the 1990's, such as the introduction of double hulls, amendments to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), International Safety Management Code, etc
- amount and properties of oil produced offshore and transported by pipeline
- location of offshore production and pipeline facilities
- extent of offshore exploration drilling
- future trends, including proposed new ports and projected changes to trading patterns.

As part of the risk assessment, waters around Australia are divided into regions and each region further divided into near-shore, intermediate and deep-sea subregions. The Risk Index for each subregion was determined by combining the predicted frequency and average size of spills from all sources in each subregion. Additionally, this includes a simple environmental sensitivity factor taking into account the vulnerability and importance of the main environmental resources in each subregion.

The overall Risk Profile for Australia is shown in Figure 4. This shows the geographical distribution of the Risk Index from all spills over 10 tonnes. Higher risk areas (where frequency, spill size and environmental sensitivity are all likely to be higher) are also shown (presented by the magenta areas); with progressively lower levels of risk being shown as indicated in the legend, down to the lowest category of risk (presented by the blue areas). It should be noted that the Risk Index represents the overall risk in any subregion, and variations of the risk level across a subregion are not shown.

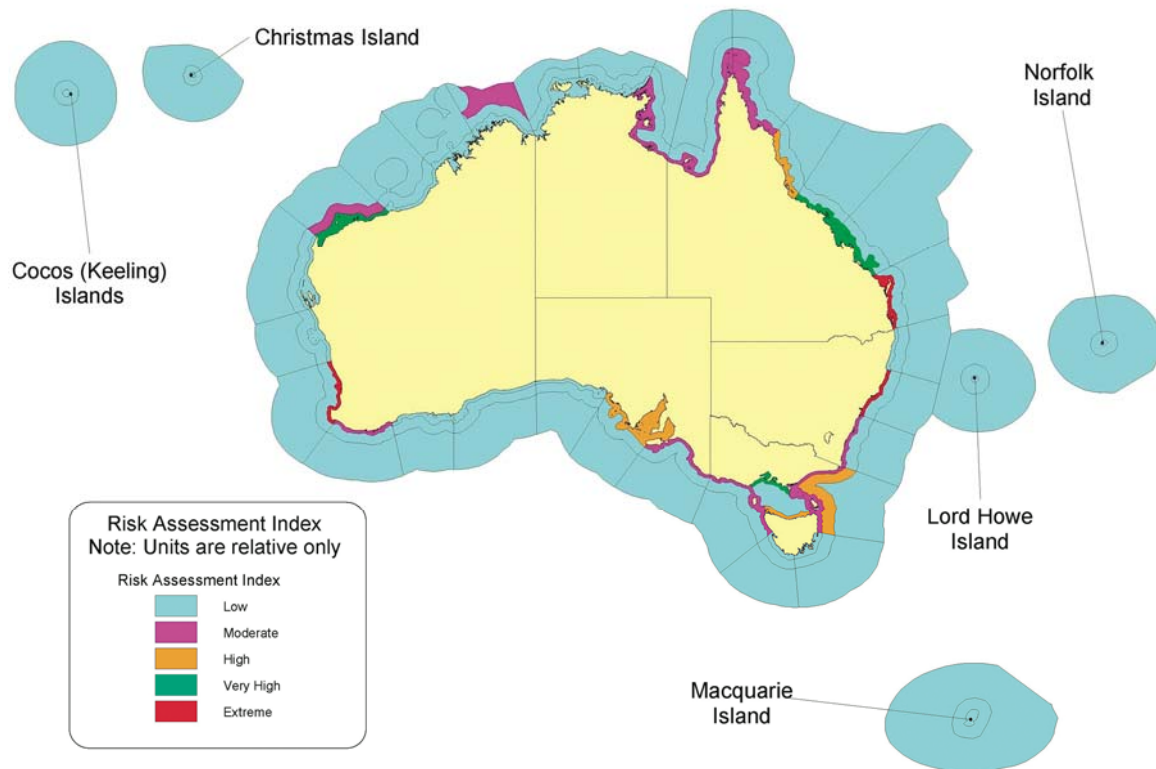


Figure 4-Risk Assessment Index

The Risk Profile indicates that there are some key areas of relatively higher risk from larger oil spills. These are most of the East Coast of Queensland, the Southwest and Northwest areas of Western Australia, and the major port areas around Sydney and Melbourne.

## 2.8. Response Planning

Under the IGA, State/NT Statutory Agencies supported by Combat Agencies, are primarily responsible for ensuring that contingency plans are developed at State/NT, regional and local levels, and that these plans complement adjacent plans. Statutory Agencies may be supported by National Plan State/NT Committees and will provide advice and support to Combat Agencies during pollution incidents.

The primary marine pollution response structure and responsibilities that need to be addressed in the planning process include:

- The Statutory Agency, usually through a State Marine Pollution Committee (SMPC), will provide management, operational, technical and environmental advice and support to the Combat Agency as required. This may include support for the management of the response.
- During major incidents, the overall response strategy shall be formulated by a nominated Marine Pollution Controller (MPC), and implemented by an Incident Controller (IC) and section officers who form the Incident Management Team (IMT). During lesser incidents, the IC shall be responsible for overall response

strategy. The IC shall keep the Statutory Agency and/or MPC informed of progress with the response.

- The Statutory Agency, the SMPC and AMSA, shall provide suitably experienced staff to assist the MPC and IC to initiate and conduct response actions.
- Preparation and maintenance of State/NT contingency plans that complement this Plan are the responsibility of the relevant State/NT Statutory and/or Combat Agencies.

## 2.9. Establishment of Response Organisations

Regional or local response organisations must be designed and established by the State/NT Statutory Agency. Where State/NT or local committees are established to support the Statutory Agency, it is recommended that the membership include senior representatives of the relevant organisations. Committees should also be able to invite wider participation to ensure that all interests are represented and their resources and services are considered.

### 2.9.1 Response Organisation Structure

The response to any pollution incident may be managed using the Oil Spill Response Incident Control System (OSRICS). OSRICS is based on an incident control system used in a wide range of emergency response activities to provide a standardised organisational structure that is flexible yet provides compatibility between agencies and events, whilst ensuring accountability and standardised records (Appendix 3). The system clearly defines roles and responsibilities and provides interoperability between State/NT agencies. OSRICS also allows for the ability to escalate or downsize the response as required.

OSRICS lists four major functions under which it is possible to group the tasks that need to be undertaken during a marine pollution response - Planning, Operations, Logistics, and Finance and Administration. These form the main elements of the organisational structure under OSRICS and are designated as sections in the structure. Responsibility for carrying out the tasks is delegated to a section officer who reports to the IC forming an IMT. Units staffed by people with appropriate skills and experience to deal with particular tasks may be created within the sections.

