



# Coast Guard Vessel of Opportunity Skimming System (VOSS), Past, Present and Future (containment, skimming, and pumping)

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**Purpose and Goal:** Review recent Coast Guard (CG) Vessel of Opportunity Skimming System (VOSS) consolidation and challenges to modernize CG spill equipment capability (containment, skimming, and pumping)

**Background:** In the aftermath of EXXON VALDEZ, CG evaluated spill response equipment:

- Major gaps in spill first response private resources
- 1990, 1991, 1992, Congress authorizes 30.5 million dollars annual to for the CG to acquire 19 pre-staged sites and upgrading overall CG spill response equipment
- CG acquired VOSS systems
- Skimming Systems
  - District VOSS (18)
  - Strike Team VOSS (3)
- Containment Systems
  - District VOSS (18)
  - Strike Team VOSS (3)

## CG 2011-2016 ALL CONUS DISTRICT VOSS SYSTEMS RECOLATED TO CENTRAL LOCATION:

Private spill response resources have increased since 1990, especially in the continental United States (CONUS)

- Gaps still exist in Alaska, Hawaii, and other territories
- Consolidating CONUS VOSS in one location creates CG savings from training, travel, maintenance, storage, equipment specialists at Districts
- Savings can be reprogrammed for other CG priorities



**VOSS Savings:** DRAT personnel, Equipment Maintenance, Exercises  
2011 Budget Control Act  
2012 National Security Cutter #6  
2013 Sequestration  
2018 Proposed 10% cut to CG budget

**Summary:** Significant cuts to spill response program prevent VOSS recapitalization or new acquisition of spill equipment, coupled with the lack of funding increases to 1990's OPA legislation for annual spill funding  
2017: All East Coast Pungo, VA VOSS systems removed from the USCG inventory

**2016 Post VOSS Consolidation System Force Lay down for USCG VOSS**  
**EAST COAST:** Pungo, VA, 11 VOSS  
**WEST COAST:** 4 VOSS, Parts shipped to augment needed spares for District 17 and 14  
**WEST COAST:** Rest of key components shipped, 2 containers, Pacific Strike Team  
**National Strike Force 3 Strike Teams:** Kept 1 VOSS each allocated post VALDEZ spill

## References:

- Coe, T. (1995). Lessons Learned Outfitting the U.S. Coast Guard with Oil Pollution Equipment. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/13532561/2>
- Konigmacher, S.(2010). SONS 2010 – Spill of National Significance Exercise in Portland, Maine, <http://gcaptain.com/sons2010-spill-of-national-significance-exercise-in-portland-maine-day-one/>

