

BELIZE NATIONAL DISASTER PLAN

NATIONAL OIL SPILL CONTINGENCY PLAN

Vol. 3dii

DRAFT ONE

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Belize National Hazard Management Plan will address the major natural or technological hazards that affect Belize on a frequent basis. It is a cooperative product designed with the input of all the relevant stakeholders from all the government ministries, international organizations, non-government organization (NGOs), community based organizations (CBOs) and the private sector. This plan fulfills the mandate of the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO), which is to provide a comprehensive disaster management strategy with complementing disaster management plans at the national level. These are further mirrored at the district and more localized at the village levels.

All the plans developed are based on tested practices and procedures and are designed to be robust, yet dynamic in nature. They all provide a consensus upon which future guidance; amendments and updates can be made especially with the ever-changing society perception, technology and availability of resources. The first five contingency plans developed were designed to work independently of each other having their own standard operational procedures (SOPs), however they are all intertwined in many ways and are designed to work synergistically.

These plans are Belize's initial first step in its quest for comprehensive disaster management. They will be the vanguard paving the way and will provide a solid foundation upon which future comprehensive disaster management strategy and plans will hinge and develop.

It is our hope that these plans with their supporting standard operational procedures will provide some guidance, structure and a way forward in your future efforts in disaster management.

Noreen Fairweather (Mrs.)
National Emergency Coordinator
August 2008

HISTORY OF REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

Review/Amendment

Date

- November 18, 2008

STRUCTURE OF BELIZE NATIONAL HAZARD MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Plan comprises several Parts, Volumes and Annexes as below:

PART ONE

Volume 1 Introduction ó (Basic Plan)

Includes general information on the national disaster management structure and the roles and responsibilities of Operational Committees.

Volume 2 Standard Operating Procedures of the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC), setting out procedures for alerting, warning and call-out for any response, and procedures for activating, staffing, managing and deactivating the NEOC.

PART TWO A. HAZARD SPECIFIC PLANS

Hazard specific plans covering preparations for and response to hazards.

Volume 3a National Hurricane Plan

Volume 3b National Flood Plan

Volume 3c National Fire Plan ó (i) Structural Fires, (ii) Forest Fires
(iii) Reserved for Chemical Fires (iv) Reserved for fires onboard ships

Volume 3d National Oil Spill Plan (i) Preparedness (ii) Response

Volume 3e ff Reserved for other plans - Transport Accidents, Aircraft Accidents, Hazardous Materials, Domestic and Wild Animals Health Management, Earthquake, Volcanic Ash, Pests, Mass Casualty, Civil Unrest, Contagious Diseases etc.

PART TWO B. PHASE SPECIFIC PLANS

Volume 4a Reserved for National Recovery Plan

Volume 4b Reserved for National Mitigation Plan

PART THREE: FUNCTIONAL PLANS

Volume 5a National Evacuation Plan

Volume 5b National Search and Rescue Plan

Volume 5c National Telecommunications Plan

Volumes 5dff Functional Plans of National Operational Committees

ANNEXES

District Plans
Special Committee Plans

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Contact Lists
Resource Lists
Model Memoranda of Understanding
Listing of Administrative and Financial Guidelines
Examples of Reporting Forms and Guidelines

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Fisheries Department	Beverly Wade Administrator				
Coastal Zone Management Authority	Collin Gillett Director				
Belize Port Authority	Lloyd Jones Commissioner				
Min of Works	Lennox Bradley Chief Engineer				
ESSO	Freddy Flores				
Belize Natural Energy Limited	Gilbert Canton Chief Executive Officer				
Petro Fuel ó Big Creek	Zaid Flores Manager				

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BAHA	Belize Aricultural Health Authority
BDF	Belize Defence Force
BEL	Belize Electricity
BTL	Belize Telecommunications Ltd.
BTU	Belize TeachersøUnion
BWS	Belize Water Services
CDERA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CEPREDENAC	Central American Disaster Coordination Centre
CMO	Chief Meteorological Officer
Comm .	Committee
DANA (C)	Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis (Committee)
DEC	District Emergency Committee
DEOC	District Emergency Operations Centre
DEP. COORD.	Deputy Coordinator
DOE	Department of the Environment
ECLAC	Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean
FAC	Foreign Assistance Committee
GOB	Government of Belize
HAZ MAT	Hazardous Materials
HRM	Human Resource Management Committee
HSMCC	Housing, Shelter and Mass Care Committee
ICWC	Information, Communication and Warning Committee
IDA	Initial Damage Assessment
LSART	Land Search and Rescue Team
MCPHC	Medical Care and Public Health Committee
MERC	Mitigation, Environment and Recovery Committee
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Min.	Ministry
NAC	National Advisory Committee
NEC	National Emergency Coordinator
NEMO	National Emergency Management Organisation
NEOC	National Emergency Operations Centre
NFS	National Fire Service of Belize
NMS	National Meteorological Service
NSAREC	National Search and Rescue and Evacuation Committee
NSART	National Search and Rescue Team
ODPEM	Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management
PM	Prime Minister
RAUC	Restoration of Access and Utilities Committee
RECON	Reconnaissance
RSMC	Relief and Supplies Management Committee
SAR	Search and Rescue
SARE (C)	Search and Rescue and Evacuation (Committee)
SIT REP	Situation Report
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SUMA	Supplies Management
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment Coordinator
VEC	Village Emergency Committee
VEOC	Village Emergency Operations Centre

