

NORWAY – NATIONAL ORGANISATION

16.1 INTRODUCTION

16.1.1 Background

Each year between 450 and 600 notifications concerning acute oil and chemical discharges are reported to the Norwegian authorities. Main sources for discharges are the offshore petroleum industry, ships and industry on land. The total length of the Norwegian coastline (including islands) is 83 000 km. High concentrations of environmentally sensitive areas such as bird nesting islands and fjords, different climatic zones and poor infrastructure pose great challenges for the national acute pollution contingency. The population of Norway is approximately 4,5 million, main land area is 323 758 square kilometres and 2 million km² of ocean is located within the national economic zone.

16.1.2 General description of national organisation and legislation

The national responsibility for dealing with acute pollution on Norwegian territory, in the territorial sea and at Svalbard rests legally from 1st January 2003 with the Ministry of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs. The Pollution Control Act of 1981, Chapter 6, regulates private and municipal contingency. This Act is based on the following main principles: obligation to notify, obligation to respond and obligation to provide assistance. The Act is also based on the polluter pays principle.

The enforcement of the Act and regulations is from 1st January 2003 the responsibility of the Norwegian Coastal Administration, **Kystverket**, through the Department for Emergency Response.

16.2 NATIONAL ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

16.2.1 Decision making levels and information flow

The command system is represented by the following levels:

- The Minister of Fisheries.
- The Director General of Kystverket.
- The Deputy Director of The Department for Emergency Response.
- The officer on duty (24h).

When the national contingency system is in operation, the Deputy Director of the Department for Emergency Response will act as the response commander.

16.2.2 National organisation and tasks

The Department for Emergency Response has the following responsibilities:

- National response authority against major acute pollution.
- Co-ordinate private, municipal and governmental contingency into a national system.
- Maintaining the governmental response organisation, Kystverket.
- Conduct surveillance by satellite and aircraft.
- Act as national and international focal point for acute pollution notification.

All private industry is required to establish and maintain its own acute pollution contingency. In addition, about 70 private enterprises have received dedicated contingency requirements. In Norway, contingency requirements are always based on environmental risk assessments.

There are 34 intermunicipal contingency regions (IUA) covering both coastal and inland areas. Acute pollution caused by "normal activity" within a municipality is the responsibility of the IUA.

The governmental at sea contingency (Kystverket and Coast Guard resources) is responsible for responding to spills not covered by private and municipal contingency. Private and municipal contingency organisations are obliged to provide assistance to the governmental contingency.

16.2.3 Strategy for combating at sea

In general, mechanical recovery of oil pollution has first priority. Chemical response (dispersants) is considered an important supplement. If net environmental benefit analysis (NEBA) identifies dispersants as the preferred method, chemical response may take position as the first priority response method for dedicated areas and spill scenarios.

16.2.4 Strategy for combating on-shore

The main criteria for selection of on-shore response methods are the environmental impact, i.e. *restitution period* for critical habitats or populations. The possible negative effect of the response method itself is part of the strategy. Hence, monitoring and attenuation (natural degradation) may be selected if this represents an acceptable restitution period.

16.2.5 National resources

In Norway, response equipment for oil recovery at sea is based on vessels of opportunity. This strategy is due to the large number of tugs, supply-ships, ferries and fishing vessels available. National private, municipal and governmental resources in Norway are as follows:

- 80 000 metres of harbour booms.
- 22 000 metres of coastal booms.
- 30 000 metres of ocean booms.
- 430 oil recovery devices.
- 6 Coast Guard vessels with on-board recovery equipment
- 4 Oil Recovery vessels belonging to Kystverket.