

NATIONAL OIL SPILL RESPONSE PLAN

- Ref
1. Office of the Prime Minister's Regulation on the Prevention and Combating of Oil Pollution, 1995
 2. Navigation in Thai Waters Act, 1913, as amended by the Navigation in Thai Waters Act (No. 14) 1992
 3. Civilian Disaster Prevention Act, 1979
 4. Enhancement and Conservation of National Environmental Quality Act, 1992
 5. Fishery Act, 1947
 6. Petroleum Act, 1971

1. Background

Oil is a very vital energy resource and has a critical role to economics and human beings. Due to its limited availability to certain places on the earth, oil consumption demand inevitably results in the transportation of oil across the world. With its distinctive advantages of high carrying capacity and low operational cost, marine transport remains a popular mean of transport worldwide. Despite very well planned protective measures, it is unavoidable that tanker accidents that consequently lead to oil spill at sea still take place from time to time, causing detrimental damage to marine resources and environment as well as posing impacts on tourism industry and fisheries. Restoration of affected areas to an original condition is unlikely and costly. It is, therefore, imperative to have a national oil spill response plan in place to minimize damage through timely and effective oil spill response.

By virtue of clause 10 of the Office of Prime Minister's Regulation on the Prevention and Combating of Oil Pollution, 1995, the Committee on the Prevention and Combating of Oil Pollution had developed the Oil Spill Response Plan to propose to agencies concerned.

The plan is intended to delineate responsibilities for the oil spill response operation, to establish response procedures and mechanisms. The objective of the plan is to build cooperation among concerned agencies to optimally co-utilize existing resources for the oil spill operation in Thai waters to ensure timely and effective response to accomplish the common purpose of minimizing damage to the environment and marine resources.

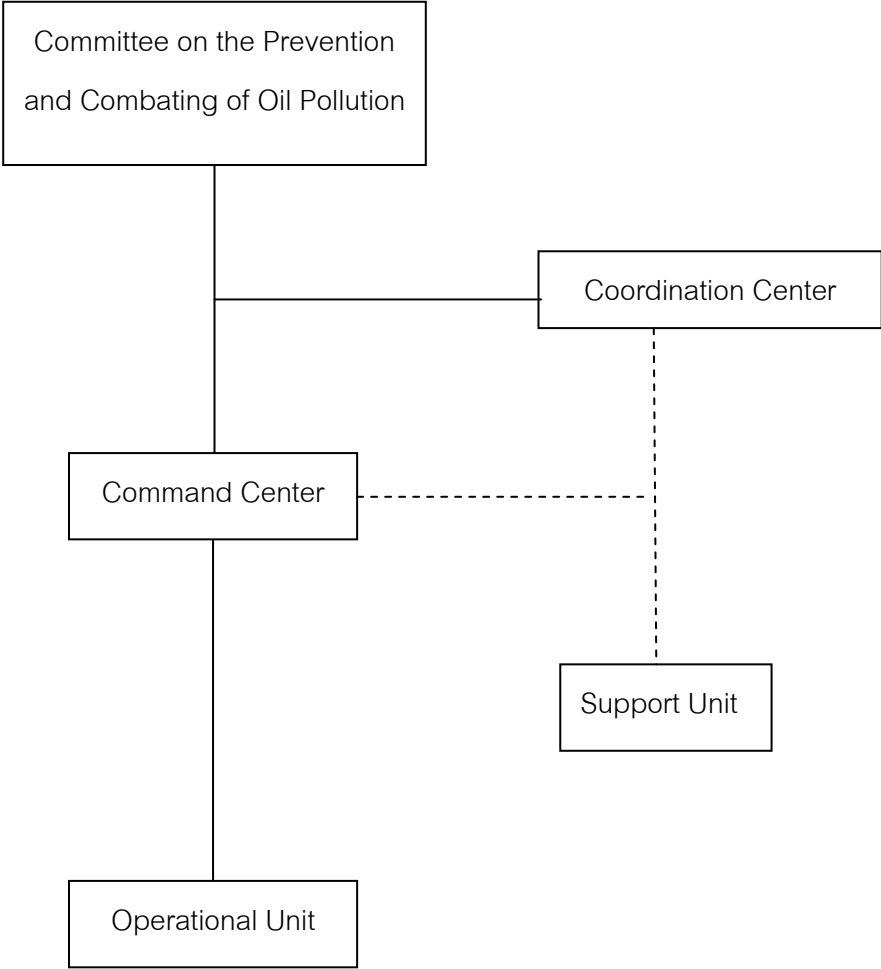
In addition, this is pursuant to requirements of the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation, 1990 or OPRC.