INTRODUCTION

1.0 NAME OF PLAN

The name of the Plan is the Belize National Oil Spill Contingency Plan, hereafter called "the Oil Spill Plan" in this document. The term oil as used here includes other petroleum products.

1.1 PURPOSE/AIM

The aim of the Oil Spill Plan is to outline national arrangements designed to reduce the effect of a spill on Belize by a quick and well coordinated response.

It will set out the arrangements, roles and responsibilities of actors in spill management.

1.2 STRUCTURE

The first section of the Oil Spill Plan outlines the aim of the plan, responsibility for its maintenance, authority for activation and warning and alerting procedures. The conspt of operations is also discussed. The following section outlines response actions.

1.3 SCOPE

The Plan is effective for the territorial waters of Belize, its adjoining shoreline and Exclusive Economic Zone. It will also be effective for spills of oil or other petroleum products on land, at sea and in any aquatic environment inland. It will cover activities which will coordinate response at national level, to an oil spill. Prevention, preparedness and mitigation aspects are detailed in the National Emergency Preparedness Plan for Oil Spills, Belize (1995)..

1.4 AUTHORITY

This Plan is developed under the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act 2000, Part 111 Section 8 which directs that a national disaster plan should be written.

1.5 RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility for development, update, review and amending of this Plan lies with the Department of the Environment in consultation with NEMO Secretariat. The Plan will be updated annually based on experiences from actual incidents, drills and simulation exercises.

The Plan should also be revised to take into account any change in the hazard/threat, as well as changes in technology.

1.6 ASSUMPTIONS

a) Belize is vulnerable to spills of oil and other hazardous materials

b) A major oil spill will have a negative effect on the environment and on the country's economy, particularly agriculture and tourism.

c) Every effort will be made to prevent oil spills through employment of necessary safety precautions as well as to mitigate effects of any spill through appropriate siting of facilities and maintaining high state of preparedness

d) Adequate resources will be made available for the implementation of the Plan

e) A major spill will initiate activation of the NEOC and all necessary supporting functional plans

1.7 RESPONSE POLICY

Management of an oil pollution incident will correspond to the procedures outlined in this plan. NEMO Secretariat will have overall responsibility for coordinating the response, unless the NEOC is activated. Once the NEOC is activated, the incident will be managed through the NEOC.

Response will be based on the size and location of discharge according to the scale below.

Coastal or Marine Environment

TIER	QUANTITY	LOCATION	RESPONSE
ONE (1)	1,000 g - 10,000g	Coastal/Marine	To be managed by polluter
TWO (11)	10,000g - 100,000g	Coastal/Marine	Requires Government assistance for management
THREE (111)	> 100,000g	Coastal/Marine	Requires Government and/or external assistance

Inland Spills

These will be delineated as Level A or Level B spills to avoid confusion between inland and marine environments.

LEVEL	QUANTITY	LOCATION	RESPONSE
A	< 1,000g	On land or	To be managed by responsible

		Inland	party
B	> 1,000g or poses significant health hazard and requires evacuation	On land or Inland	Responsible party requires Government Assistance to manage the discharge

The seriousness of a spill will be assessed not only by the volume of the discharge, but also by the potential consequences on human welfare, the environment and the economy.

Responsibility for Incidents

The 'polluter pays' principle will govern all spill and release incidents for oil or other petroleum materials. The polluter is required to report any discharge to the authorities and to take immediate measures for containment, clean-up and recovery operations. In the event that the polluter is unable or unwilling to carry out these functions, the Government of Belize will carry them out at the polluter's expense.

Containment, clean-up and recovery activities undertaken by the polluter will be monitored by the Department of the Environment and must conform to their standards and requirements.

Containment, clean-up and recovery activities will be in accordance with response policy and priorities of the Belize National Oil Spill Contingency Plan.

If the GOB has to assume responsibility for clean up, the polluter will be notified of Government Interest in the incident. Appendix !A and !B show sample notifications.

N.B. Assumption of clean – up operations by the GOB in no way represents an assumption of liability for the discharge or of the cost of clean-up and recovery for the discharge.

