



SPILL NOTIFICATION POINT

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COMPETENT NATIONAL AUTHORITY

The Marine Department, as part of the Ministry of Transport, is the principal (lead) agency for dealing with marine pollution incidents.

RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

The Marine Department, the Royal Thai Navy, the provincial administration and the Oil Industry Environmental Safety Association are the main agencies involved in oil pollution prevention and response. The Committee on the Prevention and Combating of Oil Pollution, established in 1982, incorporates all interested government bodies to review the current state of response readiness and to provide a suitable infrastructure at the time of a spill. This is chaired by the Minister of Transport. The Committee is responsible for the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan, which covers oil spills in inland waters, within port limits, coastal areas and at sea (in both territorial waters and within the Exclusive Economic Zone). The Plan was last updated in 2001, and is exercised four times a year at operational level and once every three years at national level.

The Marine Department provides a coordinating role in the event of an incident; it would establish a coordination centre, process reports and coordinate response activities. The Marine Department would report to the prevention committee. A command post would be established either with the Marine Department if the spill was in a river, estuary, lake or within port limits, or with the Thai Navy if the spill was beyond port limits to the EEZ. The command post would report to the coordination centre.

The Pollution Control Department of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment is responsible for land based pollution. Although established primarily to set and enforce discharge standards, this department would advise on shoreline cleanup.

Oil companies have developed Tier 1 contingency plans to respond to spills at their facilities and have formed the Industry Environmental Safety Association, an industry cooperative designed to facilitate the movement of resources between companies in the event of a major spill.

RESPONSE POLICY

The options available for oil spill response in Thailand are: monitoring of natural evaporation/degradation; mechanical cleanup at sea, dispersal at sea; shoreline cleanup/protection and salvage of the damaged source vessel. The choice of combat strategy would be based on assessments and criteria set by the Marine Department and other concerned agencies. Mechanical recovery is the favoured response technique, although the use of chemical dispersants is permitted under conditions formulated by the Marine Department and the Pollution Control Department. The use of chemical dispersants is prohibited in shallow water (less than 10m depth) and in the vicinity of coral reefs and aquaculture areas.

EQUIPMENT

Government

The Marine Department has sufficient response resources for a 1000 tonne spill. Equipment is located at the Marine Department Dredging Centre in Songkhla and the Merchant Marine Training Centre in Samutprakarn near Bangkok. It includes skimmers, boom, storage tanks, dispersant spray systems, transfer pumps, vacuum systems, dispersant and 2 anti-pollution vessels. Dispersant spraying aircraft and helicopters are available through the Royal Thai Navy and the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation. In addition, Royal Thai Airforce helicopters could be made available, on request, for aerial surveillance work and transportation of personnel and equipment.

Private

The Oil Industry Environmental Safety Group (IESG – www.iesg.or.th), established in 1970 by 8 major oil companies in Thailand (Bangchak, BP, Caltex, Esso, Mobil, the Petroleum Authority of Thailand, Shell and Thairoil) operates equipment, including dedicated skimming vessels for use in terminals and depots in Bangkok, Sriracha and Rayong. Small combating stations are located at Bandon, Songkhla, Phuket, Pakpanang and Chumporn. IESG members would share equipment and vehicles for oil spill response, and give assistance to the public sector.

PREVIOUS SPILL EXPERIENCE

In 1973 a spill of JP4, diesel and fuel oil totalling 1900 tonnes occurred in the estuary of the Chaophraya River. In 1992, a further 10 tonnes of fuel oil was spilt in the Chaophraya River from a holed tanker. Chemical dispersants were applied to these spills. The tanker ONCE (1996) spilt approximately 140 tonnes of crude oil at an offshore mooring south-east of Bangkok. Chemical dispersant was sprayed on the resultant slick using Royal Thai Navy aircraft as well as a C130 aircraft fitted with ADDS Pack dispersant gear brought in from Singapore. The chemical tanker EASTERN FORTITUDE grounded in Chon Buri province spilling approximately 240 tonnes of bunker fuel, the bulk of which remained at sea for 10 days before stranding along stretches of sandy shore. Owing to the thickness and viscosity of the oil, manual collection of oil from booms into drums was the preferred response option over skimmer use at sea. The Navy, merchant marine cadets and local villagers undertook manual shoreline clean-up, co-ordinated by the Harbour Department (now Marine Department). Also in 2002 the tanker SKY ACE collided with a container vessel, close to the entrance of Laem Chabang Port, resulting in a spill of bunker fuel. Clean-up at sea involved containment and mechanical recovery; dispersant was also applied. The tanker DRAGON 1 grounded at the entrance to Pataya Bay in 2004, spilling approximately 150 tonnes of fuel oil; clean-up was carried out by mechanical and manual means.

HAZARDOUS AND NOXIOUS SUBSTANCES (HNS)

Thailand is developing its capability to respond to spills of HNS.

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



REGIONAL AND BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

ASEAN - OSRAP (Association of South East Asian Nations Oil Spill Response Action Plan) with the other ASEAN countries and with contribution from Japan.

Regional Programme for the Prevention and Management of Marine Pollution in the East Asian Seas with the ASEAN countries, Cambodia, China, PDR of Korea, Rep. of Korea and Vietnam.

Date of issue: April 2010

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