2. Scope

The plan deals with oil spills occurred in inland waters, port limits, coastal areas and at sea, both in the territorial sea and the exclusive economic zone. Scope of responsibilities is demonstrated in Appendix 1.

3. Response Organization

3.1 Organization Chart



Note “———” means order line
“-----” means coordination line

3.2 Duties and Responsibilities

3.2.1 The Committee

The Committee shall be responsible for supervising, monitoring and evaluating the oil spill response including disseminating information to public and media, and submitting the report to the Cabinet.

3.2.2 The Coordination Center

3.2.2.1 The Marine Department shall assume the role of the Coordination Center, with the Director-General as Director of the Center.

3.2.2.2 The Coordination Center shall have the following responsibilities:

- Notification of the concerned agencies for the purpose of establishing the Command Center and terminating the response operation when completed;
- Reporting of the operation to the Committee;
- Dissemination of pertinent information to media;
- Coordination of activities with concerned agencies;
- Gathering evidence for legal action against polluters for a compensation claim of clean up cost

3.2.2.3 Components and responsibilities of the Coordination Center are as described in the Appendix 2.

3.2.3 The Command Center

3.2.3.1 The Command Center shall be operated by the Marine Department or the Royal Thai Navy. The Command Center comprises representatives from the Operation Unit and Support Unit as deemed necessary by the Director of the Center. The Director shall coordinate the commands issued to the Operation Unit at the site of incident.

If the spill occurs in rivers, estuaries, lakes and port limits as designated in the Ministerial Regulations, as details described in the Appendix 3, representatives from the Marine Department shall act as the Director of the Center. If the incident occurs at sea outside the port limits, representatives from the Royal Thai Navy shall act as the Director of the Center.

3.2.3.2 The Command Center shall have the following responsibilities:

- development of action plan and determination of response strategy;
- direction, coordination and issue of command to achieve efficient oil spill response operation and minimal environmental damage;
- reporting of the progress of the operation to the Coordination Center periodically;
- coordination with the Coordination Center for additional response resources.

3.2.3.3 Components and responsibilities of the Command Center are as described in Appendix 4.

3.2.4 The Operation Unit

The Operation Unit shall consist of representatives from the Marine Department, the Royal Thai Navy, the Provincial Administration, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration and Oil Industry Environmental Safety Group Association.

The Operation Unit shall conduct the oil spill response operation as assigned by the Command Center and shall continuously report the progress of the operation and difficulties encountered to the Command Center.

3.2.5 The Support Unit

The Support Unit shall consist of the Air Force, the Army, the Marine Police, Department of Aviation, Meteorological Department, Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning, Pollution Control Department, Fisheries Department, Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Customs Department, Department of Treaties and Legal Affairs, the Comptroller-General's Department, Office of Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Transport, Bureau of Royal Rain-Making and Agricultural Aviation, Natural Park, Wildlife and Plant Conservation Department, Immigration Bureau, Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (General Secretariat of Civilian Disaster Prevention), Department of Mineral Fuels, Department of Industrial Works, Port Authority of Thailand, the CAT Telecom Public Company Limited, Tourism Authority of Thailand and other private sectors concerned.

The Support Unit shall provide support on technical advice, equipment and facility, vehicles, manpower and others as deemed necessary for oil spill response upon a request.

