

## TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

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### SPILL NOTIFICATION POINT

Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard (TTCG)  
Staubles Bay Base  
Chaguaramas

Tel: +1 868 224 3324

Email: [ttcgcnau@gmail.com](mailto:ttcgcnau@gmail.com)

### COMPETENT NATIONAL AUTHORITY

Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs (MEEA)  
Maska Building – South Office  
South Trunk Road  
La Romain

Tel: +1 868 225 4334

Fax: +1 868 697 7013

### RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

The Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries (MEEI) is the lead agency for national oil pollution preparedness, response and cooperation. The current National Oil Spill Contingency Plan (NOSCP) of Trinidad and Tobago was approved by Cabinet in 2013. Responsibility for development, updating of and amendments to this plan rests with MEEI and it is intended that the Plan is kept current whenever changes to key agencies and/or personnel are made and at least reviewed annually. The NOSCP works alongside the Caribbean Island Oil Pollution Preparedness Response and Cooperation (OPRC) Plan and follows the tiered approach. Upstream oil and gas operators in Trinidad and Tobago's EEZ must maintain, in addition to a Tier 1 clean-up response capacity, a Tier 2 response capability by subscription to a dedicated Tier 2 Oil Spill Response Organization (OSRO) resident in Trinidad and Tobago.

In the event of a major threat of pollution, an Incident Command Team (ICT) is activated comprising representatives from the responsible party, and if warranted the MEEI and other government agencies utilising joint command. The responsible party would utilise the Incident Command System (ICS) to manage the response. An Incident Commander would be appointed from MEEI to function in the ICT under joint command as necessary. The Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard (TTCG) as the response agency is involved in the Command Staff and also assists with monitoring response operations in the field.

### RESPONSE POLICY

For the north and east coast of Trinidad, booming in open sea is not normally possible due to high energy seas and swells. Application of dispersant may be warranted based on the size of the spill. For the west coast of Trinidad and for Tobago, containment and recovery techniques are an option alongside dispersants. Dispersants can only be used under certain conditions, in particular not less than one nautical mile from any shoreline, nor closer than three nautical miles up-current from important marine fisheries or coral reef ecosystems which are less than 20 feet from the water's surface. The MEEI will be responsible for the approval of the use of dispersants in Trinidad and Tobago waters in accordance with criteria agreed for the Caribbean region unless there are special overriding conditions at the time. Dispersants must not be used in sensitive areas as determined by the MEEI and/or Fisheries Division and only dispersants approved by the MEEI are permitted.

The Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service, Forestry Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environmental Management Authority are responsible for advising/approval of in-situ burning in Trinidad and Tobago in accordance with criteria agreed for the region unless there are overriding considerations at the time. Safety concerns with regard to the fire and smoke plume must be considered and it must not occur closer than 12 miles from any adjacent island state or territory.

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On shorelines, manual clean-up followed by natural weathering of the remaining oil is preferred for ecological reasons. Chemicals used on the shoreline must be approved by the relevant authorities for the intended use. Shoreline clean-up would be conducted by responders mobilised by the OSROs/RP.

## EQUIPMENT

### Government

TTCG possess vessels and a limited stock of equipment. The Air Guard has fixed-wing aircraft and may also employ the services of National Helicopter Services Limited for helicopter reconnaissance.

### Private

All oil companies based in Trinidad and Tobago, including those operating on a temporary basis, are required to hold stocks of dispersant, booms and mechanical recovery equipment. There are a number of private contractors that can provide oil spill response services, Helicopter providers in country include Bristow Caribbean Limited, PHI and National Helicopters Services Limited. Four oil and gas companies – Shell, Perenco, Woodside and BP - are full members of OSRL while Heritage Petroleum Company Limited, EOG Resources, and Trinity Exploration and Production Services Limited are associate members and can mobilise their resources in the event of a major spill.

## PREVIOUS SPILL EXPERIENCE

In 1979 two laden VLCCs collided off the coast of Tobago causing a major shipping, spill and casualty incident. Equipment owned by Clean Caribbean Cooperative (CCC), now called CCA, was used to supplement local resources. A DC-4 aircraft was also brought in from the USA to provide a major dispersant spraying capability. There were no major shoreline oil impacts to Trinidad and Tobago.

In December 2013, there was a major pipeline spill at the refinery which led to oil spill impacts to La Brea and environs and other beaches along the south-western peninsula. It was estimated that 7,500 barrels spilled. The Responsible party mobilised OSRL equipment and personnel into the country to assist with the management of the spill response.

In 2017 a large petroleum storage tank at the refinery containing heavy fuel oil suffered failure near its base, causing its contents to spill within the refinery area and then into the Gulf of Paria. Oil travelled across the Gulf and also impacted the Venezuela coastline in the vicinity of Guiria.

## HAZARDOUS AND NOXIOUS SUBSTANCES (HNS)

The MEEI has drafted a Chemical Spill Contingency Plan to address chemical spills, including HNS within its borders. As of 2023, it is in the process of review prior to finalisation.

## 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

Cartagena Convention (with states of the Wider Caribbean Region).  
A bilateral agreement exists with Venezuela.

Date of issue: August 2023

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