

ESTONIA

SPILL NOTIFICATION POINT

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COMPETENT NATIONAL AUTHORITY

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RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

Responsibility for marine pollution control in Estonia lies with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In practice, responsibility for co-ordination of response to oil at sea is delegated to the Estonian Border Guard (EBG) for Estonian territorial waters and within the Peipus, Lämmi and Pihkva lakes. Responsibility for pollution on land is delegated to the National Rescue Board and thence onto a regional and local level.

The EBG is tasked with the identification of the polluter, evaluation of the spill, assignment of the On-Scene Commander, initiating response operations, requesting and organising offers of international assistance, public relations and subsequent claims processing. The overall command centre may be based at the main EBG offices or a regional office depending upon the scale of the incident.

Spills within ports and terminals are the responsibility of the relevant port authority. The EBG can take over command of operations if necessary.

A National Contingency Plan is in place, and includes a sensitivity atlas, which has been produced for the whole of the Estonian coastline detailing the shoreline type and ecological and socio-economic areas sensitive to oil pollution.

RESPONSE POLICY

Mechanical containment and recovery is the primary response option for oil spills at sea. The use of dispersants and sinking agents is limited in accordance with that of the Helsinki Commission. However, permits to use dispersants can be issued by the Estonian Environment Inspectorate if the situation warrants.

There is no set procedure for recovered oil and oiled material disposal. Oiled beach material may be bagged and disposed of at the city dump; alternatively, it may be burnt at one of several power stations in the vicinity of Tallinn.

EQUIPMENT

Government

For surveillance an L-410 aircraft is available for monitoring and to assist in directing response operations. This aircraft is not yet equipped with remote sensors. Equipment including booms, skimmers, hot water washers, absorbents etc. are operated by the EBG and are located in Tallinn.

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Private

The major ports have their own recovery equipment. A private contractor based in Pärnu has a significant amount of clean-up equipment. The stockpile includes equipment for offshore, inshore and beach clean-up operations. An agreement exists with the government to assist in clean-up where necessary.

PREVIOUS SPILL EXPERIENCE

There have been no major oil spills in Estonian waters. The KIHNU (1993) spilt 85 tonnes of light fuel oil outside Tallinn harbour resulting in limited shoreline clean-up. In January 2006, a small amount of IFO 380 was spilt off Keibu Bay from an unidentified ship. An estimated 10,000 birds were oiled by the spill, and a major bird clean-up operation was launched.

HAZARDOUS & NOXIOUS SUBSTANCES (HNS)

The EGB is responsible for the co-ordination of response to HNS at sea and in the three lakes, Peipsi, Lämmi and Pihkva. Estonia's capability for responding to marine incidents involving HNS is very limited and relies on the same resources as for oil pollution response. HNS spills are not currently incorporated into the NCP. Estonia compiles an annual risk assessment, which covers the marine transport 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



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REGIONAL AND BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

Helsinki Convention (with countries bordering the Baltic Sea).

Bilateral agreements with the Russian Federation and Finland for the Gulf of Finland.

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