4. Response Operation

4.1 General

Oil spill may have a serious impact on the environment and natural resource. The extent of damages depends on the size of the spill, the type of oil and the prevailing conditions of the area. Prompt surveillance and verification are necessary in order to assess a threat before deciding on appropriate response action. All related information has to be acquired and taken into account, such as type of oil, the size of the spill, the direction and velocity of wind and current, weather conditions and area at risks that are of particular economic and environmental significance.

There are various options of oil spill response actions, of which the most appropriate one should be adopted on a circumstance basis. As spill response performance correlates with the threat and damage sensitiveness of areas affected by oil pollution, any option selected shall aim at minimizing overall environmental damage, especially those that may potentially cause negative impact to natural resources, including quality of life and livelihood of fishery or aquaculture dependent people.

In general, one or a combination of the following response options may be adopted.

4.1.1 Termination and prevention of outflow of oil from the source;

4.1.2 Containment and recovery of oil, as fast as possible, at the incident site to mitigate the spreading of spill that may pose difficulty to containment and recovery actions;

4.1.3 Protection of area of particular economic and environmental significance, by use of booms;

4.1.4 Application of chemical dispersant to break up the oil into small droplets to make them degraded more rapidly by natural processes. This option should be used when boom containment is ineffective or untimely or when a fast response of dispersant will provide

more overall benefit to the environment. Dispersant use shall follow the conditions designated in Appendix 5.

4.1.5 Shoreline clean-up, mechanically or manually or by other appropriate means, if the spill results in contamination of the shorelines;

4.1.6 Monitoring the oil slick movement to ensure that oil slick does not move shoreward or reach the coast or no important resources are threatened, and, as the consequent, the oil is being degraded naturally at sea.

In making decision on which response option shall be adopted, all relevant information shall be gathered and considered, such as type of oil, size of spill, direction and velocity of current, wind and weather, areas of particular economic and environmental significance, to ensure the most effective response to minimize damage by oil pollution. A person who is eligible for consideration and selection of response action shall have a solid knowledge and receive intensive trainings on oil spill response.

4.2 Tiered Response Capability

Coordination of spill response may be categorized according to the spill size as followings.

First Tier small spill not exceeding 20 tons which may occur from oil transfer activities at ports. Responsibility for clean-up lies with the agency that causes the spill and /or agency involved. The Marine Department must be notified of the incident at the first opportunity.

Second Tier medium spill with a size range of 20 -1,000 tons, which may result from accidents such as vessels' collision. Clean-up requires cooperation from various national agencies, both government and private. The operation shall be conducted in accordance with the National Oil Spill Response Plan. If the clean-up is beyond capability of existing resources, international assistance may be requested.

Third Tier major spill exceeding 1,000 tons which may be caused by a severe accident. International assistance is needed for spill response in this level.

4.3 Response Procedures

4.3.1 Alerting System

Once the oil spill incident is sighted, a witness shall report to the agencies concerned, as listed in Appendix 7.

4.3.2 Upon receiving the report of an oil spill, the receiving agency shall

4.3.2.1 make inquiries for further details as outlined in Appendix 6.

4.3.2.2 notify the Marine Department to determine whether the Coordination Center shall be established.

4.3.3 Action to be taken upon the incident report

4.3.3.1 The Coordination Center shall verify the information and notify concerned agencies of the incident

4.3.3.2 The Operation Unit shall evaluate all information available to determine whether response action is required. If oil spill response is deemed necessary, the operation in accordance with the National Oil Spill Response Plan shall begin without delay.

4.3.3.3 The Marine Department or the Royal Thai Navy, depending on the designated responsibilities, shall establish the Command Center by convening a meeting of all parties concerned to formulate action plan and response strategy to be employed, to coordinate the commands and to report the progress to the Coordination Center.