1.7a Response Priorities

- a) Safety of human life is the highest priority in any response, and should be ensured for the population and emergency management personnel.
- b) Containment of incident to stabilise the situation. Every effort must be made to prevent further spillage, breakout of fires or secondary incidents.
- c) Every effort should be made to prevent or minimise adverse environmental impact

1.8 HAZARD ANALYSIS

To date, Belize has not suffered a major discharge of oil in its marine environment. The largest recorded spill occurred on March 30, 2001, when a Mexican tanker overturned, causing the spilling of approximately 5,500 gallons of Bunker C oil into the Quamina Creek. The Department of the Environment (DOE) and Ministry of Works responded to the incident, which threatened the Manatee Lagoon, a Manatee habitat and the intake source for the Gales Point Manatee Village. To prevent contaminated water being pumped to the Village, the water supply was temporarily suspended. A combination of booms and natural vegetation barriers prevented the oil from reaching the water supply and Manatee Lagoon.

Contaminated debris and oil were disposed of by burning under the supervision of the DOE.. Clean oil was collected and stored at the Ministry of Works compound. Booms were left in place for approximately six weeks to trap any residual oil.

Dead lobsters and fish were killed by the spill. Quantities were not recorded.

Clean-up costs of \$55,000 were assumed by the agent of the spiller in Belize.

Although an environmental disaster was averted, the incident demonstrated the need for a system of coordinating the response to oil spills, and ensuring that response agencies are immediately notified. The Department of the Environment was not informed of the spill until twelve hours had passed. It was also noted that the DOE did not have adequate supplies of containment and clean-up materials, nor were there arrangements in place for access to such materials from private sources.

OIL STORAGE FACILITIES (TO BE INSERTED)
MAJOR TRANSPORTATION ROUTES (TO BE INSERTED)

1.9 ACTIVATION

The Plan may be activated by the NEC in discussion with the DOE for any size incident, if a coordinated response is required. Activation of the NEOC will be required for Tier 1 and 111 spills and Level B spills. The level of staffing required for the NEOC will depend on the particular circumstances and will be decided by the NEC in discussion with the DOE and the NEOC Director. Operational Committees will provide support as per their responsibilities under the National Disaster Management Plan.

1.10 DEACTIVATION

The Plan will be deactivated by the NEC, in consultation with the DOE when there is no longer need for a coordinated response to the incident. The NEC also has responsibility for deactivating the NEOC if activated.

1.11 ALERTING AND NOTIFICATION

Any person in charge of a vessel, vehicle or facility shall immediately notify

NEMO Secretariat and/or the Department of the Environment or the nearest Police or Fire station or BDF post, as soon as he/she becomes aware of a discharge. Any report will be forwarded to NEMO Secretariat and/or the DOE by the agency receiving such a report. Should the discharge occur out of office hours, the Director of the DOE, NEC or Deputy Coordinator should be notified.

For discharges in the marine environment, the BDF Marine Wing will also be notified.

A pilot or boat captain seeing a spill should report this to the Air Traffic Control Tower and the Harbour Master respectively.

Any member of the public who sees a discharge of oil or other hazardous materials will report it to the nearest Police or Fire station or NEMO Secretariat or Department of the Environment.

The agency receiving the report will ascertain the information to complete the Report of Oil Discharge Forms at Appendix 2A or 2B . The form will be faxed to NEMO Secretariat and Department of the Environment in addition to the verbal report which has been made.

A first responder agency (Police, Fire, BDF) receiving a report will immediately seek to verify it by asking the nearest station/post to the reported discharge to despatch a team to the site.

Should NEMO Secretariat or the Department of the Environment receive the initial report, they will seek verification by the quickest means. This could include use of a first responder agency, a staff member or another agency.

Verification of reports of discharge into the marine environment will be verified by the BDF Marine Wing.

The NEC will notify the Cabinet Secretary and Minister and CEO Ministry of Defence and Emergency Management when a discharge of Tier 11 and above or Level B occurs.

