



The Norfolk, Suffolk and The Wash Environment Group Marine Pollution Contingency Plan.

Gibraltar Point, Lincolnshire to Shingle St, Hollesley Bay, Suffolk .

Version 2.1 30 May 2014



Preface

The concept of an Environment Group providing public health and environmental advice to all response units with a role in responding to a significant maritime pollution incident was recommended by Lord Donaldson in his 'Review of Salvage and Intervention and their Command and Control'. This recommendation was accepted by Government and incorporated in the National Contingency Plan for Marine Pollution from Shipping and Offshore Installations (NCP) January 2000 (Section 9 and Appendix L). [Reference Maritime and Coastguard STOp Notice 1/2001]

This document has been prepared in accordance with the NCP and the supplementary guidance provided in STOp Notice 1/2001. It is hoped to be available on the Norfolk County Council (NCC) Emergency Response Plan CD where it will sit along with other documents it is to be used in conjunction with. This version will not contain the contact directory. Versions held by officers of the group and appropriate offices will have the full version.

The plan details the scope and remit of The Norfolk, Suffolk and The Wash Environment Group (NSWEG). The roles and responsibilities of those concerned, how the group liases with other working parties involved in an incident and the group initiation process.

The area of coastline covered by the group is that between and including Gibraltar Point, the northern edge of The Wash, around to Shingle St, Hollesley Bay, Suffolk. The Humber Environment Group sits to the north of the group's remit with the Greater Thames Estuary Standing Environment Group to the South.

This document is designed for use in conjunction with existing contingency plans. In particular the NCC Oil Spill Response Plan – Beachmaster Plans.

Acronyms

CEFAS	Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science
COSHH	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
CPSO	County Pollution & Salvage Officer
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
EA	Environment Agency
EHO	Environmental Health Officer
EG	Environment Group
ELO	Environmental Liaison Officer
NE	Natural England
EIFCA	Eastern Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority
FSA	Food Standards Agency
HPA	Health Protection Agency
MCA	Maritime and Coastguard Agency
MEB	Marine Environment Branch
MRC	Marine Response Centre
NCC	Norfolk County Council
NCL	National Contingency Plan
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NHS	National Health Service
NSWEG	The Norfolk, Suffolk & The Wash Environment Group
POLREP	Pollution Incident Report
RSPCA	Royal Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Animals
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SCAT	Shoreline Clean-Up Assessment Teams
SCU	Salvage Control Unit
SFI	Sea Fisheries Inspectorate
SOSREP	Secretary of State's Representative
SRC	Shoreline Response Centre
SITREPS	Situation Reports
UTC	Universal Time Constant

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1. Introduction

The response to any maritime incident in the UK requiring a national or regional response involves the establishment of an Environment Group. The group formation is one of the recommendations contained in the report of Lord Donaldson's Review of Salvage and Intervention and their Command and Control (The Stationery Office published report, Command & Control [Cm. 4193], in March 1999.)

Reference: National Contingency Plan for Marine Pollution from Shipping and Offshore Installations – Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

This plan has been prepared for officers of:

- Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
- Environment Agency (EA)
- Natural England (NE)
- Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA)
- National Health Service Executive – Health Protection Agency
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
- Local Wildlife Trust
- Other interested parties.

The purpose of the plan is to assist officers from these organisations in responding to incidents involving oil spills in The Wash and along Norfolk and North Suffolk marine waters. Specifically the actions required of staff from these organisations, should an oil spill occur in the context of Environment Group issues.

The aim of this plan is to provide operational guidance on how to address the environmental aspects of the response to a maritime incident. It describes the proposed composition of The Norfolk, Suffolk & The Wash Environment Group, the procedures for establishing such a group and the key tasks that the group would carry out during and after an incident.

The plan also explains the individual responsibilities of local and national government departments and agencies as well as the various private groups and organisations likely to be involved.

The plan (including roles and responsibilities) is modelled on guidance compiled from the MCA National Contingency Plan (NCP), the MCA Scientific, Technical and Operational Advice Note – STOp 1/2001, entitled Maritime Pollution Response in the UK -The Environment Group (www.mcga.gov.uk).

1.1 The Environment Group (EG)

The purpose of The Norfolk, Suffolk & Wash Environment Group is derived from the Terms of Reference detailed in the NCP, paragraphs L.3 – 5 namely:

- To provide environmental and public health advice and guidance to all management response units involved in response to an oil and or chemical marine pollution incident and subsequent clean up operations.
- To advise response units so as to minimise the impact of the incident on the environment in the widest sense, taking account of risks to the natural environment and public health and potential impacts arising from any response operations, whether salvage or clean up operations, at sea and on the shoreline.
- To monitor, assess and document the environmental (including wildlife) and public health impact of a maritime pollution incident with respect to oil and/or chemicals and the impact of all measures implemented in response to the incident.
- To facilitate welfare, rehabilitation or humane disposal of wildlife casualties by recognised animal welfare organisations.