4.3.4 Action to be taken by the Coordination Center

4.3.4.1 reporting to the Committee

4.3.4.2 promoting public relations

4.3.4.3 notifying ships and people who may be affected

4.3.4.4 coordinating support for the Operation Unit

4.3.4.5 compiling information in relation to the operation

4.3.5 Action to be taken by the Command Center

4.3.5.1 directing, supervising and coordinating the response, as appropriate

4.3.5.2 reporting the progress of the operation to the Coordination Center periodically

4.3.5.3 coordinating the activities of the concerned agencies

4.3.5.4 evaluating the operation continuously and recommending the Coordination Center for additional support

4.3.6 Action to be taken by the Operation Unit

4.3.6.1 conducting the oil spill clean-up as assigned

4.3.6.2 reporting the operation result to the Command Center

4.3.7 Action to be taken by the Support Unit

The Support Unit shall supply personnel, expert, equipment, vehicles, provisions and others deemed necessary, upon a request by the Command Center or the Coordination Center.

4.3.8 Collection and Disposal of Oily Debris

The Command Center shall coordinate with Provincial administration for collection of oily debris, and coordinate with the Department of Industrial Works for its disposal.

4.3.9 Termination of Oil Spill Clean-up

The Command Center, after evaluating the situation and deciding that the desired level of clean-up has been achieved, shall inform the Coordination Center for approval of the termination of operation.

4.3.10 Evaluation

The Coordination Center shall submit to the Committee the summary and the evaluation of the operation including recommendations on necessary revisions to improve the effectiveness of the plan.

5. Designation of Responsibilities of the Operation Unit and the Support Unit

5.1 The Operation Unit

5.1.1 The Marine Department shall be responsible for surveillance, verification of the oil spill report, the clean-up in rivers, estuaries, lakes and port limits, and shall take part in the clean-up at sea by preparing and making the following arrangements

5.1.1.1 Establishment of the Command Center

5.1.1.2 Command boats

5.1.1.3 Patrol boats

- 5.1.1.4 Pollution combating vessels
- 5.1.1.5 Tug boats
- 5.1.1.6 Oil spill response equipment
- 5.1.1.7 Oceanographic data and weather forecast
- 5.1.1.8 Others

5.1.2 The Royal Thai Navy shall be responsible for surveillance and verification of the oil spill reports, the clean-up at sea, and shall take part in the clean-up in rivers, estuaries, lakes and port limits by making the following arrangements.

- 5.1.2.1 Establishment of the Command Center
- 5.1.2.2 Command boats
- 5.1.2.3 Patrol boats
- 5.1.2.4 Pollution combating vessels
- 5.1.2.5 Tug boats
- 5.1.2.6 Air planes and helicopters
- 5.1.2.7 Oil spill response equipment
- 5.1.2.8 Oceanographic data and weather forecast
- 5.1.2.9 Others

5.1.3 Provincial Administration shall be responsible for the temporary establishment of the Command Center for prevention and clean-up of shorelines in accordance with the local civilian disaster prevention plan and coordinate the activities with the Command Center of the Royal Thai Navy or the Marine Department. The Provincial Administration shall also develop a plan for environmental restoration and a claim for compensation of environmental damage of affected areas. Such plan is to be proposed to the Marine Department for further action.

5.1.4 Oil Industry Environmental Safety Group Association (IESG) shall provide support in term of information for the verification of the oil spill, participate in the oil spill response with government agencies, assist in the coordination for equipment support from abroad, and provide technical support.

5.2 *The Support Unit*

5.2.1 The Air Force shall be responsible for the monitor of the oil movement, the verification of the oil spill reports, the clean-up operation, as well as provide transport of material, device, and oil spill response equipment, at its ability extent, when coordinated through the Air Force Operation Center.

5.2.2 The Army shall provide manpower and equipment support, participate in the shoreline clean-up, provide aircrafts for surveillance and verification of information when a request is made through the Arm Operation Center.

5.2.3 Department of Aviation shall be responsible for the search and rescue of aircrafts and vessels in distress, the report receipt and transmission to the Coordination Center of oil spills sighted by aircrafts, and the announcement of the Aerial Operation Zone. It shall also provide facilitation to aircrafts that carry equipment from abroad.

5.2.4 The Marine Police shall be responsible for the receipt and the verification of oil spill reports as well as the control of maritime traffic at the scene of incident.

