

PANAMA

SPILL NOTIFICATION POINT

For Oil & HNS

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Control y Respuesta a Contaminacion

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COMPETENT NATIONAL AUTHORITY

Contact details as above.

RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

Oil pollution control in Panamanian waters, except for the Panama Canal, rests with the Autoridad Maritima de Panama (AMP), under authority provided by Law 21 of 9 June 1980. In practice, serious incidents along the Caribbean or Pacific coast would be handled by contractors appointed by AMP.

In Canal waters, oil pollution control is provided by the Panama Canal Authority (ACP) Contamination Control and Response Unit. ACP requires vessels entering its waters to have a Panama Canal Shipboard Oil Pollution Emergency Plan (PCSOPEP). Requirements are set out in a notice to shipping, updated annually.

RESPONSE POLICY

AMP contractors have mechanical equipment available for clean-up. ACP also has a large inventory of mechanical equipment and a Memorandum of Agreement with the US National Response Team (NRT) and Oil Spill Response Ltd (OSRL) for oil spill response. The US NRT supports an annual pollution response drill between the two parties. The use of dispersants is not officially allowed, although permission may be given in individual cases. The Panama Canal has identified some areas for preapproved use of dispersants.

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EQUIPMENT

Government & Private

Contractors appointed by AMP have adequate equipment, including stocks of boom, skimmers, vacuum trucks, barges etc. The ACP, through their Contamination Control and Response Unit, Dredging Division, have equipment for clean-up within Canal waters.

Further equipment is held by private companies at refineries and terminals. This equipment is primarily used to respond to small spills, following the operators' contingency plans. The operators are, however, expected to liaise closely with the AMP on any proposals on oil spill clean-up.

PREVIOUS SPILL EXPERIENCE

Panama has been the site of a number of oil pollution incidents as a result, primarily, of collisions and groundings in the Panama Canal.

HAZARDOUS AND NOXIOUS SUBSTANCES (HNS)

Contingency arrangements for an HNS incident will eventually be incorporated within current spill response arrangements. The AMP would work in conjunction with the fire authorities. Panama has had some experience of small spills of soya and phosphoric acid within port limits.

CONVENTIONS

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

* not yet in force



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REGIONAL AND BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

Cartagena Convention (Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment in the Wider Caribbean Region) with states of the Wider Caribbean Region.

Operative Network for Regional Cooperation among maritime authorities of South America, Mexico, Panama & Cuba (ROCRAM).

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