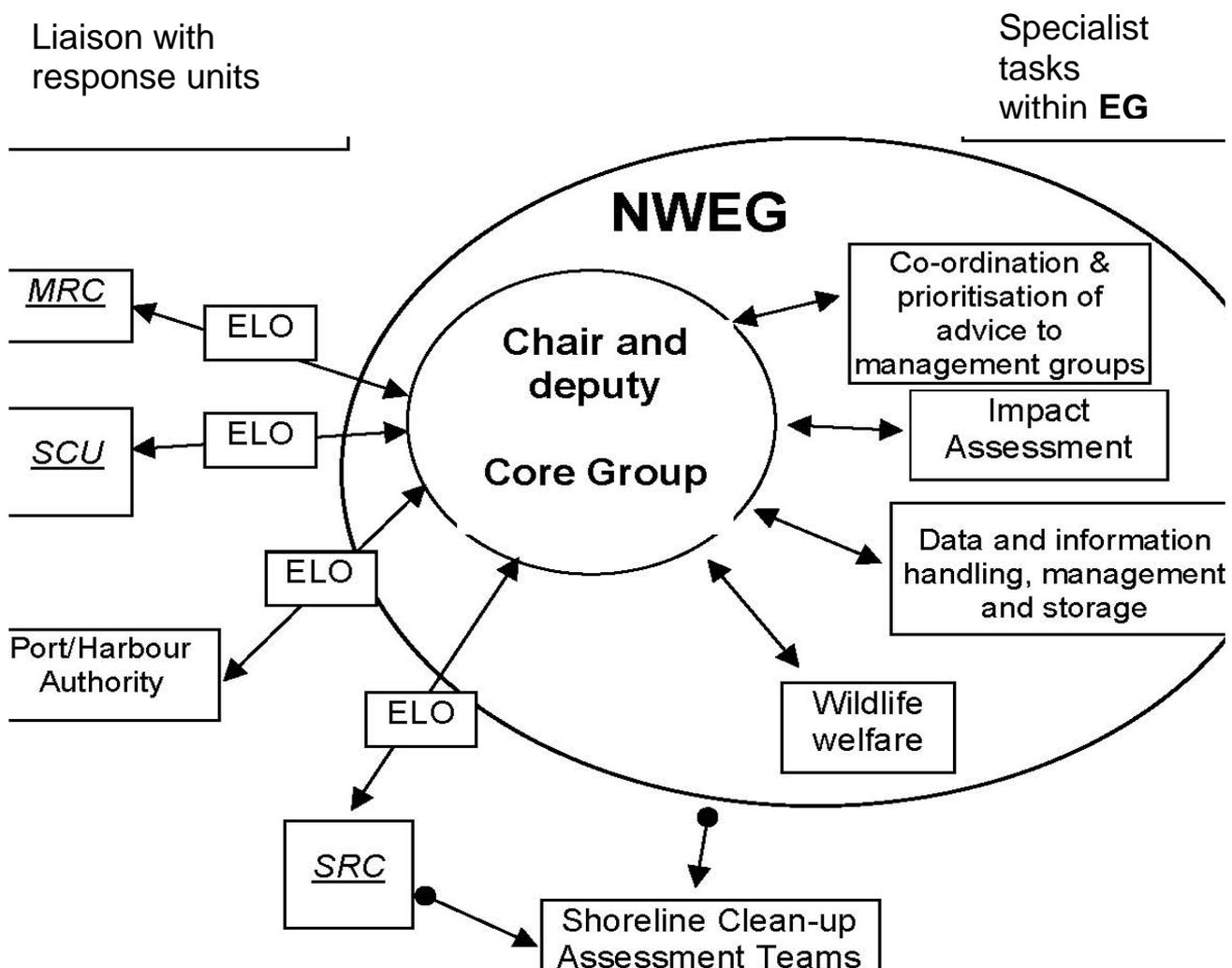


Figure 1: EG Composition and links to the incident management units (See Acronyms for full titles)

2. Scope of the Plan

As party to the UN Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the UK has an obligation to protect and preserve the marine environment. The Norfolk, Suffolk & Wash Environment Group (NSWEG) plan is intended to compliment the MCA's NCP and STOp Notice 1/2001 (The Environment Group), which are the measures that the UK has taken to meet this obligation. This plan compliments the two adjoining plans to the north and south of the group.

The plan details the role of NSWEG in the event of an incident, responding to actual or threatened oil pollution incidents within The Wash, Norfolk and North Suffolk marine waters (extending out into the North Sea UK national boundary). This stretch of coastline covers all incidents in, or likely to affect, areas from Gibraltar Point in Lincolnshire following the coastline into The Wash, around Norfolk and North East Suffolk finally ending at Shingle St, Hollesley Bay.

The definition of marine and coastal environment within the group's context includes the natural environment, water quality, wildlife including fish, cultural, landscape, habitats, public health and socio-economic factors linked to human health, e.g. through food chains.

The scope of NSWEG functions will be directly proportional to the scale and nature of the incident, its geographical location, extent, severity, pollutant involved, potential hazards to environmental sensitivities and human health. The functions of the Environment Group will need to develop with the changing requirements, escalating or diminishing, of the incident.

The objectives of The Norfolk, Suffolk & Wash Environment Groups functions include:

- provision of environmental and public health advice to the Secretary of State's Representative (SOSREP), the Salvage Control Unit (SCU), the Marine Response Centre (MRC), the Shoreline Response Centre (SRC) and the Command and Control Centre for incident response in ports and harbours. An experienced liaison officer will normally do this.
- liaison with and obtaining any relevant information the Environment Group requires to fulfil its functions from all response units established to deal with the pollution.
- proactive management of information on all environmental and health issues between the response units.
- seeking to minimise the impact of an oil and or chemical pollution incident on the environment, by determining environmental options for management groups that are likely to be affective and appropriate.
- the prompt planning, implementation and management of data gathering to enable an integrated evaluation of acute and chronic environmental and health impacts of the pollution incident across the widest appropriate range of issues.
- ensuring that proper consideration is given to all the health and safety requirements for personnel working for The Norfolk, Suffolk & Wash Environment Group
- seeking to minimise the impact of an oil and or chemical pollution incident on human health.

3. Environment Group Composition

A compact group of partners make up the core composition of an EG.

Core Members:

- Environment Agency (EA) – deputy chair.
- Natural England (NE) – current chairperson.
- Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA)
- Health Protection Agency (HPA)
- Food Standards Agency (FSA)
- Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCA)

In addition, the group may draw members from National Park Authorities with coastlines e.g. Broads Authority, Health & Safety Executive or National Focus. Key members will include:

- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)
- Wildlife Trusts
- British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMLR)

Depending on how the incident develops, the representatives may recommend that further environmental organisations become involved. Representatives from local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) may also have relevant expertise to offer the Environment Group.

1a Map showing SEG boundaries from Gibraltar Point to Shingle Street.



4. Environment Group Remit

The Norfolk, Suffolk & Wash Environment Group (NSWEG) has a vital role in the response to any maritime incident, particularly where there might be a threat of sea or air pollution involving oil and/or hazardous substances. The purpose of advice from the group is to minimise the impact of the incident on the environment in the widest sense and provide advice to management groups.

The Environment Group helps to steer the overall incident response to minimise environmental harm and to ensure that response units consider all appropriate measures for environmental evaluation and act upon them. For these purposes, the “environment” includes water quality, ecology, waste disposal, wildlife and human health interests.

The main function of the group is to provide advice and guidance to the Secretary of State’s Representative (SOSREP), the Salvage Control Unit (SCU), the Marine Response Centre (MRC), the Shoreline Response Centre (SRC) and the command and control centre for response in a harbour (when established) on all environmental aspects of a pollution incident. This includes the assessment of environmental risks and potential impacts arising from an incident, as well as the implications of any clean up or salvage operations.

4.1 Key Tasks of the Norfolk, Suffolk & The Wash Environment Group

NB: The following tasks are not in order of priority or exhaustive and not all may be necessary in individual incidents. Tasks and priorities will be incident specific.

Provision of operational advice

- Assess environmental priorities at risk from pollutant and from clean-up activity.
- Establish NSWEG environmental priorities for resource protection and pollution clean-up.
- Provide an Environment Group view on dispersant and chemical treatment product usage.
- Provide advice and guidance on environmental sensitivities, risks and preferred options. Also comment on environmental and health implications of proposed salvage and clean-up response strategies with respect to achieving a net environmental benefit.
- Ensure thorough and timely documentation of all advice provided to the response units. Where a response unit does not follow such advice, the reasons for not doing so should be recorded. Copies of all records of advice provided and feedback from response units should be circulated within The Norfolk, Suffolk & Wash Environment Group.

- Facilitate effective communication on environmental matters between the response units and NSWEG via appointed Environmental Liaison Officers.
- Ensure that appropriate co-ordinated and timely arrangements for incident specific assessment of the effects on the environment and public health are initiated and subsequently managed.
- Monitor and keep under review environmental and public health implications of ongoing salvage and at-sea clean up operations by liaising with environment groups.

Contribution to the SRC/SCU/MRC

- Ensure representation in the above Management Teams via the appointed Environmental Liaison Officer.
- Monitor on-shore clean up operations, particularly in sensitive areas to ensure that clean-up operations match the strategy agreed in the SRC/SCU/MRC.
- Advise, contribute to and provide members for the SRC-controlled multi-disciplinary Shoreline Clean-Up Assessment Teams (SCAT), as required.
- Provide scientific reports of detail from coastline assessments into the SRC.

Health and Safety

- Ensure the full implementation of health and safety measures for personnel working in the field on behalf of NSWEG (for example, through risk assessments, COSHH, Personal Protective Equipment, and health tracking).

