

# RUSSIA

## SPILL NOTIFICATION POINT

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## COMPETENT NATIONAL AUTHORITY

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# RUSSIA

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## RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

The Federal Agency of Maritime and River Transport, part of the Ministry of Transport, is the federal executive body with responsibility for preparedness and response for oil spill incidents in Russia. Oil pollution combat is assigned to the State Marine Pollution Control, Salvage and Rescue Administration (MPCSA). The MPCSA is responsible for the Marine Rescue Coordination Centres (MRCC) which serve as the focal point for communication during marine spill incidents at regional level.

The “Federal Contingency Plan on Oil Spill Prevention and Response at Sea” was adopted by the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ministry of Civil Defence, Emergencies and Disaster Response (EMERCOM) in July 2003. The Plan is in compliance with IMO Guidelines on Contingency Planning. There are three levels of planning: local, regional and federal. Ports, oil terminals and harbours have local contingency plans and capabilities which, if exceeded, can be supplemented by regional plans and resources. The latter are coordinated by MPCSA and administrations of the Federation.

Parallel to the NOSCP, Russia has participated in the development of plans for the following sea regions: the Baltic Sea, Black Sea, North-West Pacific Ocean and Caspian Sea. Regional plans for the Sakhalin region and the Barents Sea region have also been initiated, but it is not know if these have been finalised.

Any oil spill which enters the marine environment should be reported immediately to the nearest MRCC. If the oil spill is beyond the capability of the local or regional resources to deal with, it is the responsibility of the MPCSA and EMERCOM to mobilise the Russian Federation’s Tier 2 and Tier 3 capabilities.

EMERCOM is responsible for coordinating the different organisations (emergency and salvage services) involved in oil spill (Tier 3) combating operations (eg the navy, frontier guard, air forces, local authorities) and in particular to take charge of land-based clean-up.

The MPCSA has overall responsibility for the management of the Basin (Regional) Salvage and Towage Company (BASU). BASU consists of state owned companies providing salvage and towage services when needed in the appropriate marine basin. The companies are the operational arm of the regional spill response set-up and are the owners of dedicated vessels and spill response equipment.

## RESPONSE POLICY

The general oil spill strategy is as follows: Tier 1 spills should be treated by mechanical means if weather conditions allow. For Tier 2 and Tier 3 incidents all response methods are permitted, including dispersant use and in-situ burning, depending on the circumstances. Dispersants must be

# RUSSIA

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preapproved by the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of Health and the Fisheries Committee. In-situ burning is employed on rare occasions and is subject to approval by the same bodies.

## EQUIPMENT

### Government

Ports, oil terminals and harbours hold stocks of oil recovery equipment commensurate with local spill risk. The ports of Murmansk and St Petersburg have specialised pollution response vessels and suitably equipped supply vessels. The ports of Vladivostok and Sakhalin also have equipped supply vessels. Other specific pollution equipment includes offshore booms and skimmers, oil trawls and portable pumps located at various ports.

### Private

The first known commercial contractor was Ecosheff Ltd, founded in the Russian Far East in June 1997 to service the beginning of oil and gas production on the Sakhalin Shelf. It operates out of a head office in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk and has support bases and branches in Nogliki, Korsakov, De-Kastri, Vanino, Vladivostok and Moscow. Ecosheff has a variety of response equipment and vessels. A number of other oil spill response contractors also exist in Russia.

## PREVIOUS SPILL EXPERIENCE

The former USSR collaborated with neighbouring countries under bilateral and regional agreements following two incidents in the Baltic Sea (ANTONIO GRAMSCI, 1987 and VOLGONEFT 263, 1990). In 2003 the Russian river/sea tanker VICTORIYA suffered a serious fire and explosion while berthed at the rail-to-ship loading terminal in Oktyabrsk on the River Volga, spilling some 1,000 tonnes of light Russian crude. Teams of military personnel and others carried out manual clean-up of bulk oil and vessels were used to fight the fire (which burned for 2-3 days) and to position booms and apply sorbent materials. In 2007 the tanker VOLGONEFT 139 broke in two in the Strait of Kerch, between the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea, releasing about 2,000 tonnes of heavy fuel oil. Shoreline clean-up was undertaken by the military and civil emergency forces.

# RUSSIA

## CONVENTIONS

Prevention & Safety					Spill Response		Compensation						
MARPOL 73/78		Annexes III IV V VI				OPRC '90	OPRC-HNS	CLC '69 '76 '92			Fund '92	HNS*	Bunker
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓

\* not yet in force

## REGIONAL AND BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

Helsinki Agreement (with countries bordering the Baltic Sea).  
 Bucharest Convention (with countries bordering the Black Sea).  
 Bilateral agreement with the USA (covering the Bering Sea and Chukchi Sea).  
 Bilateral agreement with Norway for the Barents Sea.  
 Bilateral agreement with Finland for the Gulf of Finland.  
 Framework Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea (Azerbaijan, I R Iran, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Turkmenistan)

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