

Preparing for an Integrated Response

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In today's oil industry many non-core activities are outsourced to specialist service providers as oil companies become increasingly reliant on a wide range of external expertise, whether it is multidimensional seismic surveys, employee healthcare or, indeed, oil spill preparedness and response.

In many cases, service providers can offer a holistic "total solution" requiring the absolute minimum of intervention from the contracting company. However, despite what an oil company may wish, it is not normally possible to fully out-source the response to an oil spill. The Responsible Party is morally and legally the "owner" of the incident, regardless of scale, however there are aspects of spill response and management which, depending on the national response framework, may be ideally suited to the expertise of an Oil Spill Response Organisation (OSRO).

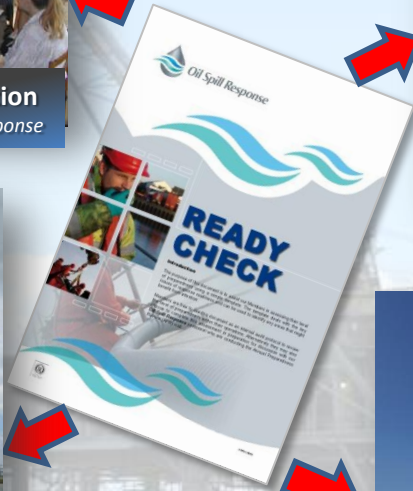
In most parts of the world oil spill management is a collaborative endeavour between the controlling governmental authorities and the responsible party and these relationships should be tested through joint planning, training and exercising.



Management & Organisation
Structures in place for effective response



Contingency Planning
Plans in place, reviewed, exercised



READY CHECK



Response
Communications, Equipment, Logistics, Training



Notification & Mobilisation
Means to engage external assistance

OSRO

- ◆ Provide technical advice / expertise
- ◆ Provide resources / equipment
- ◆ Support operational management
- ◆ Fulfil key roles in Incident Mgmt. System

Efficient and Effective Response

Responsible Party

- ◆ Regulatory, media, finance etc.
- ◆ Assist with customs / immigration
- ◆ Identify & arrange local logistics
- ◆ Interpreters & local agency services

By the same token the relationship between the Responsible party and contracted OSROs must be based on a clear understanding of their respective responsibilities so that both parties can work together in an "integrated" manner to achieve the overall response objectives.

"Integration" therefore is the process of developing mutual understanding between the Responsible Party and OSRO necessary to enable effective response. Ensuring response integration is made more challenging by the flatter, de-centralised structure adopted by many international oil companies. Whilst OSRO's often have good relationships with the Corporate Centre from where traditionally ownership of the contract rests, it is increasingly likely that it will be the remote, autonomous business unit which will mobilise an OSRO in the event of an incident and it is here that the requirement for a sound understanding of roles will be most evident.

Oil Spill Response Limited (OSRL) have developed a simple checklist to enable oil companies to assess their own level of oil spill preparedness and ability to integrate contracted spill response and spill management services.

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