



SPILL NOTIFICATION POINT

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COMPETENT NATIONAL AUTHORITY

Details as above.

RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

The Norwegian Coastal Administration (NCA) is the government agency responsible for safeguarding the coastline, including ensuring preparedness in cases of acute pollution. The NCA is headed by a Director General, who reports directly to the Department of Fisheries and the Norwegian Minister of Fisheries. The NCA's Department for Emergency Response is located in Horten with two smaller stations at Tromsø and Mongstad and 15 manned depots around the coastline.

Under the Pollution Control Act, the national contingency system is divided into private, municipal and governmental contingency areas with specific responsibilities. All contingency plans and organisations are standardised and coordinated so that in the event of a major national emergency, the national contingency system will work as a single integrated response organisation. The system is highly developed with equipment widely distributed throughout the country. Industrial plants that might cause significant oil pollution are obliged to establish an adequate level of preparedness. Governmental requirements primarily apply to operators on the Norwegian Continental Shelf, the crude oil terminals, refineries and companies distributing oil products as well as major industrial companies.

In Norway the 430 municipalities are divided into 34 intermunicipal preparedness areas, each with their own approved contingency plan. Local authorities are responsible for dealing with minor acute spills that occur within the municipality due to normal activity, and which are not covered by the polluter's private contingency arrangements. The local authorities, the fire departments, the port authorities etc all collaborate on municipal preparedness. In addition, the municipalities have an obligation to assist the government in the event of a major oil pollution event.

The NCA provides for major incidents not covered by, or beyond the capabilities, of the municipal and private contingency plans by providing equipment, material, vessels and personnel, including expert advisers. There is an obligation on all parties required to have a contingency plan to provide assistance to other such parties should the need arise. In the event of a major spill, government may call upon industry to aid their response. In such cases, equipment may be used from a number of industry stockpiles including the Norwegian Clean Seas Association for Operating Companies (NOFO). This was established to ensure that Norwegian North Sea offshore operators complied with the authorities' oil spill contingency requirements for E&P rigs and platforms.

The NCA maintains copies of inter-community contingency plans, which contain data on local coastal sensitivities. The Administration has a Marine Resource Database (MRDB) including coastline sensitivity maps. A mutual agreement policy exists, whereby the Coastal Administration notifies any organisation potentially at risk of a spill. This cascade notification system ensures, for example, that the appropriate fisheries department is alerted to a spill, and then disseminates the message to affected fish farmers. The Coastal Administration is also responsible for the National Training Centre for Oil Pollution Control and the National Test Centre for Oil Spill Response Technology.



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RESPONSE POLICY

The primary objective is to contain and recover the oil as close to the source as possible. Chemical dispersion is considered to be supplementary to physical removal. To this end, every organisation required to have an oil spill contingency plan should consider dispersant use as a strategy. The Climate and Pollution Agency (Klif), under the Ministry of Environment, is the competent authority for dispersant approval and regulations. NCA authorises dispersant use in situations where dispersants would be beneficial but have not been laid out in a contingency plan as part of requirements from Klif. Applications for use of chemical dispersants should be based on a Net Environment Benefit Analysis (NEBA).

Disposal of oily waste in local domestic waste sites is dependent upon local authority regulations, but these never allow greater than 3% oil content. If this criteria is not met, the waste may be dealt with through a nationally co-ordinated waste disposal scheme, NORSAS, in which all the major waste disposal companies in Norway participate. Cement plants are sometimes used for incineration, whilst landfill and land farming have also been used.

EQUIPMENT

Government

The NCA has access to 4 governmental oil pollution control vessels and 8 Coastguard vessels permanently equipped with oil recovery equipment. In addition, a number of naval defence vessels are on contract, capable of oil recovery, transportation or acting as a lead offshore command vessel. Vessels from the civilian coastal patrol (NSSR) can also be used, as well as vessels of opportunity such as fishing boats.

The Coastal Administration maintains 15 manned equipment stockpiles located along the coast and on the Svalbard Islands, each containing booms, skimmers, pumps, clothing etc. In addition, the various coastal authorities have inshore booms and skimmers available.

The NCA operates an aircraft equipped with SLAR, capable of tracking spills in both good and poor visibility (day and night), and a photo phone system enabling immediate downloading of still photographs to the main office in Horten. As an extension of this, it attempts to make use of radar satellites run by Kongsberg Satellite Services which aims to provide information on substantial oil spills within 2 hours of the satellite overpass.

Private

NOFO has a number of large supply ships at its disposal which can be converted for oil recovery operations at short notice and maintains 5 equipment depots, at Stavanger, Mongstad (Austervoll), Kristiansund, Traena (Bodø) and Hammerfest. All have similar, compatible equipment, consisting of large heavy duty containment and recovery systems. In addition, NOFO have contracted helicopters to enable infra red photography with a down link system with responding ships, allowing oil movement monitoring and recovery both at day and night, and for limited dispersant spraying operations.

The oil industry also maintains 3 large stockpiles of equipment, including vessels, at the oil refinery terminals of Statoil Mongstad and Esso Slagen and at the crude oil terminal of Norsk Hydro Sture. Several bunker stations have small amounts of equipment.

Because of the extensive range of equipment held by national and local government agencies and the oil industry, there is little call for clean-up contractors in Norway.



NORWAY

COUNTRY PROFILES

A Summary of Oil Spill Response Arrangements
& Resources Worldwide

PREVIOUS SPILL EXPERIENCE

Apart from the EKOFISK (1977) oil field blow-out, Norway has had very few sizeable spills. However, full-scale exercises are carried out from time to time, some of which involve the discharge of oil under moderate to rough conditions in order to test equipment and the level of preparedness. Due to the rocky, heavily-indented coastline and generally poor access, shoreline clean-up tends to be labour-intensive.

HAZARDOUS & NOXIOUS SUBSTANCES (HNS)

The competent authority for dealing with marine pollution involving HNS is the NCA. A national system for preparedness and response to HNS spills at sea similar to that for oil pollution has not yet been established - except for the capability to handle HNS pollution with behaviour similar to oil spills – but the NCA is about to start the preparatory work on this. At present, Norway's capability for responding to marine incidents involving HNS is very limited and mainly relies on the same resources as for oil pollution response. A risk assessment for the transport of HNS along the Norwegian coast was made in 2004 and recommendations have been made based on specific relevant scenarios. Norway partly covers response to HNS in its NCP and has some specialised equipment for monitoring marine spills of HNS. It has not previously been involved in any HNS spills at sea. (Information from EMSA, 2008)

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

The conventions are extended to the following dependent territories: Jan Mayen Island; Svalbard archipelago (including Spitsbergen and other islands); and the Norwegian Antarctic Territories.



NORWAY

REGIONAL AND BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

Bonn Agreement (countries bordering the North Sea).
Norbrit Plan (a bilateral contingency plan with the UK).
Copenhagen Agreement (with Denmark, Finland, Iceland & Sweden).
Bilateral agreement with the Russian Federation for the Barents Sea.

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