



BAHRAIN

COUNTRY PROFILES

A Summary of Oil Spill Response Arrangements
& Resources Worldwide

SPILL NOTIFICATION POINT

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COMPETENT NATIONAL AUTHORITY

General Directorate of Environment & Wildlife Protection Public Commission for the Protection of Marine Resources Environment & Wildlife (PMEW) PO Box 18233 Bahrain Mall Manama	Tel: +973 17 386550/551/599/6611 Fax: +973 17 386556/920213 E-Mail: adel@pmew.gov.bh / mirzak@pmew.gov.bh marzooqh@pmew.gov.bh
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RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

The Environment Control Directorate (PMEW) is responsible for spill response and for the development, maintenance and implementation of the National Contingency Plan.

Spill response is undertaken by various agencies according to the geographical location of the spill and available resources. The Bahrain Petroleum Company (BAPCO), the Ministry of Works, Power and Water, and the Directorate General of Ports would be responsible for spills at their own facilities as well as protecting adjacent sensitive resources in the event of spills from other sources.

The head of the Chemical and Occupational Pollution section of the PMEW would initiate the response. In the case of larger spills, an Oil Spill Technical Advisory Committee would be established, comprising seven permanent members and a number of co-opted members from a wide range of ministries which would be involved in an oil spill incident.

Responsibility for shoreline clean-up would be shared by the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF), the Ministry of the Interior (MoI), the Public Works Directorate and the municipalities, together with local contractors.

RESPONSE POLICY

The primary priority is to prevent oil from reaching the shoreline. Thus at-sea containment and recovery is the preferred method but is somewhat restricted by the presence of extensive areas of shallow water near the coast. Dispersants on the ROPME list of approved dispersants are the only ones which are permitted to be used. It is understood that both the Directorate General of Ports and BAPCO routinely use small amounts of dispersants on minor spills. In the event of a major spill, dispersants would not be used in the vicinity of mariculture grounds or shorelines, especially near to seawater intakes for power and desalination plants.

The general policy with regard to shoreline clean-up is to avoid causing more damage through clean-up than the oil itself, and, as a result, low amenity use or lightly polluted areas may be left to recover naturally. However, areas of high recreational value would be subject to intensive protection and clean-up effort.



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Any clean, liquid oil could be recycled at the BAPCO refinery. Other oily debris may be incinerated, either by the municipalities or the oil companies. There is also a municipal landfill site which may receive lightly oiled material. There are currently no hazardous waste dumps in Bahrain.

EQUIPMENT

Government

The government has a substantial stockpile of boom, skimmers and absorbent material. There is currently no organised regime for maintenance and routine exercising. Government would call upon industry resources in the event of a larger spill. Supplementary resources can be requested by the government through the Marine Emergencies Mutual Aid Centre (MEMAC), also in Bahrain

Vessels for at-sea response would be provided by the Directorate of Ports, the Coast Guard and BAPCO. Aerial surveillance would be provided by the air wings of the BDF and the MoI. Vessel surveillance would be provided by the Coast Guard.

The Public Works Directorate maintains heavy earth-moving equipment for shoreline clean-up.

Private

BAPCO has a considerable stock of equipment at its Sitra Refinery facility and wharf. This includes dispersant and vessel-mounted spraying equipment, boom, sorbents and skimmers. The company 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.

The Directorate General of Ports has offshore boom and skimmers and can also provide vessels for spill response. Some of the equipment is under the control of the Ministry of Works, Power and Water, located at the Sitra power station to protect the seawater intake, and adjacent sea water desalination plants.

PREVIOUS SPILL EXPERIENCE

Bahrain has experienced several spills, including two larger spills which occurred outside Bahrain's waters but which reached its coast under the influence of wind and currents. The first was from the Ras Tanura loading facility in Saudi Arabia in 1980 and the second resulted from Iraqi attacks on the Iranian Nowruz field in 1983.

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

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

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