Provision of health advice

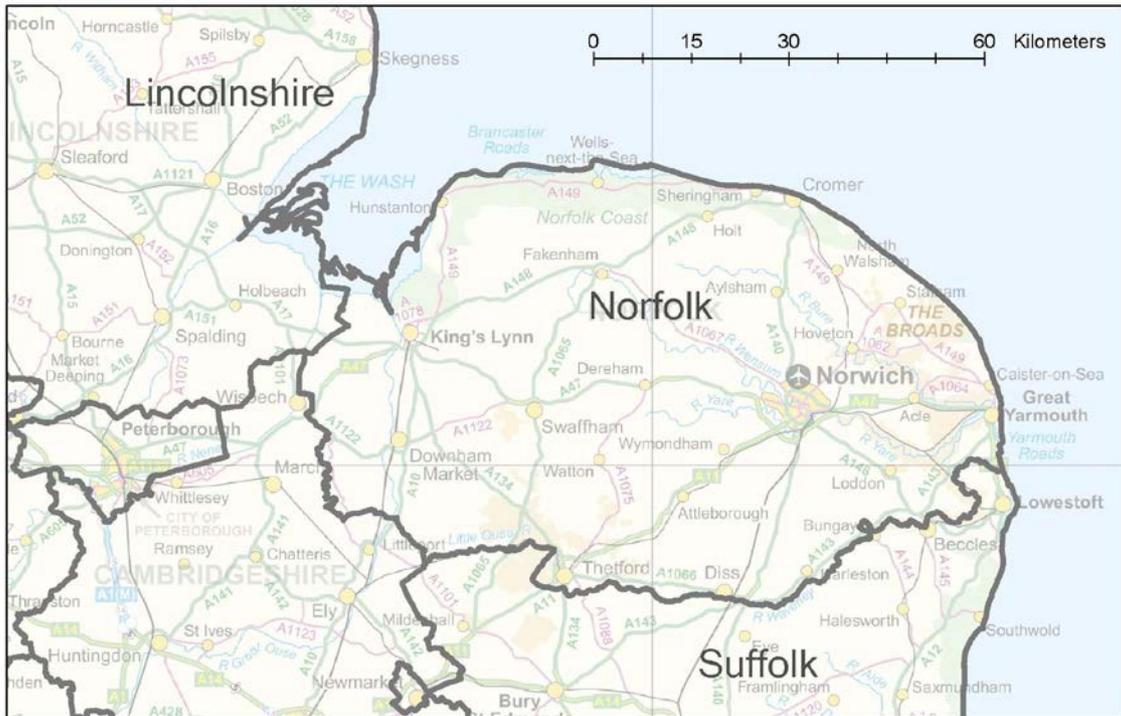
- Aim to provide health advice on potential and real impact on public health with respect to oil and chemicals.
- Advise on requirements for the monitoring of threat(s) to public health.

4.2 Requirements of The Norfolk, Suffolk & Wash Environment Group in order to fulfil functions

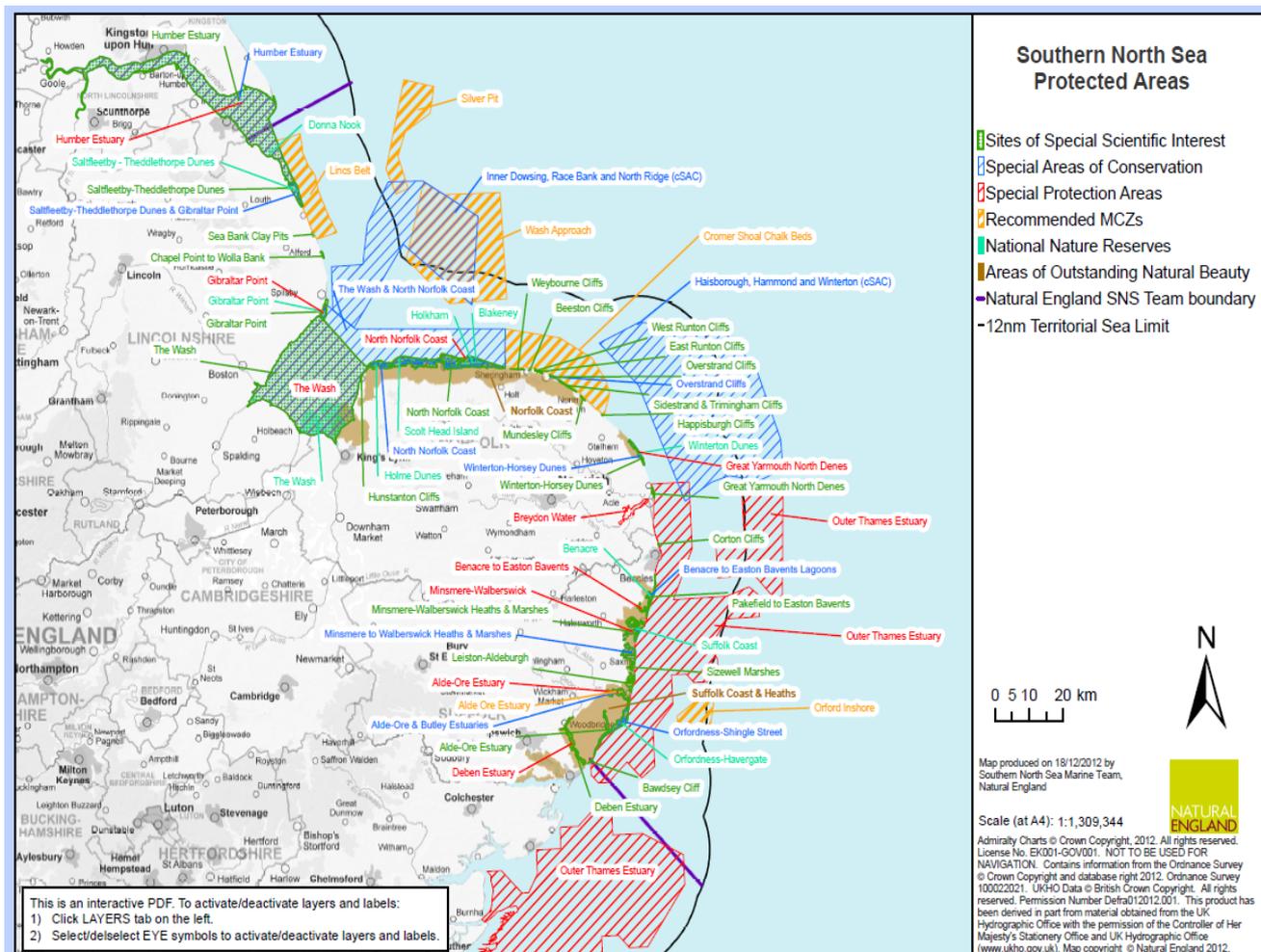
- A wide range of expertise in the impact of oil and chemicals on public health, marine and coastal ecology, wildlife, water quality, fisheries and animal welfare.
- Sufficient experienced personnel with appropriate local knowledge to carry out the many and varied key and essential tasks. A major incident will require a significant number of personnel, potentially 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The number of people and level of expertise required must not be underestimated.
- Comprehensive information and data: pre-incident health and environmental baseline data and all incident related data.
- A prepared organisational framework, including places equipped to host the Environment Group (See Section 10).

4.3 Environment Group Jurisdiction

The area covered by the group is detailed in the following Maps 1a and 1b. In addition to the area shown the group covers all UK territorial waters along the coastline detailed. Map 2 shows an overall view of the locations of designated sites within the groups area.



