

OMAN

SPILL NOTIFICATION POINT

Pollution Control Operations Section (Office hours) Directorate General of Environmental Affairs Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment & Water Resources PO Box 323 Muscat Code 113	Tel: +968 693666 Fax: +968 693946 GSM: +9343719 Pager: +968 910 5793
or Royal Navy of Oman Operations Centre	Tel: +968 618805 (24hr) Fax: +968 614776
or Royal Oman Police Coast Guard Division	Tel: +968 74661 (24hr) +968 71399/499 (24hr) Fax: +968 714937 Tlx: 5178 POLMAR ON VHF Channels 11, 16

COMPETENT NATIONAL AUTHORITY

Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment & Water Resources P.O. Box 323 Muscat Code 113	Tel: +968 693666 Fax: +968 693946
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RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

The Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment and Water Resources (MRMEWR) has overall responsibility for spill response in Oman and for the development and implementation of the Action Plan for Combating Marine Oil Spills.

Under the plan, oil spill incidents are classified into four levels, depending upon the response necessary. A Level 0 or 1 incident would be dealt with by the Pollution Control Operations Section (PCOS) of the MRMEWR. The On-Scene Commander (OSC) would be provided from the PCOS. For a Level 2 incident, the PCOS would first request a Higher Coordinating Committee (HCC) to convene. The PCOS would again appoint the OSC but his appointment and all his response recommendations would first need to be approved by the HCC. The HCC would consist of ministerial members of MRMEWR and the Ministry of Communications, the Royal Oman Police, and the Defence Forces.

A Level 3 incident would require the National Committee for Natural Disasters (NCND) to be convened. The NCND would, like the HCC, be at a ministerial level, and would include amongst its members those of the HCC. The NCND is chaired by the Inspector General of the Royal Oman Police. A Level 3 response would aim to marshal international resources. A command centre would be located at one of several pre-defined sites operated by the defence forces or the oil industry. The municipalities (Muscat, Dhofar and those under the control of the MRMEWR) would be responsible for shoreline clean-up, as well as for transport and disposal of oily waste.

Petroleum Development Oman (PDO), operates its own contingency plan for spills within its facilities at Mina al Fahl where it has sole responsibility for clean-up. The natural resources of the whole coastline of Oman have been mapped as part of the Coastal Zone Management Plan.

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RESPONSE POLICY

Oman has a cautious approach to dispersant use, and prefers to use containment and recovery to deal with oil at sea. Dispersants can be used, but only with prior approval by MRMEWR. Dispersants would probably not be used in water depths of less than 25m. The ROPME approved list of dispersants is generally adhered to.

There are no ballast reception facilities in Oman. PDO operates slops tanks and an effluent/emulsion treatment plant. A new oily water treatment plant has recently opened in Sohar. Solid waste could be land-farmed and Domestic landfill sites exist, operated by the MRMEWR, and the Muscat and Dhofar Municipalities.

EQUIPMENT

Government

The MRMEWR has a considerable quantity of spill clean-up equipment, including offshore booms and skimmers, dispersants and aerial and vessel mounted spraying equipment. This is stockpiled at various sites and is maintained by the site operators, the Royal Navy and Air Force of Oman, the Police and the Port Services Corporation. Supplementary resources can be requested by the government through the Marine Emergencies Mutual Aid Centre (MEMAC), based in Bahrain, a part of ROPME

In the event of a major spill, aerial surveillance would be provided by the Royal Air Force of Oman or the air wing of the Royal Oman Police. Boat surveillance would be mounted by the Royal Navy of Oman and the Police Coast Guard Division.

The municipalities can provide vacuum trucks and heavy plant for shoreline clean-up.

Private

PDO maintains response resources in the Mina Al Fahal port area. Several vessels are fitted with spraying equipment and carry dispersant in bulk. Containment and recovery equipment is also stockpiled. PDO is a member of the Regional Clean Sea Organisation (RECSO) (formerly known as GAOCMAO) and may request assistance from other member companies in the Gulf region.

PREVIOUS SPILL EXPERIENCE

Although Oman has not suffered any major oil pollution of its coastline, it has responded to a number of marine emergencies in recent years, including the oil spill from the tanker ASSIMI (1983), those arising from conflicts in the Gulf region and the tanker SEKI (1994) in neighbouring Fujairah which led to minor contamination of Omani beaches.

CONVENTIONS

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

* not yet in force



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REGIONAL AND BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

Kuwait Convention (with countries bordering the Gulf) administered by the Regional Organisation for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) based in Kuwait.

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