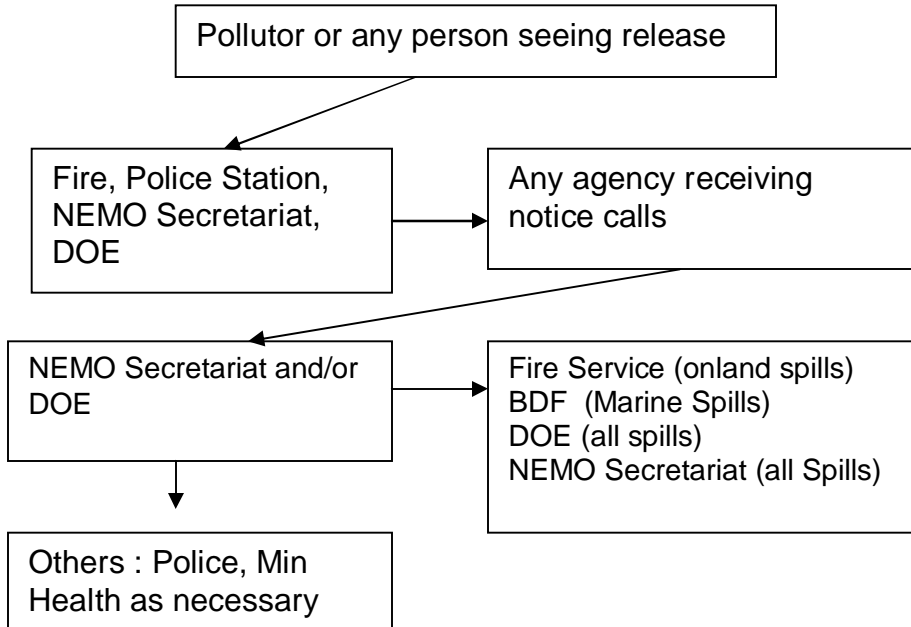


Fig. 1a Alerting and Notification - Response Agencies

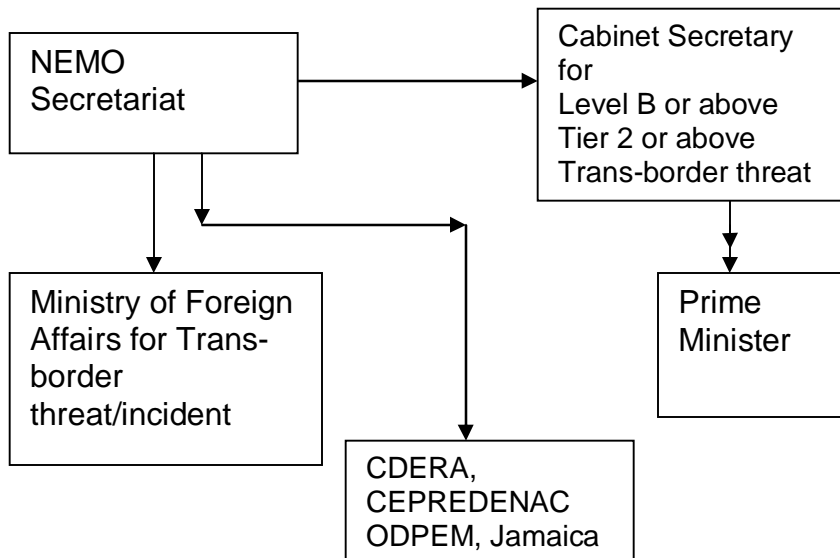


Fig 1b Alerting and Notification - Policy Level

1.12 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

The Oil Spill Plan is a hazard specific sub-plan of the Belize National Disaster Plan. Once activated it will be supported by:

Operational Committee Plans

District Plans.

Village Plans

2.0 RESPONSE

The impact of a discharge can be minimised by good management and effective response to the situation. Such response actions will depend on factors such as

- ❑ Type of oil involved
- ❑ Size of spill
- ❑ Location of spill
- ❑ Prevailing conditions of sea and weather
- ❑ Environmental sensitivity of potential or actual impact area

The OSC will take these factors into account in developing the combat strategy for the incident.

The following measures should be employed according to the nature of the discharge and prevailing conditions.

- ❑ Prevent, control or stop outflow of oil
- ❑ If no resources are threatened and the spill is in marine environment, monitor the movement and behaviour of the oil spill
- ❑ If sensitive areas or resources are threatened, take active measures to protect resources
- ❑ Contain spread of oil if possible

The priorities for protection are:

- ❑ Human health and safety
- ❑ Habitats and cultural and resources
- ❑ Commercial resources
- ❑ Rare and/or endangered flora and fauna

2.1 Evaluation and Plan Activation

The team arriving at the scene will evaluate the situation. The information on the **Report of Oil Discharge Form (Appendix 2A, 2B)** should be relayed to the despatching agency which will inform NEMO Secretariat. If the dispatcher is not DOE, then DOE will be informed by NEMO.

If the polluter is responding to the discharge, NEMO Secretariat will use the Department of the Environment as On-Scene Commander to monitor operations.

Should the responsibility for clean-up fall to the Government because of unwillingness or inability on the part of the polluter, the Plan will be activated.

A decision will then be made by NEMO Secretariat in consultation with DOE as to :

- ❑ Agencies to be called out
- ❑ Type and quantity of equipment needed
- ❑ Other expertise needed e.g. private clean-up contractors
- ❑ Actions to be taken to safeguard the public

NEMO Secretariat will decide whether the NEOC should be activated, and level of call-out required.

Resources available for response are given at Appendix 3.

2.2 GENERAL ORGANISATION FOR SPILL MANAGEMENT

Once the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan is activated, all Operational and District Committees will provide support and activate their plans as needed.

NEMO Secretariat will be responsible for coordination of response, accessing resources, ensuring public information flow, briefing of executives and policy makers if the NEOC is not activated. **The NEOC** will take over these functions once activated.