Map 1b: Map showing county boundaries within the NWEA area.



This is an interactive PDF. To activate/deactivate layers and labels:
 1) Click LAYERS tab on the left.
 2) Select/deselect EYE symbols to activate/deactivate layers and labels.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The remit of The Norfolk, Suffolk & Wash Environment Group is purely advisory. The Group has no statutory powers of direction. The nature and chair of the Group will depend upon the scale and type of the incident. The Group is a common facility providing comprehensive environmental advice to all response units.

Regulatory functions of individual members of NSWEG are exercised out with the group structure and function.

Any response unit established to deal with a maritime incident, including an incident within a harbour area, must contain a representative of the Environment Group: The Environment Liaison Officer (ELO).

Response units should make all reasonable efforts to consult the Environment Group, or its Chairperson, about any proposed action that is likely to have lasting impact on the environment. If time does not permit the response unit to consult before acting, it must circulate a full written report to the Environment Group and all other response units as soon as possible after the event. This report must detail the actions taken, the reasons for them and their anticipated outcome.

The Environment Group should record its advice in writing and circulate it to the response units as soon as possible. Where a response unit does not follow such advice it should record the reasons for not doing so promptly.

5.1 Key Norfolk, Suffolk & The Wash Environment Group personnel and their roles in general

Each of the key roles should be filled by the individuals most suited to the job and purpose, independent of their parent organisation or position within that organisation. Each should have one or more clearly identified deputies. Normally they will have scientific skills and experience in this area.

Staff involved in the Environment Group should have been trained in marine oil and chemical spill issues.

It should be noted that the following organisational roles detailed overleaf will form part of a holistic EG response i.e. pooling views and organisational policies.

5.1.1 DEFRA & their Key Partner Organisations (www.defra.gov.uk)

DEFRA is responsible for Government policy on environmental protection issues. DEFRA plays a major role in protecting the marine environment and fisheries interests when responding to marine pollution incidents in England and Wales.

DEFRA test and approve any oil treatment products manufactured for use in UK waters on behalf of all UK fisheries departments.

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) coordinate DEFRA's response to oil and chemical spills at sea in tidal waters. It has a specific role to approve oil dispersant use. It examines oil spill contingency plans produced by ports, harbours and the offshore oil/gas industry to ensure they are satisfactory in this regard.

The decision to approve the use of oil dispersants at sea in waters less than 20 metres deep, or within one mile of such depths, rests with MMO. Proposals to use dispersants will be discussed urgently with Natural England or, if offshore, with JNCC. The aim is to ensure that approval to use dispersants, where this is appropriate, is granted within one hour of such a request being received. This is to ensure that the oil has minimal opportunity to weather before dispersants are applied, whilst still ensuring that dispersants are not used where dispersing oil into the water column will result in greater environmental damage than leaving it on the surface.

A list of MMO approved oil dispersant products is available at http://www.marinemanagement.org.uk/protecting/pollution/documents/approval_approved_products.pdf

The aim of the **Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (AIFCA)** is to assist and promote the regional IFCAs to ensure that the authorities develop a leading and effective national role in fisheries and conservation management.

Eastern IFCA (EIFCA) is one of 10 IFCAs protecting the marine inshore environment around the coasts of England. The EIFCA district stretches from Haile Sand Fort in the north to Felixstowe in the south and includes Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk out to six nautical miles. Officers have knowledge of local fisheries backed up by sea-going experience. EIFCA Officers work throughout the district on land and sea in a variety of activities including managing fisheries, enforcing fisheries legislation, meeting with fishermen and anglers, conducting survey work and stock assessments, responding to external consultations on planned marine development work and attending meetings on marine spatial planning and marine conservation zones.

<http://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/>

The Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) is a DEFRA Agency internationally recognised as a centre of fisheries expertise. They operate an emergency response team to offer scientific advice on oil and chemical spills relating to fisheries and protection of the marine environment, including advice on whether or not dispersant use is appropriate. CEFAS conduct toxicity tests on oil dispersants and they may carry out work for the Food Standards Agency such as analysis of shellfish for contaminants and advice on the extent and duration of fishing prohibitions, introduced to protect consumers/human health.

<http://www.cefas.defra.gov.uk/our-services/environmental-advice/emergency-response.aspx>

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is independent and reports to the Department of Health. The Agency works closely with Local Authorities, Environmental Health Officers and Port Health Inspectors. They are responsible for providing advice to the Government on whether or not to make Orders under the Food and Environment Protection Act (FEPA) to prohibit the taking of fish, shellfish and plants from an oil spill affected area and to prohibit wholesalers and retailers from marketing such products. SFI and CEFAS may carry out work for FSA along with local EHO's and Port Health Inspectors.

<http://www.food.gov.uk/policy-advice/incidents/>

5.1.2 Natural England (NE) Responsibilities.

The principal role of the Natural England representative on the EG is to ensure that the risk to important nature conservation areas in a pollution incident is properly evaluated (in the context of the statutory provisions relating to such sites) and given due weight in the decision-making process.

As part of the response to a marine pollution incident, NE, through the Environment Group, will:

- Provide advice on the environmental impacts of the spill to the MCA's Counter Pollution Branch, local authorities (Shoreline Response Centre) etc.
- Co-ordinate the collation and provision of the best available information on wildlife interests and threats to them (including beached bird surveys, seabird colony and individual bird counts, collection of dead oiled birds, reporting of live casualties, and the collection of samples).
- Provide nature conservation advice and information to local authorities, MCA Counter Pollution Branch, DEFRA, EA etc.

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/>

5.1.3 Environment Agency (EA) Responsibilities.

Primary concern, with other partners, will be to locate the source of pollution and ensure the discharge is stopped as soon as possible. The EA will notify parties who may be effected by the pollution and will provide information to the public and media.

- The EA will take the lead on all land based source pollutions of the marine environment.
- Maintain a stock of suitable booms to provide a 'first line' or immediate response to oil spills in order to protect, wherever feasible, sensitive estuaries and areas of coastline
- Provide aerial surveillance (to be integrated with MCA but under a separate protocol)
- Deploy small boats and sea going survey vessels (if operated by the EA in a relevant area).
 - Provide advice to the MCA of the risk to controlled waters and ensuring that environmental considerations are given appropriate and timely consideration in any decision making.
 - Regulate discharges to controlled waters including the management, monitoring and control of water quality within such waters.

Regulate the disposal and management of waste, including providing advice on waste minimisation to reduce the amount requiring disposal. The location and form of temporary storage and treatment areas and the disposal options for wastes. www.environment-agency.gov.uk

5.1.4 Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)

When alerted by the Environment Group during a marine pollution incident, the RSPCA:

- Provide information to the public and media.
- Recover live birds and other wildlife casualties.
- Where appropriate, supply equipment to help the recovery of live casualties.

The SRC technical and procurement teams may directly support this activity.