The number of staff required to fill positions in the OSRICS structure can be varied according to the size and complexity of the incident and the number of staff available. In a major incident all positions may be filled, but in a lesser incident one person may fill a number of positions. In a very small incident, it may only be necessary to appoint an IC who will be able to carry out all management functions.

Figure 5 shows the typical structure of an Incident Control System (ICS). A more detailed structure may be found in Appendix 3.

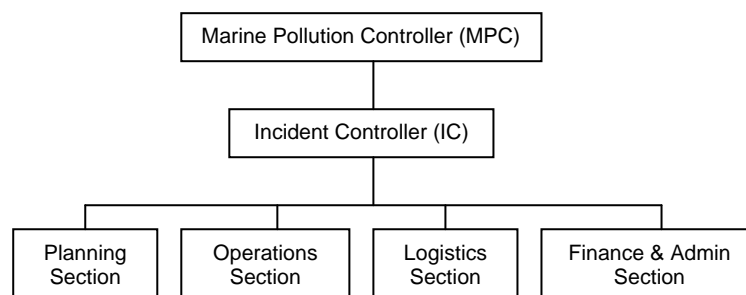


Figure 5-Typical OSRICS Structure

Statutory Agencies should ensure that persons with appropriate experience and skills are identified so that they can be appointed to the following positions if a marine pollution incident occurs. During an incident response staff represent the combat

agency and not their normal employer. If agency input into a response is required National Plan stakeholders should consider placing liaison officer/s within the IMT, rather than relying on personnel that will be fully engaged in response activities.

#### **2.9.1.1 Marine Pollution Controller**

The Commonwealth or State/NT shall nominate a senior management level MPC to take overall responsibility for managing the response. The MPC must be capable of ministerial as well as senior government, industry and media liaison.

#### **2.9.1.2 Incident Controller**

The relevant Commonwealth or State/NT agencies shall identify appropriate individuals to act as an Incident Controller (IC). The IC is responsible for the management and coordination of response operations at the scene of a pollution incident to achieve the most cost effective and least environmentally damaging resolution to the problem.

During a major incident the IC is responsible to the MPC for the operational aspects of the response. During lesser incidents the IC shall have overall responsibility for managing the response.

Commonwealth or State/NT Statutory agencies should ensure that the IC is assisted by a response team with appropriate planning, operational, technical, scientific, chemical, environmental, logistical, administrative, financial, and media liaison skills.

#### **2.9.1.3 Planning Officer**

The Commonwealth and each State/NT Statutory Agency shall identify appropriate individuals to act as the Planning Officer (PO) in accordance with relevant contingency plan requirements.

The PO is responsible for the provision of scientific and environmental information, maintenance of incident information services, and the development of Strategic and Incident Action Plans.

The PO shall ensure the distribution of all information to the Incident Management Team and to all response personnel generally.

#### **2.9.1.4 Operations Officer**

The Commonwealth and each State/NT Statutory Agency shall identify appropriate individuals to act as the Operations Officer (OO) in accordance with relevant contingency plan requirements.

The OO is responsible to the IC for all response operational activities. This includes ensuring that the requirements of Incident Action Plans (IAP) are passed on to operational personnel in the field, and for ensuring that the plans are implemented effectively.

#### **2.9.1.5 Logistics Officer**

The Commonwealth and each State/NT Statutory Agency shall identify appropriate individuals to act as Logistics Officers (LO) in accordance with relevant contingency plan requirements.

In any response there is a vital need to ensure that response personnel are provided with adequate resources to enable an effective response to be mounted. The LO shall ensure that all resources are made available as required. This includes the procurement and provision of personnel, equipment and support services for operations in the field and for the management of resource staging areas.

#### **2.9.1.6 Finance and Administration Officer**

The Commonwealth and each State/NT Statutory Agency shall identify appropriate individuals to act as Finance and Administration Officers (FAO) in accordance with relevant contingency plan requirements.

The FAO shall be responsible for all financial, legal, procurement, clerical, accounting

and recording activities including the contracting of personnel, equipment and support resources. In addition, the FAO is responsible for the management of the Incident Control Centre (ICC).

#### **2.9.1.7 Environmental and Scientific Coordinator**

The Commonwealth and the State/NT shall pre-appoint the Environmental and Scientific Coordinator (ESC), either on a State/NT, regional or local area basis. During a spill response the ESC will normally form part of the Planning Section. In this role the Planning Section is to provide the IC with an up-to-date and balanced assessment of the likely environmental effects of an oil spill. The Planning Section will advise on environmental priorities and preferred response options, taking into account the significance, sensitivity and possible recovery of the resources likely to be affected. Under some State/NT arrangements the ESC may directly advise the MPC.

#### **2.9.1.8 Media Liaison Officer**

An experienced and well-informed Media Liaison Officer (MLO) appointed by the Combat Agency shall be provided for the response. The MLO shall ensure adequate liaison between the IC's team and the media. All queries received from the media should be directed to this person.

Before releasing any information, the MLO's action should have the approval of either the MPC or IC, depending on the size of the spill incident.

## **2.10. Specialist Advice and Assistance**

Specialist technical advice is available to response managers from a variety of sources. Advice can vary from the fate of oil, selection and deployment of pollution control equipment, and dispersant use, to the associated environmental effects of an oil spill. Specialist advice can also be provided in relation to the safety and stability of ships.

Some of the organisations that can provide a range of specialist environmental and operational technical advice in the event of an oil spill in the marine environment, include:

### **2.10.1 Australian Maritime Safety Authority**

#### **2.10.1.1 Marine Environment Division**

The objectives of MED are to minimise the impact of shipping on the environment and to minimise the environmental impact if marine pollution incidents occur. This is accomplished by maintaining a regulatory system consistent with international standards; influencing the development, implementation, monitoring and enforcement of international environment protection standards, and the operation of international liability and compensation schemes; providing timely and appropriate response to marine casualties; and providing ship and offshore facility sourced pollution response services, consistent with international obligations, regional arrangements and Inter-Government Agreements, as manager of Australia's National Plan to Combat Pollution of the Sea by Oil and Other Noxious and Hazardous Substances.

#### **2.10.1.2 Marine Environment Pollution MEP**

The MEP section can provide advice relating to spill management, operational, logistic and technical issues, dispersant use, environmental effects, intervention powers, and legislation. MEP can also provide outputs and advice on decision support tools outlined in Section 4. All AMSA assistance will be coordinated through MEP.

MED is responsible for the National Maritime Emergency Response Arrangements (NMEMA).