On-Scene Organisation

For on-scene organisation, the Incident Command System will be adapted for use. Each incident will be managed by an Incident/On-Scene Commander (OSC) who will be responsible for containment and immediate clean-up operations.

The Department of the Environment is the On-Scene Commander for discharges of Oil. The DOE is responsible for guiding clean-up and recovery operations, and will determine the most suitable clean-up and recovery techniques for protection and restoration of the environment. This responsibility will also extend to disposal of contaminated debris.

Support to the OSC at the incident scene will be from:

The Ministry of Works ó responsible for providing equipment, transportation and labour.

The Belize Defence Force ó responsible for communications, support for marine spills.

Belize Police Department – responsible for security, crowd and traffic control, investigations, securing evidence, arrests

District Emergency Committees – will provide expertise, labour, other assistance as requested.

Ports Authority – Assistance with Operations

Fisheries Department – will provide information on resources at risk such as fishing grounds, fish nurseries, sea-grass beds

BDF Marine Unit ó will provide boats and assist with deployment of booms etc. for marine and aquatic spills. Will act as On-Scene Commander for marine pollution incidents

Coastal Zone Management Authority – will provide technical assistance, oceanographic data and information on sensitive areas and habitats.

Esso – Assistance with operations

.4 DISCHARGE REQUIRING ACTIVATION OF NEOC

A Tier 11 and above or Level B discharge will require the activation of the NEOC. Once the NEOC is activated, the NEC and NEOC Director will liaise with the OSC and determine the level of support needed. The NEC will call out necessary personnel for efficient management of the response. Major activities and responsibilities are set out below. Lead organisations are listed first.

ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY
International Conventions, Protocols	Department of Environment/ Ministry of Foreign Affairs/ Ministry of the Attorney General
Policy Decisions	NEC/ Executive Group
Resource Acquisition including Private Sources	Coordinated by NEOC
Public Information, Alerting, Precautions	Education, Information, Communications and Warning Committee
Information on weather conditions	National Meteorological Service
Information on sea conditions	National Meteorological Service
Oceanographic and marine habitat data	Coastal Zone Management Authority
Fire and hazardous materials management	National Fire Service
Telecommunications	BDF
Transportation and Equipment	Transport Committee/Ministry of Works
Evacuation	NSARE Committee
Medical Care and Health	Medical Care and Public Health Com.
Search and Rescue	NSARE Committee
Legal Aspects, Litigation	Ministry of the Attorney General
Evidence gathering and custody	Police Department
Resource Protection and Recovery Use of chemicals and dispersants	M&E Committee/DOE
Protection of Agriculture	Ministry of Agriculture
Protection of Fisheries	Fisheries Department
Protection of Harbours, Ports	Port Authority/Harbour Master
Protection of sensitive areas, sanctuaries	M&E Committee/DOE
Protection of wildlife	M&E Committee/Forestry Department
Mass Care, Shelter	Housing Shelter/RSM Committees
Relief supplies, food	Relief & Supplies Management Committee
Cross-border incidents/threats liaison	Foreign Assistance Committee/Ministry of Foreign Affairs
External Liaison, Requests for Assistance	Foreign Assistance Committee/Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Coordination of Foreign Teams in Belize	BDF through NEOC
Translation, Interpretation	Foreign Assistance Committee/Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Damage and Impact Report	DANAC/DOE

2.5 RESPONSE ACTION GUIDELINES - INCIDENT SITE

a) ON-SCENE COMMANDER DOE/BDF

- Liaise with pollutor/representative if known
- Direct operations as necessary
- Determine facts concerning discharge
- Determine how discharge can be stopped if still in progress
- Determine threat to population if any
- Determine resources needed to respond/mitigate impact and request from NEOC/NEMO Secretariat
- Organise incident site
 - equipment staging area
 - command post
 - first aid post
 - media corral
 - safety perimeter

- Liaise with other public officials at scene, plan containment and clean-up strategy and course of action
- Brief clean-up contractors/crew on approaches to be used
- Brief HQ/NEOC/NEMO Secretariat
- Advise NEMO Sec whether vessel causing spill should be detained
- Advise on cessation of clean up operations
- Keep incident diary of chronological sequence of activities

b) ASSISTANT OSC BDF/DOE/NEMO Secretariat

- Keep chronological incident diary
- Ensure safety precautions adequate and being followed
- Liaise with clean-up contractor/personnel and guide activities
- Ensure communications available
- Coordinate on-scene resources
- Coordinate all information gathered from all parties
- Advise OSC of additional requirements
- Arrange for welfare needs of response team
- Ensure documentation of all work done, costs incurred
- Keep log of all personnel involved at scene of response

c) ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICER DOE

- Identify discharged product if possible
- Evaluate threat to environment, natural resources
- Provide guidelines for protection of these
- Advise OSC on equipment needed