- Co-ordinate the treatment and rehabilitation of casualties.
- Provide NE and the relevant Wildlife Trust with details of the recovery, treatment and rehabilitation of live wildlife casualties.
- Agree a protocol with EN for the recovery, marking and release of cleaned wildlife.

www.rspca.org.uk

5.1.5 Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)

When alerted by the Environment Group during a marine pollution incident, the RSPB:

- Provides information to the public and media.
- Contributes to the monitoring of bird casualties.
- Co-ordinates the deployment of beached Bird Surveyors during an emergency and ensure that all surveyors follow agreed recording procedures, including health and safety.
- Provides EN with the results of Beached Bird Surveys on a daily basis.
- Notifies the EN co-ordinator of the location of live, oiled birds and sends this information to the RSPCA;
- Assists in providing information on birds at risk from the pollution incident.

www.rspb.org.uk

5.1.6 Wildlife Trusts

Wildlife Trusts are useful sources of local knowledge on all environmental aspects. They:

- Provide local nature conservation information to complement that given by NE.
- Provide specialist help with monitoring clean up operations in sensitive areas.
- Contribute to the work of evaluation committees or inquiries that take place after a marine pollution incident.

However, the Wildlife Trusts are not animal welfare organisations and believe that responsibility for the collection of wildlife injured during an oil spill should lie with the voluntary organisations (RSPCA). Wildlife Trusts, however, are willing, when appropriate and if resources allow, to act as a “clearing house” for volunteers who wish to assist the RSCPA, or other organisations with these aspects.

<http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/>

<http://www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk/Home.aspx>

<http://www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/>

<http://www.lincstrust.org.uk/>

5.1.7 Norfolk County Council (NCC)

In the event of an incident the SRC will liaise and take advice from the Environment Group, paying attention to any approved recommendations by the group.

Norfolk County Council have wide-ranging responsibilities that they cannot deal with alone. Much of their work involves communicating with other agencies, communities and organisations to ensure they fully understand the needs and capabilities of one another and the [Norfolk Resilience Forum](#) co-ordinates a lot of this activity.

By virtue of the Civil Contingencies Act they are “Category 1 Responder”. They have a number of legal obligations in relation to resilience and emergency planning. These are to carry out risk assessments; have business continuity management in place; plan for emergencies; maintain public awareness and arrangements to warn; inform and advise the public; provide advice and assistance to the commercial sector and voluntary organisations; cooperate with other responders; share information.

http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/Safety_emergencies_and_accidents/Business_continuity/index.htm

5.1.8 On Call Public Health Doctors Responsibilities (HPA)

Health Authorities are responsible for co-ordinating the public health aspects of the response to an incident. Central government has asked health authorities to ensure that they can respond to incidents, by being included within Environment Group contingency plans and arranging for getting advice and expertise to deal with potential hazards to public health.

Operational response to public health issues will always be from the public health department of the local health authority. Public health cover is on call 24 hours a day to cover communicable diseases and human health issues.

<http://www.hpa.org.uk/AboutTheHPA/ContactUs/PublicHealthEmergencyContact/>

6. EG Officer Functions

The following section contains tables listing the responsibilities of the different officers within the NWEF. The training and experience ideally associated with each role is also given.

<p>6.1 Chair of The Norfolk & Wash Environment Group</p>	<p>Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of The Norfolk & Wash Environment Group • Ensure that strategic objectives are met, inline with the MCA STOp notice. • Co-ordinate all Environment Group functions and activities, collating and recording all key information. • Appoint an Environment Liaison Officer (ELO) for each of the response units established to deal with the incident. • Direct the monitoring of the environment and wildlife. Provide advice and guidance to minimise the impact of the incident and clean up response, informed by local knowledge and specific information collected. This will normally be via SRC/MRC/SCU. • Assess the environmental and wildlife impact of the incident and clean up response in both the short and long term, providing scientific advice to management groups. • Facilitate the welfare, rehabilitation or humane disposal of wildlife casualties by the RSPCA or other agreed recognised animal welfare organisations. • With other MRC/SRC managers provide an effective response to media interest.
<p>Training and Experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oil pollution training (MCA 5 day course). • Regularly attend training sessions. • Understanding of the legal and procedural requirements of pollution incident control and management and where to obtain advice and aid as appropriate. • Knowledge of key MCA STOp notices. • Have had media training.
<p>6.2 Deputy Chair of The Norfolk and Wash Environment Group</p>	<p>Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deputise for the Chair of the Environment Group and share work areas, as listed under the Chairs responsibilities. • Ensure that strategic objectives are met. • With other MRC/SRC managers provide an effective response to media interest.
<p>Training and Experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oil pollution training (MCA 5-day course) • Understanding of the legal and procedural requirements of pollution incident control and management and where to obtain advice and aid as appropriate. • Knowledge of key MCA STOp notices.
<p>6.3 Natural England Competent Officer</p>	<p>Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work to the chairman and the people in that group in a holistic manner. • Provide specialist advice to the Environment Group on any aspect and (through it) to the response unit(s) about the nature conservation resource in the area affected by the incident. • Provide appropriate nature conservation advice in the context of the Environment Group to external parties including DEFRA, Environment Agency, local authorities and the media. • Co-ordinate an appropriate input by conservation partner organisations to the incident response (i.e. NGO's). • Contribute, with other parties, administrative and other specialist support to the Environment Group as required. • Ensure the continuity of representation on the Group by suitable individuals, throughout the course of the incident.

Training & Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oil pollution training (MCA 2-day course). • Understanding of the legal and procedural requirements of pollution incident control and management and where to obtain advice and aid as appropriate. • Have undergone a practice or experienced an Environment Group.
6.4 Public Health Doctor/Officer	<p>Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as the Environment Groups point of contact for NHS organisations. • Liase with NHS organisations on behalf of the Environment Group. • Give advice in conjunction with the local authority Environmental Health Officer on the likely health effects of agent(s). • Give advice on the clinical management of persons exposed to the agent(s) including the public and incident staff. NB: These responsibilities will be undertaken with support from the Health Protection Agency Chemical Hazards and Poisons Division • The public health doctor should have basic training in the management of chemical incidents; access to the Chemical Hazards and Poisons Division in and out of hours; have undergone a practice or experienced an Environment Group.
Training and Experience	<p>The public health doctor should have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic training in the management of chemical incidents. • Have access to the Chemical Hazards and Poisons Division (formerly Chemical Incident Response Service) in and out of hours. • Have undergone a practice or experienced an Environment Group.
6.5 Environment Agency Competent Officer	<p>Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide specialist advice to the Environment Group and (through it) to the response unit(s) about booming plan effectiveness, risks to controlled waters & associated management issues & waste regulation issues. • Provide monitoring of shoreline contamination and environmental impact of pollution. • Facilitate ecological and biological assessment of the impact of pollution, clean up and disposal operations, including collection of evidence in an appropriate manner. • Lead on issues relating to polluting discharges from a land based source via EA legal team of officers. • Contribute, with other parties, administrative and other specialist support to the Environment Group as required. • Ensure the continuity of representation on the Group by suitable individuals, throughout the course of the incident.
Training and Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oil pollution training (MCA 2-day course). • Understanding of the legal and procedural requirements of pollution incident control and management and where to obtain advice and aid as appropriate. • Have undergone a practice or experienced an Environment Group.

6.6 Key Environment Group Member Officers (RSPB, RSPCA, Wildlife Trusts, National Trust, BDMLR)	Responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide EG with the results of Beached Bird Survey as required. • Assist in providing information on wildlife/birds at risk and affected from the pollution incident to the Environment Group. • Provide local nature conservation knowledge and information.
Training and Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in maritime pollution response (advantageous). • Have undergone a practice or experienced an Environment Group.

7.0 Operational Logistics

Information on initial facilities available for the EG should be available from the appropriate County Council Duty Officer using the 24-hr duty officer number. If deployment to an SRC is appropriate, facilities should be made available to the EG either in or near to the SRC. Facilities that have not been pre-determined should be made available in liaison with the SRC Management Team.

