



VIRGIN ISLANDS (US)

SPILL NOTIFICATION POINT

US Coast Guard Sector San Juan
5 Calle La Puntilla
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00901

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Fax: +1 787 729 6706

and also

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USA

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USCG Marine Safety Detachment
PO Box 818, Kings Wharf
St. Thomas, USVI 00801-818

Tel: +1 340 776 3497
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For St. Croix and Buck islands
USCG Marine Safety Detachment
Christiansted, St. Croix, USVI

Tel: +1 340 772 5557
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Department of Planning & Natural Resources
Nisky Center, Suite 231
St Thomas, USVI 00802

Tel: +1 340 714 3320

COMPETENT NATIONAL AUTHORITY

US Coast Guard Sector San Juan
5 Calle La Puntilla
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00901

Tel: +1 787 289 2041
Fax: +1 787 729 6706

RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

US Coast Guard (USCG) Sector San Juan (based in San Juan, Puerto Rico (PR)) maintains federal responsibility for spill response in PR and the US Virgin Islands (USVI). Representatives of USCG Sector San Juan are permanently based in St Thomas and St Croix to assume the lead for spills within their regions. The designated lead agency for the local government is the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR). Other local authorities with an interest are the USVI Port Authority and private terminals.

The USCG and local authorities have developed an Area Contingency Plan for PR and the USVI (updated 2005). The plan provides response guidance for various contingencies including oil and hazardous substance spills. Coastal sensitivity maps in the plan identify environmentally sensitive areas and define oil recovery and shoreline protection strategies for these areas. The USVI is also covered by an IMO Caribbean Regional Response Plan, which sets out plans for the Caribbean States and cooperative arrangements between countries.

During an incident, a Federal On-Scene Coordinator (FOSC) would be appointed from the USCG Sector San Juan. The FOSC serves as the incident commander and may form a Unified Command with the DPNR. Depending on the severity of the incident, the Unified Command may involve numerous federal, state and local government authorities as well as the party responsible for the incident, organised under an Incident Command System. The Caribbean Regional Response Team (CRRT) and other specialised US national resources and expertise may also be used to support response efforts.

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Responsibility for combating and cleaning oil spills rests with the polluter, who would be expected to provide resources or engage appropriate contractors. If the work is performed unsatisfactorily, the USCG is empowered to take over the cleanup and appoint their own contractors at the owner's expense.

RESPONSE POLICY

The main response strategy is to secure the source, contain the spilled oil and recover free-floating oil with skimmers and sorbents. The use of dispersants for certain areas within the USVI has been pre-approved, however the use of such measures and in-situ burning may require final consultation and approval of the USCG, DPNR and CRRT. Shoreline clean-up would be conducted via manual or mechanical recovery.

DPNR is responsible for providing permits for the storage and disposal of oily wastes. However, there are no approved sites for disposal available locally and all wastes would have to be exported for final disposal.

EQUIPMENT

Government & Private

Locally available resources are extremely limited and would probably be required from PR. Limited stocks of containment boom and sorbent pads are held on St Thomas. In addition, the Water and Power Authority (WAPA) holds some minor lengths of boom and some sorbent. The availability of manpower is also limited.

Hess Oil Corporation in Lime Tree Bay, St Croix holds sufficient containment and recovery equipment for its own needs, as does the nearby Vialco Aluminium smelter. The Marine Spill Response Corp (MSRC), also in St Croix, has a stock of offshore response equipment. Local firms can provide small boats and tugs.

PREVIOUS SPILL EXPERIENCE

Hurricane Hugo in 1989 produced a considerable number of small spills from damaged vessels and shore structures. However, no major spills have affected the islands.

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).

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