



Offshore Petroleum Regulator
for Environment & Decommissioning

ENVIRONMENTAL ALERT

ALERT NUMBER: 002/2026

ISSUE DATE: March 2026

ALERT DETAILS:

The purpose of this Environmental Alert is to explain OPRED expectations for wells that are not connected to offshore installations in Oil Pollution Emergency Plans (OPEPs).

ALERT FINDINGS:

Recent queries have been received from industry regarding how Responsible Persons should demonstrate the processes in place to respond to a release of oil from wells that are not connected to offshore installations and where there is no in-situ offshore response capability. OPRED recognises that such wells are not currently defined as offshore installations under The Merchant Shipping (Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation Convention) Regulations 1998 and are not required to be detailed in OPEP's.

OPRED expect that best practice will be followed and Responsible Persons would include these potential pollution risks within their OPEPs. OPRED will update its Guidance Notes for Preparing Oil Pollution Emergency Plans in due course but until that time, the following captures OPRED's *interim* position:

OPRED expectations would be that the Responsible Person for such wells would have in place an OPEP that demonstrated their capability to respond robustly and effectively to any release of oil from these wells.

The Responsible Person can demonstrate their pollution response for such wells within an 'offshore' OPEP which aligns with OPRED guidance on oil pollution emergency plans and captures the relevant details of the wells such as location, flow-rates, crude characteristics etc, and describes how any required regulatory reporting and interface will be undertaken by onshore response teams.

Responsible Persons should not reference response capabilities (e.g. reporting, liaison, monitoring etc from offshore based personnel or use of in-field response equipment) where these do not exist offshore.

Where a Responsible Person has already submitted details of such wells within an onshore OPEP at OPRED's request, no further changes are required until further notice.

Further Information

Any queries relating to this alert should be addressed to:

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