A pre-prepared memory stick with the appropriate documents on them will be available from NE Chair or competent officer.

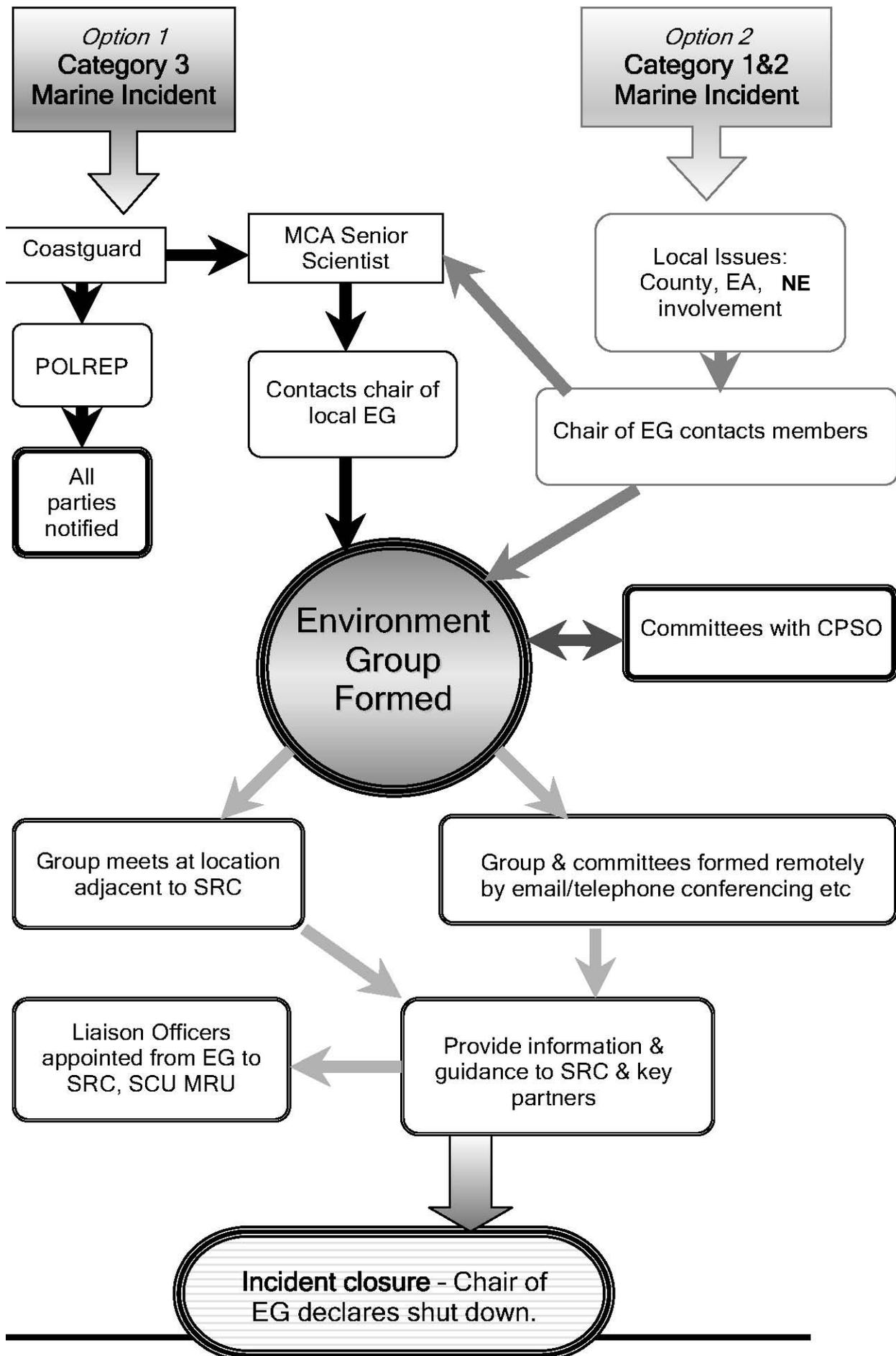
7.1 Standing down the Environment Group

The role of the Environment Group will evolve over the period of any incident. Operational advice may continue to be required by a local authority shoreline clean-up control centre after an SRC stands down and impact assessment is likely to be a protracted task.

The decision to stand down will be taken by the Environment Group, but clearly informing the SRC/MRC/SCU etc. There may still be a role of occasionally advising the key members such as the local authority or ports remotely (e.g. by telephone) after the initial event and with prolonged incidents that have been reduced to lower status.

The following flow chart visually summarises the two main routes via which the group is initiated.

Environment Group Initiation



7.2 Pollution Incident Classification

The level of response will be dependent on a number of factors. These include the quantity and type of oil spilled, its location and proximity to available response resources. In reality oil spills do not fall into convenient categories so there will be grey areas of overlap between the boundaries. Accurate quantification of oil spills is difficult.

The internationally recognised oil spill classification system is as follows:

Tier One:	Small operational spills. A spill that can be dealt with immediately utilising local resources without assistance from other areas (usually less than 25 tonnes).
Tier Two:	Medium sized spills. A spill that requires outside assistance from other bodies (usually less than 250 tonnes).
Tier Three:	Major spills that require a rapid large-scale response. Beyond the capability of local and regional resources. A spill that requires national assistance through implementation of the NCP (usually result from a loss of containment event >250 tonnes or ongoing).

Within the Environment Group and the National Contingency Plan the term Category is used instead of Tier.

8. Reporting Pollution: Format of CG77 POLREP_

Information regarding an incident will come through in the following format of a POLREP (Pollution Report) as formal notification of the incident. The initial report will be a POLREP (CG77) followed by small POLREPs identified as SITREPS. The initial POLREP is presumed to be SITREP 1 the following reports are numbered sequentially after this.

Part 1: Information that should be provided in an Initial pollution

Report.

- A Classification - of Report: i. Doubtful ii. Probable iii. Confirmed
- B Date and Time - pollution observed e.g. 010914 UTC = 01 (day) of the current month at 09:14 (Universal Time Constant) incident reported and identity of observer / reporter
- C Position and Extent of Pollution -by latitude and longitude if possible, range and bearing from a prominent landmark and estimated amount of pollution, e.g. size of polluted area, number of tonnes of spilled oil, or number of containers, drums etc. lost. When appropriate, position of observer relative to pollution.
- D Tide and Wind - speed and direction
- E Weather - conditions and sea state
- F Characteristics of pollution - gives type of pollution, e.g. oil crude or otherwise, packaged or bulk chemicals, garbage. For chemicals the proper name or United Nations number is given if known. Its appearance e.g. liquid, floating solid, liquid oil, semi-liquid sludge, tarry lumps, weathered oil, discoloration of sea, visible vapour etc.
- G Source and Cause of Pollution - from vessels or other undertaking. A statement as to whether it is the result of a deliberate discharge or a casualty from a vessel, a brief description should be given. Where possible the name, type, size, nationality and Port of Registry of polluting vessel. If vessel is proceeding on its way, the course, speed and destination, if known, is detailed.
- H Details of Vessels in the Area - to be given if the polluter cannot be identified and the spill is considered to be of recent origin.
- I Not Used.
- J Whether photographs have been taken and / or samples for analysis.
- K Remedial action -taken, or intended, to deal with the spillage
- L Forecast - of likely effect of pollution (e.g. arrival on beach, with estimated timing).
- M Names - of those informed other than addressees
- N Any other relevant information (e.g. names of other witnesses, references to instances of pollution pointing to source).

