



ITALY

SPILL NOTIFICATION POINT

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COMPETENT NATIONAL AUTHORITY

Contact details as above

RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

Overall responsibility for spills rests with the Ministry of Environment. The Central Service of Sea Defence, a part of the Ministry of Environment, is responsible for coordinating the response, through its contract with a private company, Castalia Ecolmar ScpA, who provide 71 anti-pollution vessels to patrol the Italian coastline. The 48 Harbourmaster offices, part of the Coast Guard, would control and coordinate the operation in the field, under the authority and direction of the Central Service of Sea Defence. Each Harbour Master has responsibility for a particular area and would coordinate response within that area.

The coastal municipal and regional authorities have responsibility for maintaining public areas and would be involved with shoreline clean-up disposal issues.

If the pollution constitutes a hazard or serious threat to national interests, the Ministry of Civil Protection may declare a national emergency. They can operate at sea and on land and have all public and private resources at their disposal under emergency powers granted by the government. Emergencies at this level are handled by the Maritime Emergency Operating Centre located in Rome at the Department of Civil Protection which is equipped with a 24-hour operating room. Day to day control of operations locally could be delegated to a Regional Operating Centre. In practice, operational matters would be undertaken by the Coast Guard, Navy and by private contractors.

Two national plans exist for the Ministry of Environment and for the Department of Civil Protection. The Ministry of Environment's plan, approved in 1987, has been updated and is waiting administrative approval (as at 2008). In addition, each local maritime authority and oil handling facility is required to have its own plan.

RESPONSE POLICY

The government's preferred approach for dealing with pollution at sea is to use booms and skimmers for the containment and recovery of oil before it affects the coast. Dispersants may only be applied in situations where a response is required and mechanical recovery is impractical. Authorisation by the competent national authority must be obtained and only dispersants approved by the Ministry of Environment may be used. A list of sensitive areas is attached to the national plans.

ITALY

EQUIPMENT

Government

The Italian Government through its contract with Castalia Ecolmar operates 71 vessels equipped with skimmers and booms and 7 warehouses (Genoa, Fiumicino/Civitavecchia, Naples, Catania, Bari, Ravenna and Cagliari) equipped with booms, skimmers, lightening pumps etc. Specialised vessels belonging to the Harbourmasters' offices and various government agencies can also be called upon. The Italian Navy, at the request of the Ministry of Environment, manages four 1,500-tonne patrol boats able to undertake clean-up operations offshore. In addition, 12 surveillance aircraft are available to the Coast Guard for control and reconnaissance. These can be supplemented by similar resources from the Air Force and Navy.

Private

In addition to the services and equipment contracted to the Ministry of Environment, several other commercial contractors operate specialised pollution clean-up equipment within port areas. Oil handling facilities are required by law to maintain some equipment which can be requisitioned by the Harbourmasters should the need arise.

PREVIOUS SPILL EXPERIENCE

Numerous small spills have occurred in Italian ports. The AGIP ABRUZZO & HAVEN (1991) incidents occurred within a day and 150 kilometres of each other. With the sinking of the HAVEN, most of the oil was consumed by the resulting fire. Little residue was recovered from the water due to the high viscosity caused by the incomplete combustion of the crude. Poor weather thwarted the booming of sensitive tourist beaches. Manual cleaning of the shoreline continued throughout the summer. In the AGIP ABRUZZO incident, attempts to recover oil at sea were partially successful, but intermittent contamination of shorelines with heavy fuel oil occurred along 130 kilometres, north of Livorno.

HAZARDOUS & NOXIOUS SUBSTANCES

The competent authority for dealing with marine pollution involving HNS is the Ministry of Environment and Italian Coast Guard. In case of a national emergency, responsibility for coordinating the response action lies with the Department of Civil Protection. Other entities involved in an HNS incident would be the Agency for Environmental Protection and Technical Services (APAT), the Central Institute for Applied Marine Research (ICRAM) and the Regional Agencies for Environmental Protection (ARPAs). The draft of the new NCP encompasses spills of HNS. Italy's capability for responding to HNS spills is rather limited and relies on harbour fire brigades and the same resources as for oil pollution response. Five specialised teams of Fire Fighters (CBNR) are available for HNS spills. They are equipped with appropriate PPE and have personal decontamination equipment and tools for the containment of products. The CBNR are able to operate along the shoreline and on vessels and have 12 centres around the country. In major ports, a chemical specialist is also available, who would operate under the direction of the harbour master. Italy has some specialised equipment for monitoring marine spills of HNS and the harbour fire brigades have some boats fit for intervention in this field. In addition the contractor of the antipollution service for the Ministry of Environment has some vessels classified as HNS anti pollution vessels. APAT, ICRAM and the Italian National Institute of Health can provide scientific advice during an HNS incident. Italy has been involved with 2 HNS spills;- VAL ROSANDRA (1990, Propylene) and ALLESSANDRO PRIMO (1991, Acrylonitrile, dichloroethane). (Information from EMSA, 2008)

ITALY

CONVENTIONS

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

* not yet in force

REGIONAL AND BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

Barcelona Convention (with states bordering the Mediterranean)
 RAMOGE (a trilateral agreement with France and Monaco).
 Bilateral agreement with Greece (covering the Ionian Sea).
 Member of the European Community Task Force.

For further information see also REMPEC (Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea) Country Profile (http://www.rempec.org/country.asp?cid=10&IDS=2_1&daNme=General%20Information&openNum=1)

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