

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR OIL SPILL RESPONSE

Prepared by the National Disaster Office

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Table of Content

INTRODUCTION

- 1. REPORTING SYSTEMS**
- 2. ALERTING SYSTEMS**
- 3. SPILL ASSESSMENT/SURVEILLANCE**
- 4. CLEAN UP RESPONSE DECISION AND OPERATIONS**
- 5. SEEKING TECHNICAL ADVICE AND CALLING IN
RESOURCES FROM OUTSIDE REGION**
- 6. USE OF DISPERSANTS**
- 7. ILLEGAL DISCHARGES**
- 8. INTERVENTION**
- 9. COMMUNICATIONS**
- 10. CLEANING UP AND DISPOSAL OF RECOVERED OIL**
- 11. RESTORATION OF AFFECTED AREAS**
- 12. PUBLIC RELATIONS**
- 13. HANDLING OF EXTERNAL RESOURCES**
- 14. COMPENSATION**
- 15. RECORD KEEPING AND PREPARATION OF CLAIMS**
- 16. AFTER ACTION REPORTS**

17.

INTRODUCTION

The Standard Operating Procedure will be based upon a tiered response whereby:

- Tier One is response by local resources on the spot. The following sections should be applied:
 - Section 1 - Reporting Systems
 - Section 2 - Alerting Systems
 - Section 3 - Spill Assessment/Surveillance
 - Section 6 - Use of Dispersants
 - Section 7 - Illegal Discharges
 - Section 10 - Cleaning up and disposal of recovered oil
 - Section 12 - Public relations
 - Section 15 - Record keeping and preparation of Claims
 - Section 16 - After action reports

- Tier Two is support and assistance from within the region. The following sections should be applied:
 - All Sections apply with the exception of Sections 5 and 13.

- Tier Three is reinforcement on a global scale. All sections apply.

1. REPORTING SYSTEMS

- 1.1 Upon notification of an oil spill, the National Disaster Office, which is usually the initial contact point, shall immediately notify the Lead Agency and On-Scene Commander who will in turn alert relevant support agencies. The format for an initial oil spill notification report is found at Annex B, and at Annex C is the format for the subsequent more detailed follow-up report - CARIBPOLREP.

2. ALERTING SYSTEMS

- 2.1 Following notification, the On-Scene-Commander will activate the Operations Centre and the personnel designated to staff the Centre positions should report for duty. Once the seriousness of the incident has been confirmed, the National Disaster Coordinator will activate the Emergency Operation Center. The National Disaster Coordinator, who has overall responsibility for implementation of the plan, will contact external agencies such as Clean Caribbean Cooperative and others as appropriate. The International Maritime Organisation (IMO), Regional Consultants in

Curacao will also be informed as necessary in accordance with the Caribbean Plan (paragraphs 2.2.1 and 2.2.2).

3. SPILL ASSESSMENT/SURVEILLANCE

- 3.1 Initial confirmation will be made by the Grenada Coast Guard using information gained from observation by the aircraft and surface vessel and an assessment as to the threat to Grenada Carriacou and Petit Martinique will be made by the Grenada Coast Guard in collaboration with the Ministry of Fisheries, and report directly to the On-Scene-Commander.
- 3.2 If the assessment shows that another state is likely to be threatened, Ministry of Foreign Affairs will inform that state.
- 3.3 For routine surveillance all pilots of aircraft and masters of ships and vessels should be instructed by the Civil Aviation and Grenada Ports Authority to report any sightings of oil in the sea for immediate onward transmission to the Lead Agency.

4. CLEAN UP RESPONSE DECISION AND OPERATIONS

- 4.1 National Response Team will meet under the Chairmanship of the National Disaster Coordinator when summoned. It will implement the National Contingency Plan and will also consider the following:-
 - 4.1.1 the desirability of engaging external expertise to advise on oil spill clean up, and the related measures necessary to deploy external resources into and within the country;
 - 4.1.2 the possible prevention or reduction of outflow of oil at source;
 - 4.1.3 if marine or coastal resources are threatened, whether it is practicable to mount any at-sea response, with or without external aid, and whether sensitive shoreline areas need to be protected by the deployment of booms;
 - 4.1.4 if beaches have been, or are likely to be affected, determine clean up priorities and direct resources accordingly;
 - 4.1.5 mobilize personnel, equipment and materials from internal and, if necessary, external resources.
- 4.2 To assist in making these decisions, Annex D shows environmentally sensitive areas as the priority areas for clean up. Annex E list locally available resources. It is expected that Shell, Texaco and Grenada Ports Authority will

make equipment available (unless required for tanker operations on the basis, that it is returned as supplied). Annex F lists external sources of specialist equipment. Annex G identifies sources from which expert advice might be obtained on response options and Annex H gives some details of oil spill counter measures.

5. SEEKING TECHNICAL ADVICE AND CALLING IN RESOURCES FROM OUTSIDE REGION

5.1 In the event of a spill being adjudged as beyond the resources of the Region and recognizing the need for speedy deployment of reinforcements, the following reporting procedures has been established:-

5.1.1 Report details direct to National Disaster Office.

5.1.2 National Disaster Office will then

5.1.2.1 Contact the Clean Caribbean Cooperative.

5.1.2.2 Dependent on that advice, approach with a request for third party access to clean-up facilities, trained personnel and air deployment using dedicated aircraft.

5.1.2.3 It should be noted that if the oil spillage is from a damaged tanker all reasonable costs incurred in the clean up would be reimbursed by the Civil Liability Convention (CLC) and the International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund. (See paragraphs 8.5, 8.6, and 8.7 of the Caribbean Plan).