Key elements of the NMEMA are:

- The provision of a minimum level of maritime emergency towage capability involving Emergency Towage Vessels (ETVs) located in strategic coastal regions. The ETV's include a dedicated vessel, *Pacific Responder*, which maintains a constant presence and availability to respond to emergencies in the Northern area of the Great Barrier Reef. Other ETVs are either vessels contracted by AMSA to be available to be called upon in the event of an incident or suitable vessels that are in the relevant area at the time of the incident that are used as "vessels of opportunity".
- The provision of a Maritime Emergency Response Commander (MERCOT) appointed by AMSA to act on behalf of the Authority during a shipping casualty. The MERCOT is responsible for the management of responses to shipping incidents.

#### **2.10.1.3 Maritime Operations Division**

Maritime Operations Division (MOD) of AMSA can provide advice relating to ship safety, structural integrity and stability of marine casualties.

#### **2.10.1.4 Emergency Response Centre**

In addition to coordinating the rescue and saving of life through the Emergency Response Centre (ERC), the ERC can provide drift calculations and advice on offshore currents.

The ERC has a range of communication facilities that can be utilised during an incident including International Maritime Satellite (Inmarsat) systems, enabling messages to be communicated directly to vessels.

#### **2.10.2 Emergency Management Australia**

Emergency Management Australia (EMA) has agreed to assist in coordinating the movement of National Plan equipment. Where necessary, EMA will facilitate access to Defence Force resources where commercial operators are unable to provide this service. All EMA assistance will be coordinated through MEP.

#### **2.10.3 Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, People and Communities (DSEWPC)**

The Australian Government Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, People and Communities (DSEWPC) develops and implements national policy, programs and legislation to protect and conserve Australia's natural environment and cultural heritage. Some responsibilities relevant to the marine environment include regulation of dumping of wastes at sea, declaration and management of marine protected areas in Commonwealth waters and conservation of listed threatened, migratory and marine species. DSEWPC also leads Australia's Antarctic Program, which includes administration of the Australian Antarctic Territory (AAT) and the Territory of Heard Island and McDonald Islands and protection of Antarctic and sub-Antarctic marine ecosystems and species.

The responsible Minister has issued a Notice of Exemption for the National Plan under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act). The effect of this notice is that response actions taken in accordance with the National Plan are exempt from the EPBC Act.

DSEWPC can advise on matters relating to the Environment Protection (Sea Dumping) Act 1981 and its obligations, including the permitting and reporting of emergency dumping of material at sea. DSEWPC can also advise on Australia's obligations under the International Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Waste and Other Matter (London Dumping Convention) and its 1996 Protocol.

DSEWPC will advise on potential impacts of oil spills on threatened marine and migratory species, such as seabirds, seals, marine turtles, whales and dolphins. It

can also provide advice on proposals approved under the EPBC Act where conditions may specify arrangements for dealing with spills.

DSEWPC should be contacted if any oil spill is likely to impact on marine protected areas in Commonwealth waters. DSEWPC should also be informed of any oil spills affecting the Australian Antarctic Territory, the Australian Territory of Heard Island and McDonald Islands, Macquarie Island and the Southern Ocean between Australia and the AAT. DSEWPC is able to provide advice on habitats in Commonwealth marine protected areas, Antarctic and sub-Antarctic seabirds, marine mammals, marine invertebrates and macro algae, along with advice on rates of hydrocarbon biodegradation, dispersal and the use of dispersants in cold climates.

Information on cultural and heritage issues can be found in part 3.9.

#### **2.10.4 Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority**

Advice relating to the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area is contained in REEFPLAN which is available from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA).

#### **2.10.5 Oil Industry**

As outlined in part 2.6, the oil industry can provide equipment and personnel resources and advice on a range of issues, including oil characteristics and local industry resource availability.

#### **2.10.6 State/NT and Local Authorities**

State/NT and local authorities, such as Transport, Conservation and Resource Management Departments, Environmental Protection Authorities, emergency services, port/harbour authorities, and local conservation groups are able to provide a wide range of site-specific information and resources, either in relation to environmental impacts, or response activities.

#### **2.10.7 National Response Team and National Response Support Team**

The National Response Team (NRT) provides support to the Australian and States/Northern Territory (NT) Governments in the event of a major oil pollution incident, specifically in the roles of response managers, aerial observers and response team leaders. A total of 63 personnel are nominated by States/NT as follows:

<b>Role</b>	<b>Positions per State/NT</b>	<b>Total</b>
Planning Officer	1	7
Operations Officer	1	7
Logistics Officer	1	7
Aerial Observer	1	7
Response Team Leader	5	35
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>63</b>

The National Response Support Team (NRST) is required to support an incident. The following roles have been identified for a national capacity:

- Environmental Advisers
- Finance & Administration Officer
- Wildlife Officer
- Equipment Operator

- Marco Operator
- Offshore Containment/Recovery
- Inshore Containment/Recovery
- Marine Qualifications
- Dispersant Helicopter Spray Buckets
- Vessel-based dispersant spraying
- Shoreline Assessment
- Shoreline Cleanup

The Equipment Operator role has been broken down into areas of specific expertise. Equipment Operators may be competent in more than one area. Training of NRST is the responsibility of the States/NT.

Nominations for the NRST are optional; however, each State/NT is encouraged to identify personnel to fulfil these roles, as these personnel may be required when responding to incidents within their own jurisdictions, and will become part of the NRT when succession planning.

During a National Plan incident the Incident Controller or the Marine Pollution Controller appointed by the combat agency may submit a request to AMSA for personnel from other States/NT to become part of the Incident Management Team or the incident response team. A request should be made initially through the Marine Environment Pollution Duty Officer via the Emergency Response Centre. This request must be followed by written confirmation within three (3) hours of the verbal request. During extended responses AMSA may appoint an officer to coordinate inter-state deployments and will advise the Incident Controller and the Marine Pollution Controller accordingly.

The following information is to be provided when making such a request:

- Roles or skills required (e.g. Planning Officer, Aerial Observer)
- Number of personnel required to fill each role
- Contact name, address, and time of where personnel are to initially report
- Brief overview of the work to be undertaken.

Suitable personnel will then be selected by AMSA from the National Response Team or the National Response Support Team, unless special circumstances exist. This procedure does not apply to the activation of NRT and NRST personnel from within the State/NT where the incident has occurred. In such circumstances, the relevant combat or statutory agency is responsible for activation in accordance with applicable contingency plans or State/NT arrangements.

The maximum release period is ten (10) days (including travel time) as per the [National Response Team Policy](#), unless both AMSA and the NRT/NRST member's organisation reach a separate agreement. Where an extension on deployment is being sought, the requesting agency is to provide details how the health and safety of the individuals are to be managed.

