

SYRIA

SPILL NOTIFICATION POINT

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COMPETENT NATIONAL AUTHORITY

Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs (for Oil & HNS) PO Box 3773 Tolyani Street Damascus	Tel: +963 11 239 63 91 +963 11 231 86 82/3 Fax: +963 11 231 21 20 Tlx: 412686 ENV SY E-Mail: env-min@net.sy
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RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

A draft national contingency plan for oil and other hazardous substances was prepared in 2003 but it was never tested or exercised. Syria is updating the plan with assistance from REMPEC (*information current May 2011*).

The Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs was established in 1991 with a mandate to protect the whole environment in Syria and, *inter alia*, to supervise all the activities concerning the marine environment. Under the draft NCP, the Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs will be responsible for establishing a national system for responding promptly and effectively to marine pollution incidents involving oil or other hazardous substances. In the event of a major marine pollution incident (Tier 3) the Minister of State for Environmental Affairs would act as the Incident Commander and an Emergency Response Committee may be convened to assist and advise him. The Director General of Ports would be a standing member of the Committee wherever it is convened. Apart from this, membership of the Emergency Response Committee would be on an *ad hoc* basis, depending on the nature of the incident and the expertise required. In the context of the NCP, the Directorate-General for Ports is the national contact point responsible for the receipt of all marine pollution reports. He would act as the On Scene Commander for marine operations for any marine pollution incident in Syria's territorial waters or EEZ but outside the jurisdiction of an individual port authority or oil handling facility.

RESPONSE POLICY

Under the NCP, the national combat strategy is based on the following principles: - to terminate or reduce the outflow of oil at the source; to monitor the oil slick when marine or coastal resources are not threatened; to attempt containment and recovery at sea by use of mechanical means, to protect sensitive areas and to clean up the contaminated shoreline. The use of dispersants is strictly controlled by the Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs. Prior approval would need to be obtained from the Ministry either as a "standing approval" issued in advance to a port authority or operator, or on a case by case basis.

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EQUIPMENT

Government & Private

The General Directorate of Ports and the government-owned Syrian Company for Oil Transport (SCOT) have oil spill response equipment, including booms, skimmers, boats, dispersant and absorbents. Vessels would be provided by the General Directorate of Ports and helicopters by the Navy. Equipment would also be made available to Syria in the event of a major spill under the cooperation and assistance arrangements of the Barcelona Convention.

PREVIOUS SPILL EXPERIENCE

The BP VISION (1985) spilled 15 tonnes of crude at the Baniyas terminal. No clean up response at sea was attempted but the Syrian Ports Authority engaged a local contractor to clean the shoreline.

HAZARDOUS & NOXIOUS SUBSTANCES (HNS)

Arrangements for HNS are included in the NCP. The process of preparing local plans for HNS is at an early stage. No specialised HNS equipment is available, above and beyond the response equipment outlined above. Syria has experienced no ship-source HNS related incidents to date.

CONVENTIONS

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

* not yet in force



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REGIONAL AND BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

Barcelona Convention (with states bordering the Mediterranean).

For further information see REMPEC (Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea) Country Profile (http://www.rempec.org/country.asp?cid=19&IDS=2_1&daNme=General%20Information&openNum=1)

Date of issue: May 2011

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