Part 2 – Supplementary Information

Supplementary information will be provided later and may be disregarded when POLREP's are for UK internal distribution only

- O Results of sample analysis.
- P Results of photographic analysis.
- Q Results of supplementary enquiries.
- R Results of mathematical models.

1 POLREPS should be used for oil, chemical or dangerous substance spillages and for illegal discharges of garbage.

2 All messages should be pre-fixed by the code word POLREP followed by a serial number issued by the operator. Subsequent updating or amplifying reports should repeat this information and add a SITREP number, e.g. "POLREP 21/SITREP 1" would be followed by "POLREP 21/SITREP 2". The first report is assumed to be SITREP 1 with subsequent reports being numbered sequentially.

3 Grounding, collisions or breakdowns of oil tankers or other vessels carrying potential pollutants, including bunkers, should be treated as serious incidents with a classification of "PROBABLE" until proved otherwise.

4 Local county pollution alerting plans should establish the notification responsibilities. The coastguard will inform the County Oil Pollution Officer in the affected county and the counties immediately adjacent. Although Chief Surveyors of Marine Regions are not directly involved with C/P operations, it is necessary to include them as addressees to give them notice of possible involvement with salvage, surveying a casualty or possible prosecutions under current regulations.

5 Care should be taken to avoid undue escalation of UNCONFIRMED pollution incidents with consequent misleading publicity.

8.1 Latitude and Longitude

POLREPs may give details of incident locations in degrees latitude and meridians of longitude. The conversion of longitude and latitude into grid references involves a complicated formula for which a computer package exists. The following briefly explains the principle behind longitude & latitude so that an officer should be able to approximately locate an incident on a chart. OS reference maps also contain rough longitude and latitude markings that can be used to generate equivalent grid references.

8.1.1 Latitude & Longitude in Brief

Latitude, gives the location of a place north or south of the equator. It is expressed by angular measurements ranging from 0° at the equator to 90° at the poles (North or South). Latitude lines are made by circles that run parallel to the equator's plane, and grow progressively smaller as they get closer to the pole.

Longitude, is the location of a place east or west of a north-south line called the prime meridian. It is measured in angles ranging from 0° at the prime meridian to 180° at the International Date Line. Longitudes are measured in half circles of 0° to 180° East and from 0° to 180° West from the Royal Greenwich Observatory, England.

8.1.2 Lines of Latitude & Longitude

Each degree of latitude and longitude is divided into 60 minutes and each minute divided into 60 seconds. This allows the assignment of a precise numerical location to describe any place on earth in terms of its angular distance from the reference points of the equator (0° latitude) and the prime meridian (0° longitude). The following diagram illustrates the lines.

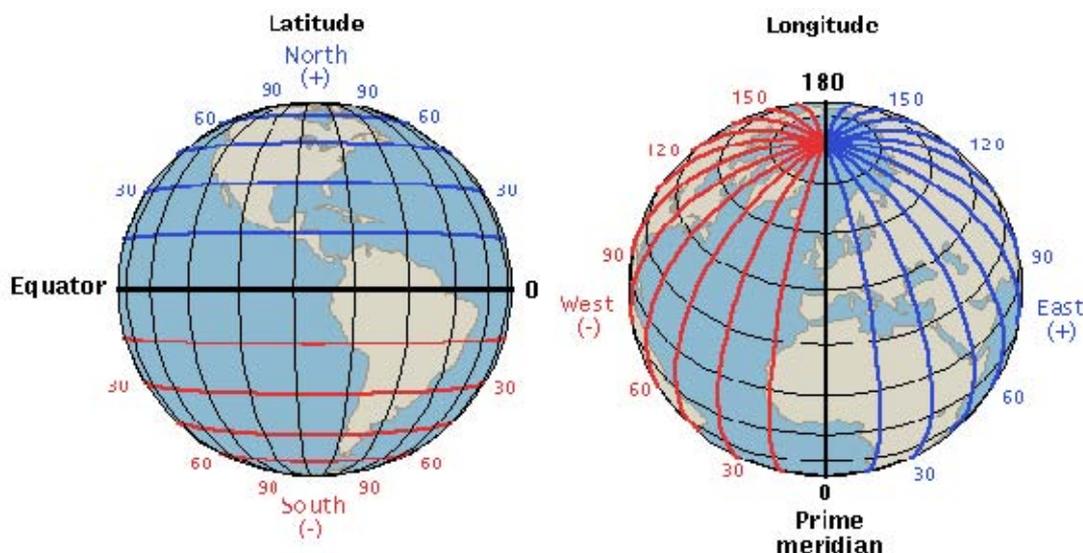


Figure 2: Diagrammatic representation of the lines of Latitude and Longitude.

8.1.3 Plotting a Position

To plot a latitude and longitude reading, such as 45 02 North 005 54 West, you simply draw a line from 45° 02' on the latitude scale up the side of the chart. Then mark off the position of 005° 54' along the longitude scale. Where the two cross equals the plotting position as shown in the following image, Figure 3.

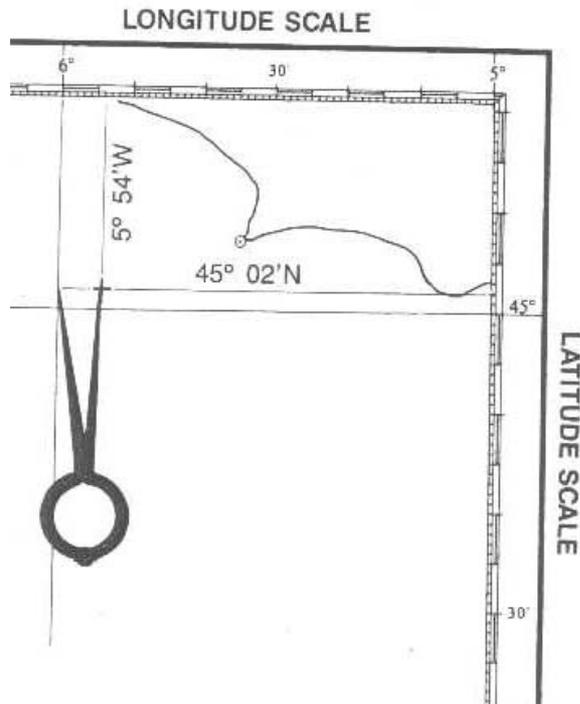


Figure 3: Plotting a chart position.

9. Initial Response Checklists.

9.1 EG Chairman's Checklist

- 1 POLREP – What? Where? When? MCA prediction?
- 2 What is the hazard?
- 3 Are the pollutant properties defined and understood?
- 4 What is at risk in the short, medium and long term?
- 5 Weather and tidal state and forecast.
- 6 Prediction of the duration, likely area of impact and scale of the event.

Group availability contact and deployment.

- 1 Contact Core Group reps: EN, DEFRA, EA, HPA.
- 2 Decide on remote operation or convening of Environment Group.
- 3 Arrange communication and/or accommodation in liaison with local authorities.
- 4 Decide on Chairman and Deputy (in liaison with MCA Chief Scientist) and rotation for EG manning.
- 5 Nominate Environment Liaison Officer(s) to any Response Units established.
- 6 Delegate initial EG action roles and review hourly.

