



# ICELAND

## SPILL NOTIFICATION POINT

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## COMPETENT NATIONAL AUTHORITY

Office of Marine Environmental Supervision <b>(Oil &amp; HNS)</b> Environmental Agency of Iceland Suourlandsbraut 24 IS - 108 Reykjavik	Tel: +354-591 2000 Mobile: +354 822 4003 Fax: +354-591 2010 E-Mail: ust@ust.is Web: <a href="http://english.ust.is/infobase/pollution-prevention/marine-protection-ERS">http://english.ust.is/infobase/pollution-prevention/marine-protection-ERS</a>
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## RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

The Environmental Agency of Iceland (EAI), under the auspices of the Ministry of Environment, is the lead government agency overseeing maritime environmental issues in Icelandic waters. Responsibility for combating spills is divided between the Office of Marine Environmental Protection, a division of the EAI, and the municipalities. The Icelandic Coast Guard exerts a policing function and provides a surveillance and communications service on behalf of the Agency, whilst within port areas that role is fulfilled by the port authorities. The ports are either government-owned and operated (Keflavik, Helguvik) or run by the municipal authorities (Reykjavik). The municipalities will be the main responders to spills in ports and harbours.

Upon notification of a major spill from the Coast Guard, the EAI officer will decide upon the response according to size and seriousness. A member of the agency would normally assume the role of On-Scene Commander. The EAI is assisted by an advisory committee with expertise and knowledge of the affected environment, particularly wildlife and sensitive areas. The local communities are responsible for shoreline clean-up. In practice, this may be delegated to the local fire brigades.

A national training course in pollution response is held and organised annually for the benefit of personnel from government agencies, local authorities, oil companies and operators of industrial facilities.

## 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 and is used with caution when physical removal is not viable. A major consideration in the contemplated use of dispersants would be a concern to avoid tainting commercial fish stocks, particularly salmon farms scattered around the coast. However, the low population density, harsh climate and poor access to many coastal areas mitigate against all but the most basic clean-up responses and it is recognised that weather and sea conditions are not conducive to success, with the possible exception of dispersant spraying. Dispersant products must be approved by the EAI.

The oil companies operating in Iceland are expected to accept any waste liquid oil/water mixtures recovered during clean-up actions. Processed waste oil is routinely sold as a fuel to cement factories. Oil sludge may be incinerated, whilst solid wastes can be disposed of on inland waste ground, providing approval has been given.



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## EQUIPMENT

### Government

Coast Guard vessels have been prepared for response to a major pollution incident. Equipment, consisting mainly of boom and skimmers, is stockpiled at five sites around the coast, that at Reykjavik being the largest. The smaller stockpiles are maintained and operated by regional cooperatives formed by the municipalities and harbour/port authorities. In addition, several port tugs have the facility for dispersant spraying.

Coastguard aircraft and helicopters are equipped for aerial surveillance and equipment transport.

### Private

US Navy facilities at Helguvik and Hvalfjörður have limited containment and recovery equipment. However, the paucity of spills has not encouraged private enterprise in this field.

## PREVIOUS SPILL EXPERIENCE

There have been no major spills in recent times. However, small spills are not uncommon and several have occurred in remote areas in winter and in bad weather. Dispersants have been applied to harbour spills.

## HAZARDOUS & NOXIOUS SUBSTANCES (HNS)

The EAI is the competent authority for dealing with marine pollution involving HNS. Due to a very limited chemicals industry, no special expertise has been considered necessary in the EAI. However, the local fire brigade is trained to respond to chemical spills on land and it is under discussion to extend the training of some units to marine HNS spills. Iceland does not specifically cover response to HNS in its NCP. Iceland's capability for responding to HNS spills is very limited and mainly relies on the local fire brigade, and, for larger incidents, international agreements and cooperation. Iceland has not had any previous experience of 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



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## REGIONAL AND BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

Copenhagen Agreement (with Denmark, Finland, Norway & Sweden).

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