Personnel will remain in the employ of their own agency, and all entitlements in relation to their contract of employment remain unchanged.

The individual's employer will initially meet all costs. Costs include salary, travel, accommodation, incidental expenditure, and where appropriate overtime expenses. The loaning agency can recover such costs by forwarding deployment cost details, including supporting documentation, to the borrowing agency or AMSA for cost recovery purposes. The National Plan [Pollution Cost Recovery Procedures](#) will be applied when assessing claims for costs.

### **2.10.8 International Assistance**

In the event of a major oil spill incident, it is likely that assistance may be sought from overseas in accordance with the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation (OPRC 1990). Commonwealth Customs and Immigration Departments will expedite the temporary import of equipment and experienced personnel should the need arise on a request from AMSA. If additional overseas resources are required to respond to an incident in Australia, then MEP in conjunction with AMOSC will arrange for assistance from Oil Spill Response (OSR) (see 2.6 above). OSR is a company based in Singapore, Bahrain and Southampton (UK) and is part of the Global Response Network. The Global Response Network is a collaboration of seven major oil industry funded spill response organisations (including AMOSC) whose mission is to harness cooperation and maximise the effectiveness of oil spill response services world wide.

MEP, in accordance with current Memoranda of Understandings and relevant International Conventions, may also assist neighbouring countries in relation to oil spill incidents in their waters.

### **2.11. Equipment Availability**

Tier 1 marine pollution response equipment is located in State/NT ports. In addition to the equipment held by the States/NT, the National Plan through AMSA operates nine (9) regional stockpiles of Tier 2/3 equipment, which can be utilised for larger incidents or where additional resources are required. These stockpiles are located in Townsville, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Launceston, Adelaide, Fremantle, Dampier and Darwin. Ship-to-ship transfer equipment is located in the Brisbane and Fremantle regional stockpiles.

AMSA National Plan equipment is under the direction and control of MEP release of this equipment shall be authorised by the Manager, MEP or the MEP Duty Officer. Requests for equipment from other States/NT should be made by the IC, directly to the State/NT Committee, which will, in turn, request the equipment through MEP. Details for National Plan, State/NT, AMOSC and other industry resources held in each State/NT are given in the Marine Oil Spill Equipment System (MOSES) - see part 4.4.

### **2.12. Financial Arrangements**

The IGA includes agreed funding arrangements (Paragraphs 21-24), and the administrative arrangements (Schedule 1, Paragraphs 22-29) provide guidance on costs and expenses. This includes details for reimbursement of expenses and the charging for use of National Plan equipment.

Statutory and Combat Agencies should note that detailed financial records, including all supporting information, are required where a claim is made in accordance with the IGA. This requirement is of particular importance when submitting claims to the Protection and Indemnity (P&I) insurers, as all claims will be assessed to ensure that the costs are reasonable, and are supported by satisfactory documentation.

Accordingly, agencies should have in place appropriate systems to ensure that these requirements are met and that these are adequately outlined in contingency plans. For claims submitted to AMSA for reimbursement, when the spiller has not been identified, the authority addresses the claims from a standpoint of normal audit requirements and reasonableness, i.e. it will apply the same general criteria used by P&I Clubs and their correspondents when assessing the reasonableness of claims for reimbursement of costs incurred in responding to an oil spill, or potential oil spill. In general, costs will be considered "reasonable" if they result from actions that:

- were undertaken on the basis of a technical appraisal of the incident
- sought to enhance the natural processes of recovery
- were not undertaken purely for public relations reasons.

Further details are provided in “Pollution Cost Recovery Procedures” available at: [http://www.amsa.gov.au/Marine\\_Environment\\_Protection/National\\_plan/Supporting\\_Documents/Claims\\_for\\_Reimbursement.asp](http://www.amsa.gov.au/Marine_Environment_Protection/National_plan/Supporting_Documents/Claims_for_Reimbursement.asp).

### **2.13. Communications**

In a pollution incident it is important that the IC has access to adequate communication facilities. In addition to the facilities available through the ERC (part 2.10.1.4) it is envisaged that port Very High Frequency (VHF) radio facilities, the AMOSC communications package, and the National Plan communication systems, consisting of portable Satcom M, MiniSat, VHF marine band radios and repeater VHF aviation band radios and Ultra High Frequency (UHF) networks would be available to coordinate a response. In a major incident it may be necessary to seek assistance from the relevant State/NT/Commonwealth Government agency and utilise the Government Radio Network or the emergency services or Defence Forces radio network.

To obtain Defence assistance, a request should be made through MEP (part 4.6).

### **2.14. Wildlife Response**

When a marine oil pollution incident occurs it is highly likely that oiling of birds, marine mammals and other wildlife will eventuate.

The impact on wildlife and biodiversity will depend upon the environmental sensitivity, the type and quantity of the pollutant, and the location of the spill. Oiled wildlife attracts both significant community and media attention. The effectiveness of a spill response is sometimes measured on the success of its wildlife rescue and rehabilitation.

AMSA has developed National Guidelines for the Development of Oiled Wildlife Response Contingency Plans, with the objective to provide guidance for the immediate and effective protection, rescue, cleaning and rehabilitation of birds, marine mammals, their habitat, and other wildlife resources that are harmed or potentially harmed by a marine oil spill. This is further supported by detailed State/NT internal arrangements. The guidelines are available at: [www.amsa.gov.au/Marine\\_Environment\\_Protection/National\\_Plan/General\\_Information/Oiled\\_Wildlife/Wildlife.pdf](http://www.amsa.gov.au/Marine_Environment_Protection/National_Plan/General_Information/Oiled_Wildlife/Wildlife.pdf).

Under most State/NT internal agreements, arrangements, and legislation, the National Parks and Wildlife Services, Natural Resource and Conservation Agencies, or Environment Protection Authorities have the responsibility to protect wildlife and respond to wildlife impacts such as oil spills. These arrangements vary from State to State and should be detailed within a State/NT or regional oiled wildlife plan.

### **2.15. Place of Refuge**

It is rarely possible to deal expeditiously and satisfactorily with a casualty in open sea conditions, and the longer a damaged ship is forced to remain at the mercy of the open sea, the higher the risk of its condition deteriorating and thereby becoming a greater pollution hazard.

A place of refuge must provide favourable conditions to enable a ship to stabilise its condition, protect human life, and minimise the risk of environmental degradation. Australia is better placed than many maritime nations in that passing traffic not calling at Australian ports is minimal, and States/NT have sufficient jurisdiction over waters and areas of the coast to enable the selection of a place of refuge.