6. USE OF DISPERSANTS

6.1 The criteria for the use of chemical dispersants in the Caribbean Region are established in the Caribbean Plan paragraphs 10.2, 10.3, 10.4 and 10.5 copied at Annex J.

6.2 In general terms the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Division, will approve the use of dispersants in Grenadian waters in accordance with the criteria agreed for the Region unless there be especial overriding considerations at the time. It must be noted, however, that for chemical dispersants to be effective against fresh oil they must be applied speedily in order to maximise the limited window of opportunity.

6.3 It is further emphasized that only licensed and approved dispersants are permitted. This does not include commercial detergents, which must never be applied.

7. ILLEGAL DISCHARGES

- 7.1 If an illegal discharge takes place within a port area of Grenada, the Grenada Coast Guard/Grenada Ports Authority will consider whether prosecution action is appropriate under the International Convention for Prevention of Pollution from Ships, MARPOL 73/78, and local laws and regulations.
- 7.2 If a foreign ship discharges oil while passing through the territorial waters of Grenada, the National Disaster Coordinator will advise the Grenada Coast Guard who will report the incident to the Flag State of the vessel concerned along with any photographs or evidence and request that the matter be investigated further.

8. INTERVENTION

- 8.1 The Coast Guard/Ports Authority will monitor all actions by a damaged vessel, will carefully assess any salvage agreement between the master of the Vessel and any Salvage Company, and will be prepared at all times to intervene under the (fill in), can use this power to give direction when:-
- 8.1.1 an accident has occurred to or in a ship;
 - 8.1.2 in his opinion, oil from the ship will or may cause pollution on a large scale to Grenada or in the waters thereof;
 - 8.1.3 in his opinion action is urgently required to prevent or reduce oil pollution or the risk of oil pollution.
- 8.2 Directions in this respect will relate to either the ship or its cargo and should preferably be in writing. Once action is taken, the On Scene Commander can arrange for other persons to act on his behalf.

9 COMMUNICATIONS

- 9.1 In the event of an oil spill, the (fill in) will be the Co-ordination Centre. All information from the site of the spill and impacted areas will be fed into the (fill in) by ship-to-shore/shore-to-ship VHF. When the spill reaches a beach, a field site would be set up to feed information into the control Centre. Each On-Scene Commander will be responsible for coordinating information to be fed into the Centre. Communication arrangements are described at Annex I.

10 **CLEANING UP AND DISPOSAL OF RECOVERED OIL**

- 10.1 If the spill takes the form of tar balls washed up on the beaches, these will be put into plastic bags and disposed of at a location and in a manner approved by the Environmental Health Department and the Department of Fisheries. Workers mobilized by the Ministry of Works will spearhead the clean up. Appeals may be made for volunteer groups to assist. Tarred sand will be removed with appropriate equipment supplied by the Ministry of Works or contractors and transported to a disposal site designated by the Ministry of Health & the Environment. Any liquid oil recovered will have to be placed in containers and taken away for proper disposal.

11. **RESTORATION OF AFFECTED AREAS**

- 11.1 Once clean up operations are completed, it may be necessary to restore affected areas. The degree of restoration will be determined by the Department of Fisheries in consultation with support agencies.
- 11.2 Consideration will be given, as necessary to replacing contaminated beach sand; replanting mangrove stands, marsh and sea grasses; and restocking aqua-cultural projects.
- 11.3 In areas identified as having high environmental sensitivity, consideration will be given to establishing a monitoring programme to determine the long-term effects on flora and fauna.

12 **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

- 12.1 Effective public relations is an integral part of any oil spill clean up operation. In the event of spillage, the (fill in) will make arrangements for an experienced public relations officer to disseminate pertinent information to the public and the media to ensure that those who need to know have a full and timely appreciation of the incident and of the actions taken and progress made during the response.
- 12.2 A carefully worded press release will be issued in consultation with the Tourist Board.

13 **HANDLING OF EXTERNAL RESOURCES**

13.1 The handling of external reinforcements of personnel and equipment will inevitably impose considerable strain on Grenada's internal arrangements and the whole subject should form the basis of a separate detailed plan. However, the following salient points deserve mention here:-

13.1.1 Aircraft likely to be deployed are Hercules C 130 and Russian Ilyushin IL-76;

13.1.2 Aircraft usage of Point Salines Airport will certainly be required for landing and unloading of certain aircraft and, for fueling by all aircraft;

13.1.3 Availability and deployment of marine crafts;

13.1.4 Seaport docking and cargo handling facilities and, where necessary, water transport;

13.1.5 Immigration, Health and Customs arrangements;

13.1.6 Food, accommodation, medical and public health services.

14 **COMPENSATION**

14.1 This gives force to the 1992 Protocol of the International Convention and Civil Liability for Oil Pollution damage (the "CLC") and makes the owner of a ship carrying cargo of persistent oil in bulk, strictly liable for any pollution damage in the area of Grenada including the territorial waters, seabed, shores, beaches and ecology thereof.

14.2 The liability extends to post-spillage prevention and clean up costs. Grenada does not have to prove that the ship was in any way at fault in causing the pollution.

15 **RECORD KEEPING AND PREPARATION OF CLAIMS**

15.1 In order that financial claims may be processed with minimum delay, it is essential that accurate records are maintained for each clean up location and include detail of all actions taken; the reason for such action; personnel and equipment deployed; and consumable material used. The National Disaster Coordinator and the On Scene Commander will be responsible for ensuring that these very important records are maintained.

16 **AFTER ACTION REPORTS**

16.1 Following resolution of the oil spill and termination of the response for a particular incident, the support agencies involved will be responsible for submission of an After Action Report to the On Scene Commander not later than three days following closing of the response. The On-Scene Commander and the National Disaster Coordinator shall be jointly responsible for taking the necessary actions.