



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

SPILL NOTIFICATION POINT

United States Coast Guard Marine Safety Office Saipan Saipan	Tel: +670 3329572 +670 2344237 (Pager) Fax: +670 3223598
Spills should also be notified to:	
CNMI Civil Defence Emergency Operations Centre Saipan	Tel: +670 322 9274
Alternatively, spills may be notified to:	
United States Coast Guard Marine Safety Office Guam Guam	Tel: +671 3396100 (24hr) +671 3392001 Fax: +671 3392005

Additionally, a spiller must notify the United States Coast Guard National Response Centre:

National Response Centre USCG Headquarters 2100 2nd Street S.W. Washington, DC 20593-0001 U.S.A.	Tel: +1-800 4248802 +1-202 2672675 Fax: +1-202 2672165 Tlx: 892427
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COMPETENT NATIONAL AUTHORITY

USCG MSO Guam, details as above.

RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) is a territory of the USA. As such, spill response arrangements are governed by the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA'90). Under OPA'90 primary responsibility for combating and cleaning oil spills lies with the polluter, under the coordination of a designated Federal On-Scene Commander (OSC). The polluter would be expected to provide personnel and resources or engage appropriate contractors and must operate an applicable response plan. If the work is performed unsatisfactorily, the USCG are empowered to take over the clean-up and appoint their own contractors at the owner's expense.

The US Coast Guard Marine Safety Office (USCG MSO) in Guam is the lead federal agency for oil spills in CNMI coastal and offshore waters with the Commanding Officer acting as the Federal OSC through the USCG Marine Safety Detachment in Saipan. The Federal OSC would be supported by the National Response System, developed to coordinate response using the support of the National Response Team, Regional Response Team, Area Committees and responsible parties as necessary to supply the required resources.



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The CNMI Civil Defence Coordinator would act as the local CNMI OSC and would supervise all response operations of CNMI agencies. The CNMI OSC is responsible for spills not affecting navigable waters and where the CNMI is the responsible party. In the event of a spill from a navy vessel, an OSC would be appointed from Naval Forces Marianas.

When appropriate, a unified command structure will be initiated comprising the Federal OSC who has overall command, the CNMI OSC and the spillers representative. This will normally be located at the CNMI Civil Defence Emergency Operations Centre. The OSC and polluter would be advised by an Area Committee. The Committee is an advisory body comprising three levels of members. Primary members as required under OPA'90 include the Division of Environmental Quality, Coastal Resources Management, Department of Public Safety, Department of Public Works, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), Commonwealth Ports Authority, Division of Fish & Wildlife, Disaster Control Office, Office of Civil Defence, Office of the Attorney General, U.S. Coast Guard and the Chair of the CNMI Oil Spill Coop. Secondary members include local organisations not required by OPA'90 but having an interest and include Shell Oil, Mobil Oil, Marinex, Marianas Tug & Barge and Saipan Shipping. A third level includes observers to the committee. The Area Committee has responsibility for the Oil and Hazardous Substances Response Contingency Plan which forms the Area Contingency Plan (ACP) for the CNMI. The ACP is complimentary to and would be implemented in conjunction with the Oceanic Regional Contingency Plan and the US National Contingency Plan as appropriate. The ACP includes sensitivity maps for the CNMI.

Where a spill is beyond the capabilities of regional resources and becomes a spill of national significance (SONS), the regional organisation will be augmented by a national structure. A National Incident Commander, most likely a USCG Vice Admiral, will assume the role of OSC with the Commander of the District (14th) as an alternate. Other USCG officials will assume various supporting roles.

The US Oceania Regional Response Team (RRT), which is responsible for the Regional Contingency Plan, can provide guidance to the OSC on clean-up strategies, disposal, safety and environmental issues. Guidance can also be sought from the National Response Team through the RRT. Further specialist advice and resources can be requested from the USCG National Strike Force Pacific Team, the US Navy Supervisor of Salvage-SUPSALV, the NOAA Scientific Support Coordinator and the US EPA Environmental Response Team amongst others.

RESPONSE POLICY

The preferred clean-up policy is that of mechanical containment & recovery. The use of dispersants while not specifically prevented would be unlikely due to the sensitivity of large areas of the sea bed and the lack of any suitable resources. The OSC will generally use guidelines specified by NOAA for shoreline clean-up with additional input from local expertise.

Limited quantities of waste oil may be disposed of through US Navy and CUC power plants. There are no hazardous waste disposal sites and licensed contractors within CNMI. The closest facilities, albeit for temporary storage, are available on Guam.. A shipping company is available to transport any waste.



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EQUIPMENT

Government

The USCG Marine Safety Detachment in Saipan has boom located at the Shell facilities. Further equipment is operated by MSO. The CNMI Division of Environmental Quality has limited supplies of sorbent on Saipan. Various other CNMI agencies have non-specialised equipment.

Private

A CNMI Oil Spill Cooperative operates between Shell, Mobil and the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation. Equipment operated includes various small skimmers, pumps, boom, sorbent, vessels and tank trucks and is located at member facilities on Saipan, Tinian and Rota. Commercial plant hire companies and tug operators can supply necessary support equipment.

PREVIOUS SPILL EXPERIENCE

There have been no major spills in CMNI waters. The PETRO SERVICE (1986) was blown onto a reef by a typhoon spilling 1000 gallons which dissipated at sea. A fishing vessel sank in 1992 spilling approximately 450 gallons of diesel and lube oil into Tanapag Harbour. The Coast Guard initiated a federally funded response.

CONVENTIONS

Prevention & Safety					Spill Response		Compensation						
MARPOL 73/78		Annexes III IV V VI			OPRC '90	OPRC -HNS	CLC '69	CLC '76	CLC '92	Fund '92	Supp Fund	HNS*	Bunker
✓	✓		✓		✓								

* not yet in force



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REGIONAL AND BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

Noumea Convention (with states of the South Pacific Region).

Date of issue: May 1996

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