Some States/NT have adopted specific policies on places of refuge, and these should be followed as appropriate. National Maritime Place of Refuge Risk Assessment Guidelines (Appendix 5) have been developed to provide an overall framework for the assessment and identification of place of refuge requirements. Regardless of whether places of refuge are pre-designated or not, the following criteria form the basis for their selection:

- adequate water depth
- good holding ground
- shelter from the effect of prevailing wind/swell
- relatively unobstructed approach from seaward
- environmental classification of adjacent coastline and fisheries activity
- access to land/air transport
- access to loading/unloading facilities for emergency equipment.

It should be noted that the International Convention on Salvage 1989 places an obligation on Australian response authorities to take into account the need for cooperation between various parties concerned in a salvage operation, including public authorities, when considering admittance of damaged vessels to ports.

## **2.16. Training and Exercises**

The National Plan, incorporating AMSA, State/NT authorities and industry, conducts regular training programs and exercises for personnel likely to be involved in a response to an oil spill in the marine environment. These training programs and exercises are designed to enable Australia to have sufficient numbers of trained personnel to mount a credible and effective response to an oil spill incident.

Training programs are conducted at three levels, which recognise the overall technical complexity of managing an oil spill response and that the associated knowledge required by personnel varies depending on their level of responsibilities. The three levels of training conducted are:

- Level 3 - senior government and industry personnel responsible for high level decision making in the management of oil or chemical spill incidents.
- Level 2 - middle management personnel responsible for managing the operational response, e.g. incident controllers, their deputies and environment and scientific coordinators, and Fire Brigade (Hazardous Materials) specialists.
- Level 1 - operator level personnel, i.e. those undertaking on-site clean-up operations. In a major incident this would also include supervisors appointed as site managers.

Full details of the National Plan training program, including course content, are available from MEP.or at:

[http://www.amsa.gov.au/Marine\\_Environment\\_Protection/National\\_plan/Training\\_Program/index.asp](http://www.amsa.gov.au/Marine_Environment_Protection/National_plan/Training_Program/index.asp)

## **3. RESPONSE**

### **3.1. Measures to be Employed**

In the event of an oil spill in the marine environment the following measures should be employed according to the circumstances of the spill and conditions prevailing:

- if possible prevent, control or stop the outflow or release of the oil from the source
- if coastal or marine resources are not threatened or likely to be threatened, monitor the movement and behaviour of the oil
- if coastal and marine resources are threatened, determine whether to begin response operations, either at sea and/or to protect sensitive resources
- if possible contain the spread of oil
- if, due to weather and sea conditions, response at sea or protection of sensitive areas is not feasible, or the foreshores have already been affected, determine appropriate cleanup priorities and other response measures.

The importance of human health and safety in any response operation cannot be overstressed.

### **3.2. Overall Protection Priorities**

Protection priorities to be employed during a response to an oil spill are, in order of descending priority:

- human health and safety
- habitat and cultural resources
- rare and/or endangered flora and fauna
- commercial resources
- amenities.

However, in assessing protection priorities, it is necessary to maintain a balanced view of the potential success of particular response strategies.

### **3.3. Incident Reporting and Response Activation**

#### **3.3.1 Initial Reports**

Notification of a pollution incident will normally be made by:

- those responsible for the incident
- Government Agencies
- ships in the vicinity of the spill
- aircraft flying over the spill
- the public.

It is important that the information received be reported without delay to enable immediate and appropriate action to be taken. Pollution reports from the polluter may prove to be imprecise, often conservative. All efforts should be made to validate the quantity to better inform planning and decision making. The response procedures that shall be followed are summarised in Figure 6.

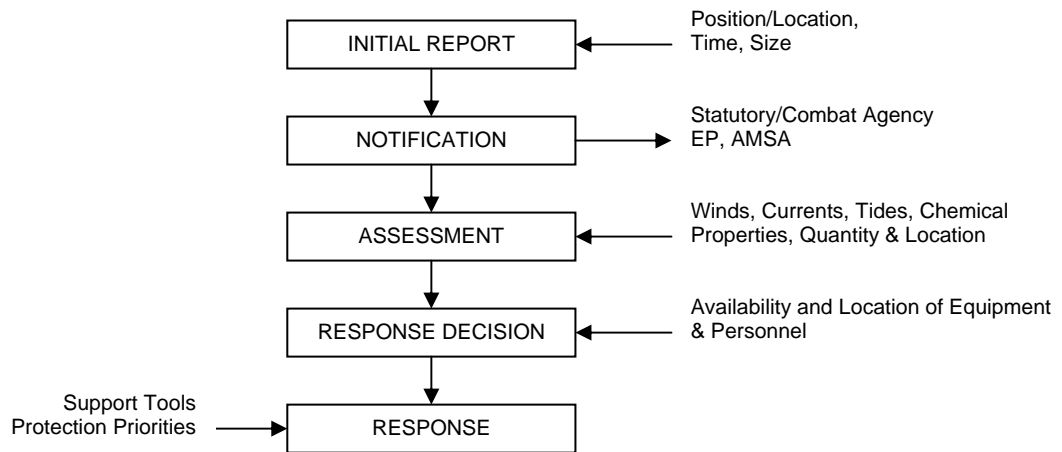


Figure 6 -Typical Response Procedure

The most efficient method of ensuring that reports are dealt with promptly is by reporting through the ERC. The ERC operates twenty-four (24) hours a day and is equipped with continuously monitored telephone, facsimile and telex lines. The ERC will disseminate this information to MEP.

The ERC contact details are outlined in Appendix 2.

### 3.3.2 Initial Action

The agency receiving the report of a pollution incident shall notify the relevant State/NT/Commonwealth Statutory Agency as defined in the IGA.

In the event that AMSA is the first agency advised of a pollution incident, the relevant State/NT Statutory Agency shall be notified as soon as possible.

In the event that the relevant State/NT Statutory Agency is the first agency advised of a pollution incident, AMSA shall be notified as soon as possible.

The Statutory Agency shall promptly assess the information contained in any report and make the necessary decisions in relation to appropriate investigations and response actions. This will include jurisdiction and expected Statutory and Combat Agency responsibilities. The Statutory Agency shall advise the relevant Combat Agency of the need for a response.

Following the report of an incident the Combat Agency shall issue a Pollution Report (POLREP) in accordance with part 3.3.4.

### 3.3.3 Activation

When a report has been received by the Combat Agency, that agency should confirm the incident details. The proximity and possible subsequent movement of an oil spill to sensitive areas will dictate the urgency of the method used to confirm the presence of the pollution.