5.2.5 The Meteorological Department shall provide information on weather conditions and forecast continuously.

5.2.6 Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (General Secretariat of Civilian Disaster Prevention) shall be responsible for coordination for equipment support, shoreline clean-up, as well as provide vehicles for mobilization of manpower and oily debris.

5.2.7 The Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning shall provide information on marine resources and the use of the coastal areas, appraise environmental damage of natural resources as well as develop and implement the environmental restoration plan.

5.2.8 The Pollution Control Department shall provide information on oil slick movement predicted by a mathematical model and coastal resources affected by marine pollution for the verification of the oil spill source, supervise and regulate the use of chemical dispersant and develop the environmental restoration plan as well as provide information in support of legal action against a polluter.

5.2.9 Fisheries Department shall provide technical support, equipment, vehicles, manpower, and others necessary for the oil spill clean-up.

5.2.10 Department of Marine and Coastal Resources shall provide technical support, equipment, vehicles, manpower, and others necessary for the oil spill clean-up.

5.2.11 The Bureau of Royal Rain Making and Agricultural Aviation shall provide aircrafts for spraying dispersant upon a request.

5.2.12 The Customs Department shall coordinate and develop measures or special procedure or orders to facilitate the temporary importation of oil spill clean-up equipment from abroad.

5.2.13 The Office of Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Transport shall coordinate with agencies concerned and report the operation result to superiors in the Ministry.

5.2.14 The Department of Treaties and Legal Affairs shall provide advice on international laws and/or international agreements and other relevant matters in case an offender is a foreign vessel.

5.2.15 The Immigration Bureau shall facilitate the entry of foreign experts or personnel who will assist in the combating of oil spill.

5.2.16 The Port Authority of Thailand shall be responsible for the oil spill report receipt, surveillance support, verification of oil spills, ship salvage and oil spill clean-up in the responsibility zone of Bangkok Port, Laem Chabang Port and their vicinities. Request for assistance shall be made through the Communications Center of the Port.

5.2.17 CAT Telecom Public Company Limited shall facilitate the use of radio stations that have communications links with sea-going vessels for the receipt of oil spill reports and shall provide communications equipment and range, upon a request.

5.2.18 The Comptroller-General's Department shall facilitate the disbursement of the advance funds and the central budget funds for oil spill response.

5.2.19 Department of Mineral Fuels shall provide a technical information in relation to the oil drilling units and spilled oil, and take part in the development of the environmental restoration plan.

5.2.20 Department of Industrial Works shall coordinate and carry out the disposal of oily debris upon a request from the Command Center.

5.2.21 The Tourism Authority of Thailand shall provide information on tourist attractions in the incident area and take part in the development of the environmental restoration plan.

5.2.22 Natural Park, Wildlife and Plant Conservation Department shall provide information on forestry and wildlife resources and take part in the development of the restoration plan.

6. Coordination

6.1 Cooperation among agencies of both government and private sectors shall be made through coordination. Each agency shall then issue instructions to its own units.

6.2 To achieve efficient operation and to prevent mishaps in cases of joint operations between ship and ship and/or ship and aircraft of various agencies, the Director of Operation Center shall assign as a Command Post a ship with personnel, organizational, and strategic readiness. Other ships and aircrafts shall be under the command of this Command Post.

6.3 This plan shall be effective upon the approval of the Committee. The Committee shall distribute the plan to agencies concerned. Each agency concerned shall then develop its own action plan and coordination plan.

7. Communications

7.1 Communications among the Coordination Center, the Command Center, and support unit shall be made by telephone and fax. The telephone and fax numbers of concerned agencies appear in Appendix 7.

7.2 Communications Network at Sea

Communications among the Command Center, command ships, oil combating vessels and aerial surveillance unit shall be made through channel 15 of VHF Marine Band radio by using a frequency of 156.750 MHz. as a major network and 156.875 MHz. as a minor network. Coordination among oil combating vessels shall be made through any frequency as deemed appropriate. A figure of Communications Network at sea is illustrated in Appendix 8.