Operational action within first few hours.

- 1 Contact MCA/ MRC/SRC/SOSREP and establish communications arrangements: phone numbers, named EG liaison officers, meetings schedule and attendance or delegation appropriate.
- 2 Ensure operating base is widely known.
- 3 Arrange administration for logging of reports, requests, distribution, decisions issued etc.
- 4 Ensure log of all actions/communications is established.
- 5 Review the hazard: determine nature, amount, toxicity/ impact and persistence.
- 6 Consider: What and who are at risk? How sensitive and significance? Have we reliable information? If not how do we get it?
7. Establish arrangements for producing, distributing and recording decisions, advice and guidance.
8. Review and prioritise risks in terms of immediate damage and short, medium and long threat.
9. Consider whether spraying at sea with dispersal chemicals is advisable.
10. Identify options for storage, transportation, treatment, reuse, recycling and disposal of recovered oil.
11. Issue initial guidance and advice to Response Units.
12. Organise visual situation displays: SITREPs, information board, arrival/deployment board, contact directory, maps/charts etc.
13. Find out what monitoring/observation is being undertaken and obtain information gathered.
14. Decide what EG monitoring/sampling required/necessary/practicable by Core Group or local team arrangements.
15. Check essential legal evidence to be gathered and ensure it is in-hand or delegate EG representative to arrange.
16. Consider legal responsibilities and liability of the EG and response teams and remind each of them.
17. Consider draft media statement and necessary urgent warnings directly and via radio, TV and press.
18. Arrange for group feeding, accommodation, support staff, manning rotas etc

Expansion of operations.

- 1 Wide Group involvement for back-up and specialist activity; e.g. wildlife rescue/cleansing/shelter.
- 2 Local knowledge, specialist advice, resources etc.
- 3 Communications with parent organisations to provide information and obtain intelligence and support.

9.2 Environmental Impact Checklist (EG Members)

The Incident

- When did it happen?
- Where?
- What immediate measures have been deployed?

The Material

- What is it? What are its key characteristics? (Toxicity info.)
- How much is there?
- Where is it? (location/ extent)
- In what way will it change/disperse?

The Weather

- Wind speed and direction. Precipitation. Visibility.
- Forecast
- State of tides (springs to neaps or neaps to springs?)
- Time of high/low water

The Location

- Designations
- Features
- Particular sensitivities/priorities
- Substrate character
- What impacts reported (e.g. oiled wildlife)?

The People

- Who is leading the response process?
- Which colleagues are immediately available? Need a short-term rota
- Ensure national specialists notified (including press office)
- Admin support required?
- Local contacts on the ground
- Landowners
- Time recording
- H&S guidance

The Environment Group

- Has one been called?
- Where?
- Who chairing?
- Who as Environment Liaison Officer?

Local Interests

- Fish, mammal's, birds and their feeding, breeding and habitat, is their seasonal importance?
- People living, working and recreating.
- Navigation – local sailing, ports and harbours etc.
- Physical and geographical circumstances and particular factors.
- Specific industrial factors and protection matters.

10. Linked Contingency Plans & Databases

In order for The Norfolk, Suffolk & Wash Environment Group to provide operational, monitoring and environmental data advice to all response units when dealing with a maritime incident a list of available databases has been made.

Several plans exist detailing environmentally sensitive areas and priorities for protection. All of The Wash is deemed an environmentally sensitive area with extensive important shellfish beds throughout. The use of dispersant anywhere within The Wash area is, therefore, highly unlikely to be approved by DEFRA.

10.1 Useful Databases

Several useful databases exist that should be used in conjunction with this plan.

10.1.1 NCC Oil Spill Response Plan – Beachmaster Plans

(CD ROM available) This document is likely to be a key tool in any incident. The Norfolk County Council plan details the Norfolk coastline split up into cells. Each cell has a Super and Super Shadow Beach Master, site/access map, road and beach access description, parking facilities, beach profile, beach size, type of beach, load bearing capacity of the site, important considerations, clean up recommendations and temporary holding facilities listed. In addition it also details conservation designations, conservation importance and treatment recommendations and constraints.

10.1.2 Coastal Sensitivity Maps Detailed information maps illustrating the location of sites of interest, special designations, flora and fauna, in particular the time of year that the sites are normally inhabited by many species. Maps are available for the whole coastline covered. Electronic versions of the environmental sensitivity maps of the Norfolk coastline have been developed as part of the MCA UK mapping project called MAGIC.

10.1.3 Suffolk County Oil Plan The Suffolk County Oil Plan

This details the county response to an oil spillage along its coastline. The area of Suffolk around Kessingland is not of high environmental sensitivity although the areas further south have statutory designations. The plan operates in a similar manner to adjacent counties with the County Emergency Planning Officer taking the lead.

10.1.4 Adjoining EG Plans

The Humber EG covers from Flamborough Head to Gibraltar Point. The Greater Thames Estuary EG covers Shingle St to Ramsgate. The plans are structured along the same line as this one but have an additional piece. Both of the plans have a section breaking the area covered into zones. For each zone a map and environmental information for each zone is listed. This information can be found for Norfolk in the NCC Oil Spill Response Plan.

10.2 Plan Locations A selection of Incident Manuals and Plans are held at the following places:

EA Ipswich Incident Room

Title	Author
British Pipeline Agency Emergency Procedures.	British Pipeline Agency
Environment Protection Incident Manual	EA
Norfolk Emergency Response Plan	Norfolk County Council
Pollution Control Equipment	EA
Powell-Duffryn Emergency Plans.	Suffolk County Council
Regional Incident Procedures	EA
UN Hazchem Numbers.	CIA
Marine Plans	
Area Marine Oil Procedures	EA
Associated British Ports Ipswich Oil Pollution Contingency Plans.	Ipswich Port Authority
Associated British Ports Lowestoft Oil Pollution Contingency Plans	Lowestoft Port Authority
Booming Plans – Blyth –Southwold	EA
Castle Point Oil Spill Plan	Castle Point Borough Council
Deben Oil Spill Plan (Booming Plan)	EA
Essex County Council Oil Spill Plans	Essex County Council
Gt Yarmouth Oil Spill Contingency Plans	Great Yarmouth Port Authority
Harwich Haven Authority Oil Spill Plans	Harwich Haven Authority
Haven Oil Working Group - Oil Spill Response Procedures	HOWG
Ipswich Port Authority Oil Spill Plans	Ipswich Port Authority
National Contingency plans for marine pollution for shipping and offshore installations	MCA
River Orwell Estuary Oil Plan Overview (Booming Plan).	EA
Shell Haven Oil Spill Plan	Shell
SCC Oil spill and Chemical Pollution Plans (Oil Chem Plans) EA Norwich Incident Room	Suffolk County Council
Gt Yarmouth Oil Spill Contingency Plans	Great Yarmouth Port Authority
Harwich Haven Authority Oil Spill Plans	Harwich Haven Authority
Haven Oil Working Group - Oil Spill Response Procedures	HOWG
Ipswich Port Authority Oil Spill Plans	Ipswich Port Authority
National Contingency plans for marine pollution for shipping and offshore installations	MCA
River Orwell Estuary Oil Plan Overview (Booming Plan).	EA
Shell Haven Oil Spill Plan	Shell
SCC Oil spill and Chemical Pollution Plans (Oil Chem Plans)	Suffolk County Council