On confirmation of the presence of oil (see Appendix 6 for the Bonn Agreement Oil Appearance Code), or where a decision has been made to implement a response action, the Combat Agency should mount a response operation in accordance with the appropriate contingency plan arrangements.

Contact MEP for an AMSA 'Identification of Oil on Water: Aerial Observation and Identification Guide'.

It should be noted that some States/NT might have a requirement to formally activate

a Plan. This should be done without delay to facilitate any subsequent cost recovery actions.

#### **3.3.4 Pollution Report**

After initial verbal advice has been provided to the Statutory Agency, the Combat Agency should issue a Pollution Report (POLREP) to relevant agencies. This would best be directed to the ERC who would disseminate the information to relevant agencies based on the incident type and location. A generic POLREP form is shown in Appendix 7, which can be used by agencies.

It should also be noted that the MARPOL Convention established the requirement for ship's Masters to report discharges from their vessels. For reference, a copy of the details that ship's Masters should report is also listed at Appendix 8 (Harmful Substances Report).

#### **3.3.5 Situation Report**

During a marine pollution incident (or potential incident), it is essential that all relevant authorities be kept advised of any significant developments.

The IC will be responsible for ensuring that periodic Situation Reports (SITREPs) are dispatched to those concerned. SITREPs should contain as much information as possible.

During an incident that involves the risk of marine pollution the Combat Agency shall be responsible for initiating SITREPs to relevant agencies, including AMSA. SITREPs should be forwarded to AMSA via the ERC who will disseminate them to MEP. A suggested format, including required content, for reporting this information is outlined in Appendix 9.

### **3.4. Incident Control**

Operational control of a pollution incident is the responsibility of the Combat Agency representative nominated as an IC, and supported by an IMT that performs the tasks of the Planning, Operations, Logistics, and Finance and Administration sections of OSRICS.

The IC shall establish an ICC at a location, in close proximity to the incident, affording resources and facilities for the sustained management of the incident. This shall include access to communication facilities, suitable road access and other resources required for the response.

### **3.5. Response Plans**

#### **3.5.1 Strategic Plans**

In a major incident it is important that a strategic plan is drawn up which clearly details the aims and objectives of the overall response. In some cases it may be necessary for strategic plans to be developed to cover a number of aspects of the incident.

Strategic plans address the broader issues of the response, not short-term operational activities.

#### **3.5.2 Incident Action Plans**

Short-term operational objectives and activities are the subject of an Incident Action Plan (IAP). The IAP will provide details of the operational activities and objectives to be achieved over a specified, short-term period. Initially this may be for the subsequent few hours only, but once the operation is underway it is likely to address the activities required over each of the following twenty-four hours or longer.

### **3.6. Response Options**

A number of options exist for the treatment of oil that has been released into the marine environment. All may be effective to a degree according to the conditions prevailing and the sensitivity of the environment under threat. The response options to be considered as part of this contingency plan include:

- surveillance
- control and recovery
- application of dispersant
- shoreline cleanup
- bioremediation.

Bioremediation is undertaken in limited circumstances in consultation with the relevant State ESC, Combat/Statutory Agency and other stakeholders.

### **3.7. Occupational Health and Safety**

Response managers should be aware that at all times human life, health, and safety is paramount. The degree of risk associated with cleanup operations will depend on the:

- type of oil spilled
- size of the spill
- location of the spill
- circumstances of the spill
- weather conditions.

Fresh crude oil and refined petroleum products are capable of giving off flammable gases. Therefore, fire and explosion remain a real danger to personnel and equipment, particularly when fresh crude oil and certain refined products are situated in confined locations.

At all times response managers should be aware of the limitations and safe operating procedures for all equipment used throughout the phases of the cleanup operation. This should, where necessary, include a risk assessment and development of a formal site-specific management plan, including details for induction and briefing procedures.

### **3.8. *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999***

The responsible Minister has issued a Notice of Exemption for the National Plan under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC) Act. The effect of this notice is that response actions taken in accordance with the National Plan are exempt from the EPBC Act. In this context, the National Plan includes separate contingency plans for oil and chemicals, supported by State/NT contingency plans, regional contingency plans, contingency plans for ports, terminals and platforms, and vessel response plans.

It is important to note, however, that any response action contrary to one of these contingency plans would be subject to the EPBC Act.

### **3.9. Cultural and Heritage Issues**

Important indigenous and non-indigenous heritage values and places exist in many parts of Australia's coastal areas and include:

- historic heritage sites and items
- places with physical evidence of indigenous use
- places of cultural value to indigenous people (e.g. dreaming places)
- natural resources.

The potential impact of response operations on the heritage values of the area needs to be addressed in planning the operation.

The potential heritage values of an area need to be identified and the likely impacts that result from the activities should be addressed. Specific consideration should be given to access to, and general use and disturbance of areas. The assessment should consider both direct and indirect impacts, cultural protocols and strategies for minimising impacts. Consultation with local indigenous communities should occur as part of the planning process (refer Ask First – A guide to respecting Indigenous heritage and places, Australian Heritage Commission, 2002, <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/ahc/publications/commission/books/ask-first.html>)

Information about the heritage values of an area may be limited, or difficult to access. Some heritage registers held by State/NT agencies are subject to access restrictions. As such, appropriate Commonwealth, State/NT and local government agencies should be consulted to facilitate contact with indigenous communities and obtain necessary information required by the IMT and response personnel.

### **3.10. Obtaining Samples for Evidence and Analysis**

In the aftermath of a pollution incident, identification of the source of contamination is a vital component in identifying the polluter, not only for possible legal action but also for the recovery of response costs. Even where one ship is considered to clearly be the source of the spill it is important to be able to establish that other potential sources have been eliminated. Where a spill has occurred there may be a number of different ships that are potential sources of the spill and they must all be identified and sampled as far as practicable. Samples must be obtained from all possible sources (tanks, bilge etc) onboard each ship to compare with spill samples. The laboratory will use multiple analysis methods to eliminate or identify the source of the spill. To ensure that a positive analysis result can be achieved, correct sampling, storage, handling, preparation of the samples from all potential sources is essential. Further details concerning sample collection, storage and handling are outlined in Appendix 10.

### **3.11. Disposal of Oil and Oily Debris**

Cleanup operations generate substantial quantities of oily debris. Temporary storage, transportation and final disposal methods must be arranged to comply with Government disposal approvals. This will usually be facilitated by the responsible State/NT environment protection agency.

State/NT, regional and local contingency plans should contain information on the disposal of oily waste. This should include any pre-designated arrangements for disposal sites and approved contractors.