7.3 Communications Network on Shores

Communications between the Command Center and Operation Unit on shores shall be made through telephone and VHF and UHF radio system by using local communications network as a major network, as illustrated in the Figure of Communications Network on Shore in Appendix 9. If the use of local communications network is not possible, any appropriate radio frequency may be used.

8 Reporting, Public and Media Relations

8.1 Objectives

To ensure the continuous systematic and accurate report of the clean-up operation for effective public and media relations

8.2 Principle

Reports on the situation and the result of the operation shall be accurate and timely disseminated to the public through various media, from the same information source.

8.3 Procedures

In addition to the oral communications during the operation,

8.3.1 There shall be a report on the progress of the situation through the line of coordination periodically, as deemed appropriate. The Command Center shall submit the written summary to the Coordination Center.

8.3.2 The Coordination Center shall issue timely, continuous and formal situation reports and the facts available at that moment to the media. Such reports shall be approved by the Director of the Coordination Center prior to dissemination.

8.3.3 The media shall, from time to time, be informed of the updated situation, as deemed appropriate, by the Director of the Coordination Center or the Director of the Command Center or personnel assigned from both centers.

8.3.4 In case that people in the incident area are directly affected by the oil spill, the Coordination Center shall, as soon as possible, set up the Public Relations Unit as the center for information and assistance, as deemed appropriate.

8.3.5 After the operation is concluded, the Coordination Center shall submit the final report to the Committee and government agencies concerned.

9. Clean-up Cost

The Operation Unit and the Support Unit shall provide the provisional financing of the clean-up cost. After the tasks are completed, all relevant documentation of clean-up cost shall be submitted to the Marine Department for disbursement in accordance with the laws and regulations of the Ministry of Finance.

10. Legal Proceedings

10.1 The Marine Department shall collect evidence for legal actions against the polluter for compensation of clean-up cost.

10.2 The Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning and the Pollution Control Department shall provide technical advice and recommendations that may be beneficial to agencies responsible for natural resources protection and conservation, as stated in the laws, or government agencies that have provided the provisional financing of the clean-up to be used for the compensation claim on environmental damage and restoration cost against the polluter.

11. Request for International Assistance

11.1 If the magnitude of the oil spill is beyond capability of the national agency to combat, the Coordination Center shall request for the international assistance in accordance with the international agreements or cooperation that Thailand has endorsed. The polluter must be responsible for the incurred expenses and provide a financing guarantee to the Coordination Center.

11.2 In case the polluter is a member of an oil spill response company in foreign countries. The Coordination Center shall coordinate with the polluter to request assistance from such oil spill response company for the clean-up operation.

11.3 In case the polluter is not a member of the foreign oil spill response company, the Coordination Center shall request assistance from the oil spill response company in foreign

countries. The polluter must provide a financing guarantee for the clean-up cost of such company to the Coordination Center.

A list of agencies and overseas oil spill response companies are given in the Appendix 10.

12. Oily Debris Disposal

The Department of Industrial Works shall coordinate with the Command Center for the disposal of the oily debris to prevent and resolve an oil contamination problem after the completion of operation.

13. Restoration of Affected Areas

13.1 To solve the oil spill problem by preventing an environmental impact or deterioration of environment, the Committee shall establish the Sub-Committee on Environmental Restoration and Appraisal of Environmental Damage by Oil Pollution, which consists of representatives from the following agencies:- provincial administration, Marine Department, the Royal Thai Navy, the Pollution Control Department, the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning, Natural Park, Wildlife and Plant Conservation Department, Fisheries Department, Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Department of Mineral Fuels, The Tourism Authority of Thailand and others, as deemed necessary, to develop an action plan on restoration of the environment and claim recovery of the incurred cost from environmental damage of the affected area by oil pollution.

13.2 The polluter shall be responsible for the cost incurred from the restoration of the environment in the affected area by oil pollution.

Ministry of Transport
Chairman of the Committee on the Prevention
and Combating of Oil Pollution