- ❑ Liaise with clean-up personnel and advise and monitor process
- ❑ Liaise with Coastal Zone Management Authority for information on sensitive coastal areas
- ❑ Document incident, including interviews with spiller, photographs, video footage
- ❑ Document major decisions taken and reasons
- ❑ Provide maps and data on environmentally sensitive areas
- ❑ Prioritise protection actions
- ❑ Advise whether other assets need protection ó e.g. water sources
- ❑ Advise on use, or not, of clean-up products, dispersants
- ❑ Advise on temporary storage of debris
- ❑ Advise on final disposal
- ❑ Keep listing of all equipment used in response

d) MEDICAL / HEALTH REPRESENTATIVE (Called if necessary) MOH

- ❑ Evaluate risk to public, emergency response personnel
- ❑ Advise on safety precautions to be taken
- ❑ Ensure response personnel adequately protected
- ❑ Monitor response personnel
- ❑ Provide health report if required

e) POLICE REPRESENTATIVE

- ❑ Ensure safe perimeter set up
- ❑ Be responsible for traffic management, crowd control
- ❑ Ensure equipment safety
- ❑ Ensure safety of response team
- ❑ Secure evidence as necessary
- ❑ Properly label and identify evidence
- ❑ Ensure chain of command integrity for evidence
- ❑ Advise OSC on matters pertaining to liability, evidence
- ❑ Provide escort duties if needed
- ❑ Provide investigative report if required

f) COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER (BDF)

- ❑ Responsible for assessing communications needs and advising NEOC
- ❑ Inventory all equipment received
- ❑ Ensuring all communications resources operational
- ❑ Coordinate radio operators if present
- ❑ Direct traffic and assign priority to messages
- ❑ Keep message log and file copies of all messages
- ❑ Direct out-going messages
- ❑ Ensure all equipment returned in good condition

g) PRIVATE CONTRACTOR REPRESENTATIVE

Provide technical support and equipment as requested by NEOC/OSC

2.6 RESPONSE OPTIONS

Various options exist for capture and treatment of released oil. Which is used will depend on the oil, location of the spill, resources at risk, environmental sensitivity, prevailing weather condition and availability of skills and resources. The OSC will decide on the options to be used according to the particular circumstance at the location of the discharge.

A CONTAINMENT

i) Spills on Land

Containment measures for spills on land include:

Covering spill with absorbent material

Dyking spill to prevent spread and recovering pooled material for recycling

Recovering any contaminated material into appropriate containers

The Department of the Environment will advise on disposal of contaminated material.

ii) Spills in water or in marine environment

Containment measures include:

Deployment of booms

Spreading of absorbent material

Skimming and recovery of oil for recycling

The Department of the Environment will advise on disposal of contaminated material.

B. CLEAN-UP

i) For Marine-based oil spills, clean-up measures could include:

Skimming pooled oil, pressure flushing, manual cleaning, absorbing then removing,

Use of detergents and solvents, dispersants.

ii) Using Dispersants

Dispersants ó Composed of detergent-like surfactants in low toxicity solvents which are used to break the oil slick into small particles. These disperse into the water column where they are further broken down by natural processes.

Note:

High viscosity oils such as No. 6 Fuel Oil ó Bunker C will not dissolve easily and is difficult or impossible to disperse

Effective use of dispersants depends on several factors including droplet size, dosage and age of oil. It also requires air and boat support.

Dispersants are toxic ó use in shallow water will kill some species. Dispersion usually takes place in the upper 30ft of the water column, use is therefore recommended in deeper water to increase dilution and to prevent impact on bottom dwelling organisms.

Use of dispersants must be carefully considered. The Department of the Environment should work out beforehand a protocol for use of dispersants, as well as making contact with experts who will be available should the need arise.

The International Maritime Organisation and UNEP have produced the òIMO/UNEP Guidelines on Oil Spill Dispersant Application and Environmental Considerationsö which can provide guidance.

Biological Agents

Used to enhance biodegradation process of oil. The use of biological agents must be under the direction of the Department of the Environment.

2.7 PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING EXTERNAL SUPPORT

Requests for external support will be done through the NEOC according to procedures laid out in the Foreign Assistance Committee Operational Plan.

2.8 SAMPLING FOR EVIDENCE AND ANALYSIS

In the event that no pollutor takes responsibility for the discharge, identification of possible sources is vital. This will provide clues as to responsibility for the incident. Samples of the discharged product will have to be matched against possible sources. See Appendix 4

2.9 DOCUMENTATION AND COST RECOVERY

Documentation of the incident is important for several reasons. It will form the basis for updating and amending the Plan, it will form the basis for prevention and mitigation of future spills and it will be critical for cost recovery.

Documentation of incidents on site is the responsibility of the OSC, with the assistance of the Assistant OSC. The Department of the Environment is responsible for compiling all the information from different sources for the complete final report.