Ideally disposal sites should be identified as close as practical to those areas where oil pollution could most likely occur. Additional information is provided in the National Plan document Management and Disposal of Oil Spill Debris, available on the AMSA National Plan website

[www.amsa.gov.au/marine\\_environment\\_protection/National\\_Plan/Supporting\\_Documents/Management\\_and\\_disposal\\_of\\_oil\\_spill\\_debris.asp](http://www.amsa.gov.au/marine_environment_protection/National_Plan/Supporting_Documents/Management_and_disposal_of_oil_spill_debris.asp).

### **3.12. Equipment**

On completion of an oil pollution response operation, the IC shall arrange recovery of all equipment and unused materials, and their prompt return to the resource centre from which they came. In the event of a major incident, a NRT member would normally be available to assist in the coordination of equipment transfers, including returning equipment to its point of origin. The IC shall advise the Manager, MEP, of all usage of AMSA-owned National Plan equipment, including details of any damage or discrepancies. When AMSA-owned National Plan dispersant stocks are used during an incident, the Combat Agency shall furnish the Manager MEP, with a full report outlining the quantities used.

The IC, or delegate, will ensure that all equipment is cleaned after use to the fullest extent the available facilities allow, and is returned to its owner by the quickest possible means, having regard to freight costs.

On its return to the resource centre the equipment shall be thoroughly serviced in accordance with equipment maintenance schedules prior to being stored. The Combat Agency shall ensure that all costs incurred in returning equipment to the resource centre, including cleaning and servicing is included in the overall schedule list of costs submitted for reimbursement by the polluter.

### **3.13. Termination of a Response**

Under the terms of the IGA, an incident response will be terminated by the Statutory Agency once the Statutory Agency considers that the effective completion of the response is achieved based on expert Combat Agency advice.

Termination arrangements are outlined in the IGA and should be included in State/NT, regional and local contingency plans.

## **4. RESPONSE SUPPORT**

### **4.1. Oil Spill Response Atlas**

#### **4.1.1 About the Oil Spill Response Atlas**

The Oil Spill Response Atlas (OSRA) identifies marine and foreshore ecosystems and biological resources for the determination of protection priorities and provides information to authorities on response options including:

- boom deployment
- chemical dispersant use
- foreshore cleanup techniques to be employed
- disposal sites for wastes generated.

#### **4.1.2 Available Information**

OSRA datasets include but are not restricted to:

- habitats, both coastal and near-shore marine
- high definition coastlines
- bathymetry
- nautical charts in scanned, georeferenced format
- scanned topographical charts for all of Australia (1:100 000)
- marine parks, reserves and national parks
- biological resources and conservation status
- fisheries and aquaculture
- coastal and marine wildlife resources
- recreational resources
- locations of National Plan equipment stockpiles
- aerial photography for selected regions; National LandSat remote sensing (colour 50m)
- oblique photography linked geographically for selected regions
- high resolution SPOT imagery for all harbours, ports and marine parks
- landmarks and features
- access (e.g. roads, airports, marinas and boat ramps)
- logistical and other infrastructure information.

#### **4.1.3 Access to the Oil Spill Response Atlas**

Access to OSRA and its tools is via the State/NT ESC, State/NT OSRA Coordinator or State/NT Chair. AMSA has holdings of the data for emergency purposes.

### **4.2. Oil Spill Trajectory Modelling**

#### **4.2.1 About Oil Spill Trajectory Modelling**

AMSA manages the provision of the Oil Spill Trajectory Model (OSTM). The model identifies speed of movement, weathering and spreading characteristics of the oil under the influence of prevailing currents and weather conditions. This system models water movement in the coastal continental shelf region of Australia based on tides, bathymetry and wind. The movement of spilled oil is then modelled, taking into account the amount and type of oil spilled. On-scene visual observations obtained

from aircraft over flights should be used to confirm the accuracy of OSTM predictions. This information should then be entered into the model to update predictions.

#### **4.2.2 Activation of Oil Spill Trajectory Modelling**

Activation of OSTM is through the MEP Duty Officer, who can be contacted via the ERC. Requests for activation of OSTM should be accompanied by a completed OSTM Proforma (Appendix 11), which can be sent to AMSA by facsimile or e-mail (OSTM@amsa.gov.au). Predictions from OSTM can be returned by facsimile or supplied in the form of a .dbf file for incorporation into OSRA or other GIS applications. Note that at least four weeks notice must be given for OSTM runs requested as part of an exercise or for contingency planning purposes. Copies of the OSTM Proforma are also available from AMSA's web site at [www.amsa.gov.au/Marine\\_Environment\\_Protection/National\\_Plan/General\\_Information/Oil\\_Spill\\_Trajectory\\_Model/Oil\\_Spill\\_Trajectory\\_Model\\_Request\\_Proforma.asp](http://www.amsa.gov.au/Marine_Environment_Protection/National_Plan/General_Information/Oil_Spill_Trajectory_Model/Oil_Spill_Trajectory_Model_Request_Proforma.asp).

#### **4.2.3 Weather and Spill Updates**

During the response, periodic updates of the prevailing winds and confirmed observations of the movement of the spill should be reported, preferably by facsimile, to AMSA for inclusion, as necessary, in the continuing OSTM predictions. Additionally, AMSA obtains Bureau of Meteorology forecasts for comparative purposes.

### **4.3. Automated Data Inquiry for Oil Spills**

The Automated Data Inquiry for Oil Spills (ADIOS) is a computer-based oil spill response tool that was developed by the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for emergency spill responders and contingency planners.

ADIOS integrates a library of approximately one thousand oils with a short-term oil fate and cleanup model, which is designed to estimate the time that spilled oil will remain in the marine environment and the amount of oil remaining.

ADIOS calculations combine real-time environmental data based on user inputs, such as wind speed and water temperature, combined with carefully researched information on chemical and physical properties of oils in its oil library. The program provides a prediction of possible ranges in the values of spill properties and oil fate. ADIOS can be accessed through the EPR Duty Officer, who can be contacted via the ERC.

### **4.4. Marine Oil Spill Equipment System**

The Marine Oil Spill Equipment System (MOSES) is a computer database that lists the type, quantity, location, status and availability of pollution control equipment. The database contains listings of National Plan, State/NT and industry equipment available for use in response to a marine oil spill. It is also used to manage audits, maintenance and repair of AMSA owned equipment.

Procedures to gain access to equipment are outlined in part 2.11.

Copies of MOSES outputs are available in State/NT contingency plans or directly from MEP.

### **4.5. Charter and Hire Arrangements**

#### **4.5.1 Charter of Vessels**

During an incident there may be the requirement to charter local vessels to assist in response operations. A Vessel Charter Agreement used by AMSA, Appendix 12, provides an example of an agreement, which may be amended for use by other agencies.

