

SPILL NOTIFICATION POINT

Ports Administration Queens Salote Wharf Hala Vuna	Tel: + 676 24 193 Fax: + 676 23 733
Notification may also be made to: Police Department Nuku'alofa	Tel: + 676 21 236 Fax: + 676 21 233

COMPETENT NATIONAL AUTHORITY

Ministry of Marine and Ports PO Box 144 Nuku'alofa Tonga	Tel: + 676 23 168 Fax: + 676 24267 Email: marports@kalia.to
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RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

Within the National Marine Pollution Plan drafted in 1985, the Tonga Police Force is identified as the focal point for the coordination of marine pollution response measures. In addition, a number of other entities have specific roles, such as the Ports Administration/Marine Department, Tonga Defence Services, Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Ministry of Works. The oil industry is relied upon to provide available expertise and equipment for oil pollution response. These various organisations form a Pollution Committee in the event of a marine pollution incident. The Police Department provides communication facilities for receiving and disseminating pollution reports, and for coordinating pollution countermeasures.

What limited scope exists for dealing with a pollution incident at sea would be provided by the Ministry of Marine and Ports and the Tonga Defence Services. A key agency for determining policy on environmental protection priorities, dispersant usage and disposal options is the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources. The Ministry of Fisheries would perform a similar role in respect of sensitive resources in the fisheries and aquaculture sector. The Ministry of Works and the oil industry are expected to provide the basic resources for mounting a shoreline clean-up response.

Tonga is a member of the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and party to the SPREP Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Combating Pollution Emergencies in the South Pacific, which provides the legal framework through which marine spill contingency planning is addressed. SPREP has prepared PACPOL, the Pacific Ocean Pollution Prevention Programme, which has drafted the Pacific Islands Regional Marine Spill Contingency Plan (PACPLAN). This was endorsed by Members in September 2000 as the regional framework through which the SPREP Pollution Emergencies Protocol would be operationalised. PACPLAN only applies to spills where regional cooperation and/or supraregional assistance are required. It does not cover Tier One and Tier Two spills.

RESPONSE POLICY

The objective stated in the National Contingency Plan is to promote prompt and environmentally sound clean-up and disposal techniques, but there is no formulated spill response policy.

EQUIPMENT

Government & Private

The government holds limited quantities of boom, dispersant and sorbent pads and can provide vehicles, machinery and work gangs in the event of a spill. BP Oil and Shell Oil also hold limited supplies of oil spill response equipment and materials in their compounds.

In order to assist each Pacific Island country and territory to establish the optimum equipment inventory for its situation, PACPOL is carrying out a review of marine spill combat needs in 2003 with funding from the International Maritime Organization and Canada. Once the review is completed, the project will seek to secure sources of support to procure the necessary equipment, plus provide training in its use and long-term maintenance.

The most significant stockpiles of marine spill response equipment held within the region are: American Samoa (US Coast Guard and oil industry/contractor); Guam (USCG and oil industry/contractor) and New Caledonia (French Navy). Access to this equipment is available via the Request for Assistance procedures under PACPOL.

PREVIOUS SPILL EXPERIENCE

Some years ago a fuel barge was wrecked on the reefs off Nuku'alofa, spilling diesel oil.

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	HNS*	Bunker*
✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓

* not yet in force



REGIONAL AND BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS

Noumea Convention (with states of the South Pacific Region).

Date of issue: October 2003

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