Documentation of incidents should include:

- ❑ Initial alerting report ó provided by agency receiving initial report and team despatched for verification
- ❑ Chronological diaries kept by key personnel ó This should be kept by the OSC, Assistant OSC and the NEOC Director/Operations Officer (as per NEOC SOPs)
- ❑ Daily work report ó kept by Assistant OSC
- ❑ All equipment used .- listing kept by Environmental Officer
- ❑ Pollutorø report - -comprehensive report from pollutor including reasons for discharge, quantity, damage incurred and any actions taken to prevent such incidents in the future
- ❑ OSCø report ó complete report of response efforts
- ❑ Investigative report . . provided by the Police if necessary. This will be the foundation of any legal action to be taken
- ❑ Damage and Impact report ó provided by the DANAC or DOE
- ❑ Complete incident report ó to be compiled by the Director, DOE
- ❑ Debrief report ó to be compiled by DOE in conjunction with NEMO Secretariat

Every effort will be made to have the pollutor pay costs by moral suasion. However if this fails, litigation will be necessary. The Ministry of the Attorney General will lead in any litigation on behalf of the Government.

The GOB will make a decision as to whether cost recovery will include only costs for containment, clean-up and damage. It is possible to try to recover costs for damage to natural resources and the environment. This requires prior valuation of these natural assets and detailed descriptions and measures of their pre-impact condition.

2.10 PROCEDURES FOR ESTABLISHING RESPONSIBILITY

TO BE INSERTED

2.11 TRANS-BORDER INCIDENTS

These will require dialogue between Belize and the state in which the threat originates. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will be the lead agency for discussions in trans-border incidents

2.12 HAZARD ANALYSIS

Hazard analysis is the process of identifying materials that may pose a threat to the community whether at a facility or during transportation. The information collected will assist in identifying a hazardous material threat, and should be carried out for each location at which oil products are used, stored or transported.

The information will also allow an assessment of which products are at greatest risk of being released, what the potential damage will be and which elements of natural or man-constructed are at risk

See Sample Forms at Appendix 5

2.13 PUBLIC INFORMATION

The release of accurate information on spills to the public is important for their protection. A sample initial press release is shown at **Appendix 6**

3.0 MITIGATION

Actions taken prior to a discharge can significantly reduce the impact when a spill occurs. Examples of mitigation measures which can be implemented are shown below:

Hazard-resistant design and construction of tanks, pipelines etc.

Engineered bunds surrounding tanks

Bunds constructed to contain entire content of tanks

Adequate stocks of response equipment strategically located to ensure rapid deployment in case of a spill

Adherence to rigid safety standards and strict maintenance schedules at all installations/facilities

Trained response teams at installations

Where possible siting facilities in less sensitive/hazardous areas

Designating special routes for transportation of hazardous materials

Controlling development of population centres close to hazardous materials facilities.

APPENDIX 1

To be written for specific incidents with appropriate details by Ministry of the Attorney General

1A SAMPLE - NOTICE OF GOVERNMENT INTEREST IN A POLLUTION INCIDENT

Gentlemen

This to inform you that a pollution incident for which you may be financially responsible has occurred or may occur at (vessel/facility) at (location/ body of water). Under Belizean law the Government has interest in this incident and may take appropriate action to minimise damage which may be caused by this incident.

The discharge of oil is a violation of (Law/Act)

Under this law/act the owner or operator of the source is required to undertake removal actions. Where he refuses to take adequate removal action, he may be held financially responsible for action taken by the Government to remove and adequately mitigate the effects of the pollutant. Removal is considered effective where it is done in accordance with Government statutes and regulations and the criteria of the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan for Belize. The adequacy of removal will be determined by the designated representatives of the Government at the scene.

These are:

So long as adequate actions are being taken in this matter, Government action will be limited to monitoring the progress of your actions and provisions of guidance as necessary.

If it is determined that you are not taking prompt and appropriate actions to clean-up, contain and remove the pollutant (s), Government response may be initiated. You may then be held responsible for all costs incurred by the Government as set forth in the

(Clean Sea Act as amended, other) Should you require further information you may contact:

Name:

Position:

Telephone

Fax

Email

Signed:

Date/Time

Received and acknowledged

Name of Addressee:

Date and Time

1B SAMPLE - NOTICE OF GOVERNMENT ASSUMPTION OF RESPONSE ACTIVITY

To be written for specific incidents with appropriate details by Ministry of the Attorney General

Gentlemen

My letter of (date) notified you of Government interest in an actual or potential incident at () at () for which you are presently cosidered financially responsible.

You are hereby given notice that your actions to abate this threat and to remove the pollutant (s), and to mitigate (its/their) effects have been evaluated as unsatisfactory by

Effective (date/time) the _____ will conduct all response activities in accordance with the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan of Belize and the Country's laws and regulations. You may then be billed for actual costs incurred by the Government as set forth.

