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Organisation of oil spill response in the UK

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Phases of incident response

3

Search and Rescue
HM COASTGUARD
G-SARB

4

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At Sea Response
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Who is involved and who does what ?

- HMCG - Her Majesty's Coastguard
- CPSO - Counter Pollution & Salvage Officer
- SOSREP – Secretary of State's Representative
- SCU – Salvage Control Unit
- MRC – Marine Response Centre
- SCG/RCG – Strategic/Recovery Coord Group
- EG – Environment Group

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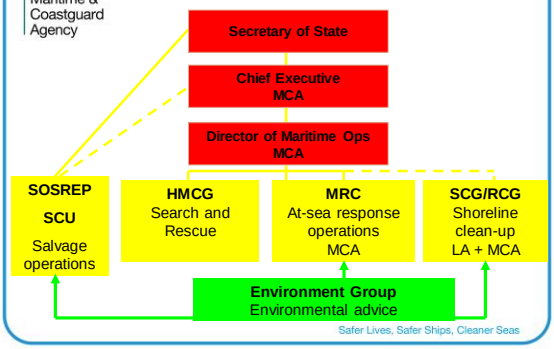
Command and Control



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UK oil spill response

- Each cell has a specific role
- Some cells make decisions and initiate actions
- Some cells have statutory powers, some do not
- Some provide advice to other units
  - Prime objective of all involved to minimise the potential effects of the pollution within their remit

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Alerting

- The Polluter
- Third Party
  - normally via CGOCs
  - OPRED Env Inspector
  - Harbour Authority
  - Offshore Operator
- Aerial Surveillance and Verification
  - Tour d'Horizon
  - Bonn Agreement Partner States
- CleanSeaNet
  - only wide area surveillance capability available to UK

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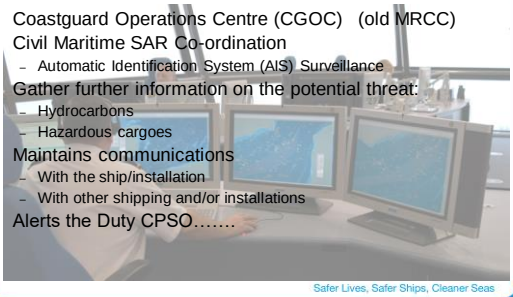
HM Coastguard



- Coastguard Operations Centre (CGOC) (old MRCC)
- Civil Maritime SAR Co-ordination
  - Automatic Identification System (AIS) Surveillance
- Gather further information on the potential threat:
  - Hydrocarbons
  - Hazardous cargoes
- Maintains communications
  - With the ship/installation
  - With other shipping and/or installations
- Alerts the Duty CPSO…….

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Duty CPSO

- Front line on-call for pollution response incidents in UK waters
- Make assessment & establish category of incident – trigger point ?
- Assess ship owners and/or operators initial responses
  - Where offshore - liaise with OPRED
- Consider response strategy
- Inform relevant authorities / organisations
- Primary contact for external agencies
- Assume initial MCA responsibility for Counter Pollution & Salvage implications of incident

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SOSREP

- SOSREP
  - **SOSREP has ultimate powers to intervene on behalf of Secretary of State for Transport in any salvage situation or situation where there is a threat of significant pollution**
- Powers to issue Directions
  - require ships to be moved or not to be moved from a specific area or locality within UK Waters.
  - establish Temporary Exclusion Zone (TEZ)

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Salvage Control Unit (SCU)

- Chaired by the SOSREP - or designated person
- Continues to monitor and evaluate operations, ascertain progress;
- Establish all objectives and proposals;
- Provides a forum for discussion between parties;
- Provide an avenue for state intervention if necessary;
- Conducts salvage plan approvals;
- Consider risks and dangers;
  - people and the environment
- It is NOT a committee

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SCU

- SOSREP
- Salvage Master
- MCA Representatives – CPSO and CGLO
- Environment Liaison Officer (Environment Group)
- Independent Salvage Advisor (if appointed)
- Single representative of shipowner and/or insurers
- Other Coastal State Representative – if applicable
- *SOSREP discretion to admit other representatives as appropriate*

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Place of Refuge

The Master, Shipowner or Manager may engage salvors under a commercial agreement in order to:

- Salvage the ship and cargo
- Move them to a place of safety
- Avoid, or minimise, any damage to the environment

This requires cooperation between salvor, shipowners, responders and coastal state

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Place of Refuge – Risk Assessment

- Natural Conditions
  - Prevailing winds
  - Weather and sea conditions
  - Bathymetry
  - Seasonal effects
- Vessel Condition
  - Navigational characteristics
  - Operational Condition
  - Cargo
  - Bunkers
- Environmental & Social Factors
  - Safety
  - Crew, passengers or Public
  - Sensitive habitats and species
  - Economic/industrial facilities
  - Facilities available
  - Amenity resources and tourism

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Marine Response Centre (MRC)

- Monitoring progress and effectiveness of at sea response
  - has authority to take the lead
- Recording of the decisions taken,
- Preparation of regular briefings for circulation to all interested parties, and
- Management of financial expenditure

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MRC Composition

- Head of the MRC
- Duty Counter Pollution and Salvage Officer (DCPSO)
- Counter Pollution and Salvage Officer - Current Ops
- Counter Pollution and Salvage Officer - Future Ops
- Environmental, Scientific & Technical Team
- MCA Resources and Claims Lead + Support
- MCA Public Relations Officer
- Administrative Support:
  - MRC Room Manager + 3
- Liaison Officers

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SCG/RCG

- **The SCG/RCG will co-ordinate and lead the <u>on-shore</u> response:**
  - Determine the extent of the problem
  - Agree a strategy and priorities
  - Brief elected members, Ministers, VIPs, media
  - Initiate response
  - Obtain and allocate resources
  - Determine methods of waste disposal
  - Monitor progress

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Multi-Agency response

Local Authority personnel will be mainly concerned with shoreline clean-up

- EA / SEPA / NRW
- NE / SNH
- MMO / MS-ML
- Contractors
- ITOPF
- Oil & Gas UK
- HMCG / CPS
- Oil Company
- Police / FRS
- UKPIA

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Environment Group (EG)

- Function
  - To provide advice and guidance on environmental matters to SCU, MRC & SCG/RCG
- Role is purely advisory
  - EG has no formal powers (although members may have)
- MCA initiates then contacts:
  - Statutory Nature Conservation Body
  - Environmental Regulator
  - Fisheries Department

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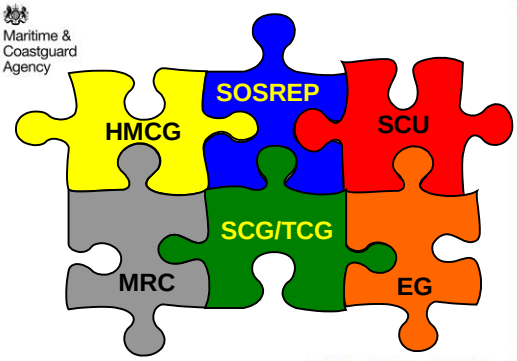

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