

INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE AND CO-OPERATION

Introduction

- 1 The UK is party to several international agreements which provide for co-operation in dealing with major marine pollution incidents. This appendix provides a summary of them.

OPRC Convention

- 2 The OPRC Convention places obligations on States Parties concerning their preparedness for, and response to, oil pollution incidents. It also provides a framework for international co-operation for combating major oil pollution incidents.
- 3 The **OPRC-HNS Protocol** has been developed to expand the scope of OPRC 1990, to apply, in whole or in part, to pollution incidents by hazardous substances other than oil. Together with the OPRC Convention, the OPRC-HNS Protocol will provide a framework for international co-operation in establishing systems for preparedness and response at the national, regional and global levels. This Protocol is not yet in force in the UK.

The Bonn Agreement

- 4 The parties to the Bonn Agreement for Co-operation in dealing with Pollution of the North Sea by Oil and Other Harmful Substances 1983 are the States bordering the North Sea and English Channel (that is, Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and the UK), and the European Community.
- 5 The parties notify each other of any marine pollution or threat of marine pollution likely to pose a threat to the coast or related interests of another Party. They pledge to assist one another to the best of their ability, on request, and on a cost recovery basis.

Anglo-French Joint Maritime Contingency Plan (Mancheplan)

- 6 Under the Bonn Agreement, the English Channel is a zone of joint responsibility between France and the UK. The Mancheplan covers counter pollution and search and rescue operations. It sets out the

division of responsibility between the two parties. For incidents likely to affect both parties simultaneously, it outlines command and control procedures, channels of communication, and the resources available to each party.

- 7 Mancheplan designates the territorial waters of the Channel Islands as a special zone of responsibility. It contains procedures for the provision of assistance, as required, to the Channel Island Authorities.

The Norway-United Kingdom Joint Contingency Plan (Norbrit Agreement)

- 8 Norway and the UK have developed the Norbrit Agreement for joint counter pollution operations in the zone extending 50 miles either side of the median line separating the UK and Norwegian continental shelf.
- 9 Like Mancheplan, the Norbrit Agreement sets out command and control procedures for pollution incidents likely to affect both parties, channels of communication and resources available. However, it does not cover search and rescue activities.

The UK/Ireland Agreement

- 10 Negotiations with the Government of the Republic of Ireland to produce a UK/Ireland joint contingency plan for counter pollution and search and rescue operations in the Irish Sea are ongoing.
- 11 This draft plan ensures effective co-operation in the event of an incident in the Irish sea which may affect the interests of both or either country. Work to establish a simple median line for operational purposes continues.

The Anglo/Isle of Man Operating Agreement

- 12 The UK/Isle of Man covers counter pollution and search and rescue operations and was agreed in May 2002.

Faroe Islands

- 13 A Local Agreement of Mutual Support exists between the UK and the Faroe Islands and remains extant and was agreed in 2007. A review of this document is to be pursued following settlement of the Agreement on Co-operation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic.

The European Union

The Consultative Technical Group for Marine Pollution Preparedness and Response (CTG MPPR)

- 14 Following the expiry at the end of 2006 of the Community framework for co-operation in the field of accidental or deliberate marine pollution, administrated by DG Environment and assisted by the Management Committee for Marine Pollution (MCMP), EMSA established the Consultative Technical Group for Marine Pollution Preparedness and Response (CTG MPPR) in 2007. The CTG MPPR is composed of Member States delegates with expertise in marine pollution preparedness and response matters. The main objective of the CTG MPPR is to provide a European Union level platform for Member States, contributing to enhance cooperation in the field of preparedness for and response to accidental and deliberate marine pollution from ships.
- 15 For a major marine pollution incident where satellite imagery may be required, this is activated via the 24 hour Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC), Civil Protection Mechanism, in Brussels.

The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)

- 16 Regulation No 1406/2002 as amended¹ establishes a European Maritime Safety Agency for the purpose of ensuring a high, uniform and effective level of maritime safety, maritime security, prevention of pollution and response to pollution by ships within the European Union. Initially, the two legal obligations for the Agency in the field of pollution preparedness and response are:
 - To provide Member States and the European Commission with technical and scientific assistance in the field of accidental and deliberate pollution by ships;
 - To support on request with additional means in a cost efficient way the pollution response mechanisms of Member States.
- 17 Within this framework, EMSA provides operational services to Member States including a Network of Stand-by Oil Spill Response Vessels,

¹ Regulation (EC) No 1406/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2002 establishing a European Maritime Safety Agency (OJEU L 208, 5.8.2002 p. 1) as amended by Regulation (EC) No 1644/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 July 2003 (OJEU L 245, 29.9.2003, p. 10), Regulation (EC) No 724/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004 (OJEU L 129, 29.4.2004, p. 1), Regulation (EC) No 2038/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 (OJEU L 394, 30.12.2006, p. 1), corrigendum (OJEU L 30, 3.2.2007, p. 12).

satellite imagery for detection and monitoring of oil spills at sea (CleanSeaNet), pollution response experts to give operational and technical assistance and information service for chemical spills at sea (MAR-ICE).

Overseas Territories

18 The Overseas Territories retain their connection with the UK and any decision to sever the constitutional link between the UK and a Territory would be on the basis of the clear and constitutionally expressed wish of the people of the Territory. Elected governments in the Territories have a wide range of responsibilities for the conduct of their own affairs. The Overseas Territories consist of the following:

- Anguilla
- Bermuda
- British Antarctic Territory
- British Indian Ocean Territory
- British Virgin Islands
- Cayman Islands
- Falkland Islands
- Gibraltar
- Montserrat
- Pitcairn
- St Helena, Ascension Island Tristan da Cunha
- South Georgia & South Sandwich Islands
- Turks and Caicos Islands
- Sovereign Base Areas of Akrotiri and Dhekelia in Cyprus

19 At the request of an Overseas Territory, the MCA's CPS team may assist with advice on contingency planning and counter pollution activities.