Should you require further information concerning this matter you should contact:

Signed:
Date / Time

Received and acknowledged

Name of addressee

Date/Time

APPENDIX 2

2A INITIAL REPORT OF OIL DISCHARGE

The following information should be elicited from reporter by anyone taking the report or given by facility reporting discharge.

Caller's name:

Caller's Contact telephone, fax, email
Name of responsible party:
Address of responsible party:
Telephone/fax number/email
Date and Time of spill:
Location of spill:
Name of material spilled:
Source of spill:
Cause of spill:
Amount discharged:
Amount in water:
Weather conditions:
Persons at risk:
Critical systems at risk:
Natural resources at risk:
Truck number or Vessel name:
Name of driver/Captain
Name of shipper:
Consignee:
Injuries if any:
Summary of damage:
Containment and clean-up actions so far:
Plans for further clean-up:
Does polluter have insurance coverage:
Name of Insurer:
Agencies already notified:

2B DISCHARGE FROM VESSELS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Date of Incident:	Time of Incident
Injuries/Casualties:	
Cargo Owner:	Vessel Owner:
Address	Address
Tel/Fax	Tel./Fax
Insurer/P&I	
Destination	

Agent: Tel/Fax
Location of Incident:
Lat Long

DISHARGE INFORMATION

Product spilled:
Quantity:
Status of source: contained continuing unknown
MSDS Available Yes No

SOURCE INFORMATION

Name of Vessel:
Type of Vessel Length Weight
Total quantity of oil onboard
Total No tanks affected
Total storage of tanks affected
Vessel Status:

Stabilised
Dead in Water
Underway
At anchorage
At berth
Pumping
Holed
Burning
Flooding
Listing Degree Port Starboard
Sunk Lat Long
Geographic

Vessel plans available? Y N
From:

APPENDIX 3

AVAILABLE EQUIPMENT LIST

TO BE PROVIDED BY DOE

Objectives of sampling exercise:

- a) to obtain an adequate size sample to make identification possible (one pint or more)
- b) to prevent contamination and alteration of sample
- c) to protect legal validity of sample identity and subsequent analysis

Sampling Kit

Spatula

Latex gloves

Chain of custody form

Sample containers, glass or teflon with tight lids

Sample labels

Water-proof pen or marker

Packing material and container

Paper towels/Rags for clean-up

Collection

A clean, sealed sample jar should be used. It should be securely covered once the oil is sampled

Samples of oil must be taken from potential sources and the spill itself as soon as possible in order to reduce any degradation due to weathering

Sampling of vegetation or other organic material should not be taken with sample as this can cause contamination

Every effort should be made to obtain a representative sample of the pollutant and from ships tanks or other suspected sources for comparison purposes, particularly if prosecution is envisaged. If the spill is large several samples should be taken from several locations.

The label of the sample should include:

- a) Sample number
- b) Date and time of sampling
- c) Sample description
- d) Precise location of sampling (Lat. Long./ Tank number etc)
- e) Name of person taking sample
- f) Name of witness to sampling procedure

Storage

Samples should be stored in a cool, dark place which is secured and locked, with restricted access

Chain of Custody of Samples

Samples taken must be proved to be in the custody of an appropriate official from sampling until delivery to the laboratory which will carry out the analysis. This requires rigid controls and signing for samples if custody changes. This includes custody during transportation. The following chain of custody information should be recorded:

- a) Name and address of facility assuming custody
- b) Case Number if relevant
- c) Name and signature of person assuming custody
- d) Date and time of assuming custody
- e) Comment

Analysis

An independent laboratory should carry out analyses, if possible.

APPENDIX 5

5A FACILITIES HAZARD ANALYSIS

Type of product

Location

Quantity

Physical state

Container type and size

Type of bund (tanks)

Capacity of banded area

Contingency Plan in effect?

Trained Response Team present?

Potential impact should spill occur

Population at risk

Elements at risk ó critical facilities to be given priority

Natural resources at risk

Vulnerability of Facility to natural hazards

Vulnerability of Facility to Man-induced hazards

List incidents of past spills, releases, fires etc

5B TRANSPORTATION HAZARD ANALYSIS

For transported materials

Route:

Type of product commonly transported

Quantities if available:

Physical state:

Container type and size:

Routes most commonly used for transporting material

Time of day/night most commonly transported

Special safety precautions taken

Major elements at risk along route

Response capacity along route:
(First responder agencies, equipment,
medical facilities)

APPENDIX 6

SAMPLE INITIAL PRESS RELEASE

An oil spill has occurred at [redacted] from [redacted] ..
It was discovered at [redacted] .. on date [redacted] ..
The following areas have been affected

Cause of the spill is being investigated by [redacted] and clean up operations are underway by [redacted] . The amount of product spilled is [redacted] . or is not known or is being calculated by the [redacted]

Brief statement of operations being undertaken and by whom:

The spill material is/is not considered to be a health hazard. the following precautions should be taken by members of the public in the [redacted] ..area(s)

Further updates will be given at [redacted]