

SPILL NOTIFICATION POINT

For Oil & HNS

Autoridad Maritima de Panama (Panama Maritime Authority) Control de Contaminacion Diablo Heights Edificio 5534	Tel: +507 501 5154/5 24 Hr: +507 501 5247 Fax: +507 501 5457 E-Mail: contaminacion@amp.gob.pa
Autoridad del Canal de Panama Control de Contaminacion y Vegetacion Acuatica	Tel: +507 276 6646/6678 24 Hr: +276 6691/4
Alternatively spills should be reported to the local port authority.	
Ocean Pollution Control SA (OPC)	Tel: +507 317 6866/6864/65/67 24 Hr: +507 317 6866 Fax: +507 317 6858 E-Mail: opc@oceanpollution.net

COMPETENT NATIONAL AUTHORITY

Contact details as above.

RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

Oil pollution control in Panamanian waters rests with the Autoridad Maritima de Panama (AMP), under authority provided by Law 21 of 9 June 1980. AMP has appointed Ocean Pollution Control (OPC), a private company, to carry out actual clean-up operations, under the supervision of AMP pollution officials.

The major ports in Panama such as Cristobal, Balboa, Manzanillo International Terminal (MIT) and Colon Container Terminal (CCT) are operated under private concessions. Other smaller ports in Panama are operated by local offices of the AMP which act as port authorities, answerable to the head office of the AMP in Panama City. Each port authority is expected to respond to spills within the port area and adjacent coastal waters. In practice serious incidents anywhere along the Caribbean coast would be controlled by the Cristobal port authority. In the same way, Balboa port authority would cover the Pacific coast. Any spills within the Panama Canal or in the 12 mile sea approach channel are the responsibility of the Autoridad del Canal de Panama (ACP).

RESPONSE POLICY

In the few small spills experienced in the past, the authorities have favoured the use of sorbent material because of poor results with mechanical cleanup equipment. Collected material is disposed of by land-fill. The use of dispersants is not officially allowed although permission may be given in individual cases. For example, concentrate dispersant has been used successfully to treat small spills of Alaskan crude oil.

EQUIPMENT

Government & Private

The AMP have handed over responsibility for clean-up operations to OPC, who have adequate equipment, including stocks of boom, skimmers, vacuum trucks, barges etc. The ACP, through their Department of Control de Contaminacion y Vegetacion Acuatica of the Divicion de Operaciones, Emergencias y Contingencias 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 Autoridad Maritima de Panama 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



REGIONAL AND BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

Quito Convention (with states bordering the South East Pacific)
Cartagena Convention (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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