It is recommended that a formal agreement be used whenever there is a need for agencies to charter a vessel for use during oil pollution incidents and where the owner agrees to its use for such charter.

Whilst the IC may need to control the operation of a vessel to suit prevailing conditions and the particular circumstances of the incident, it shall be made clear that **THE NAVIGATION AND SAFETY OF THE VESSEL WILL REMAIN THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE VESSEL'S MASTER AT ALL TIMES.**

When an owner is not prepared to accept the suggested agreement, but is prepared to make a vessel available, the charterer should ensure that:

- the vessel complies with all safety and equipment requirements; and,
- it is made clear by the charterer to the owner that the controls shall apply at all times.

All other aspects of the charter shall be the subject of local negotiation at the time of the incident.

Details of craft availability, including port and State/NT Government craft, should be shown in appropriate regional and local contingency plans.

#### **4.5.2 Hire of Spray Aircraft**

AMSA in conjunction with the AIP through its oil spill centre, AMOSC, have put in place a Fixed Wing Aerial Dispersant Capability (FWADC) for the application of oil spill dispersants. This capability has been achieved by means of a contract with Australian Maritime Resources (AMR) based in Adelaide, SA.

Based on the concept of utilising large agricultural aircraft, the FWADC is designed to complement informal dispersant spraying arrangements using helicopters, which are confined to close inshore work. The aircraft have a dispersant capability of between 1850 - 3100 litres, depending on aircraft type and model.

AMR, as the contractor, is required to have available six (6) primary aircraft on any one day. These aircraft are located at Emerald (QLD), St George (QLD), Ballarat (VIC), Tintinara or Adelaide (SA), Batchelor (NT) and Ballidu (WA). Primary aircraft activation is on the basis of a four-hour response time, i.e. available to fly within four hours of being requested to respond to an incident.

AMR are contracted to provide a Liaison Officer and aircraft Loading Crew. The Liaison Officer is a representative of AMR and is responsible for supervising AMR aircraft and Loading Crew personnel. Each Loading Crew consists of two personnel. AMR are contracted to provide sufficient Loading Crew so as not to hinder aircraft operations. The Loading Crew is responsible for dispersant loading and refuelling of AMR aircraft. AMR are contracted to provide the Liaison Officer and Loading Crew at the nominated site within twenty-four hours of Activation by AMSA.

Activation of the FWADC is through the MEP Duty Officer, who can be contacted via the ERC. The MEP Duty Officer will make an assessment of the requirement and then contact AMR, who within 30 minutes will advise AMSA of the nominated aircraft and estimated arrival time.

As the FWADC Contract does not include a stand-by arrangement, it is important to note that a decision to activate the FWADC incurs a substantial daily charge. The daily charge is in addition to charges for actual flying time. Notwithstanding the absence of a stand-by arrangement, AMSA will advise AMR, for planning purposes (not an activation), of significant incidents where dispersant application may be considered as a major response option.

It should be noted that only National Plan approved dispersants are to be used in response to any incident involving dispersant use. Full details of approved dispersant can be obtained from MEP or [www.amsa.gov.au/Marine\\_Environment\\_Protection/National\\_Plan/General\\_Information/Dispersants\\_Information/Approved\\_Oil\\_Spill\\_Dispersants.asp](http://www.amsa.gov.au/Marine_Environment_Protection/National_Plan/General_Information/Dispersants_Information/Approved_Oil_Spill_Dispersants.asp).

Further details of the FWADC are available through MEP.

#### **4.5.3 Surveillance Aircraft**

Where the source of an incident is not identified and thus recovery of costs is unlikely, or where it is intended to claim reimbursement of costs from AMSA under the IGA arrangements, then the MEP Duty Officer or Manager, MEP must approve the use of aircraft for surveillance or investigation.

Procedures for the identification and charter of appropriate aircraft should be shown in appropriate State/NT, regional and local contingency plans.

#### **4.5.4 Hire of Other Equipment**

In a cleanup operation the hire of other equipment, including earthmoving equipment, storage, and transport will be arranged under the direction of the IC as required.

### **4.6. Defence Force Assistance**

Requests for Defence Force assistance, including the use of military transport are to be directed to MEP.

After assessing and approving any requests, MEP will seek the assistance of the Defence Forces through EMA, Canberra. EMA will arrange for Defence Force assistance once all avenues of utilising commercial resources have been exhausted, or where timeframes are such that it is impractical to use commercial resources. Following approval of a request by the Defence Force, MEP will continue to liaise with EMA regarding transport details.

Costs associated with the engagement of Defence Force resources, will be charged against the incident and recovered from the polluter. These costs are determined by the Defence Forces in accordance with Government cost recovery directions and, therefore, may exceed normal commercial rates.

### **4.7. Salvage Arrangements**

#### **4.7.1 Salvage Involvement**

In the event of an incident involving a damaged or disabled ship, salvage action may be needed to take the vessel in tow, refloat, reduce or stop a discharge of oil. The vessel's Master/Owner will normally appoint a salvor by signing a Lloyds Open Form Agreement. However, in cases where this does not occur, AMSA may use its powers under the Protection of the Sea (Powers of Intervention) Act 1981 in accordance with Australia's National Maritime Emergency Response Arrangement.

#### **4.7.2 Salvage Liaison**

During an incident requiring the salvage of a vessel, consideration should be given to the appointment of a Casualty Coordinator (CC). The role of the CC is to enable continuing exchange of information regarding the salvage operation between the IC, the Salvage Master and Statutory/Combat Agencies. This will enable the Salvage Master to limit briefings to one person, whilst at the same time providing for continuity in information flow. A number of trained senior AMSA marine surveyors are available to act as CCs.

#### **4.7.3 Independent Salvage Advice**

During a major casualty it may be necessary to obtain independent salvage advice. AMSA has identified suitable companies which can provide independent advice on

the salvage operation, including the appropriateness of the salvage operation. An Incident Controller or Marine Pollution Controller should seek salvage and refloat plans from a salvor to a level of detail necessary to allow the making of an informed decision.

#### **4.8. Updating the Plan**

Contingency Plans are evolving documents, and as such, require regular updating. It is recommended that all Contingency Plans be reviewed annually to take into account policy changes and experience from incidents and exercises. Regular amendments should be made to reflect changes to contacts, equipment and other details.

Minor amendments to this Plan will be issued by AMSA as they become necessary. AMSA will review the National Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan annually. Information for updating the Plan should be forwarded on a regular basis to:

Manager  
Marine Environment Pollution  
Marine Environment Division  
Australian Maritime Safety Authority  
GPO Box 2181  
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601  
Facsimile: (02) 6279 5076