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# **Environmental Monitoring and Impact Assessment of Marine Spill Incidents: The Premium Project**

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Cefas

Interspill, London, 14<sup>th</sup> March 2012





**P**ollution **R**esponse in **E**mergencies –  
**M**arine **I**mpact **A**ssessment and  
**M**onitoring



## The Premium Partners



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Welsh Government



# Oil Spill Statistics

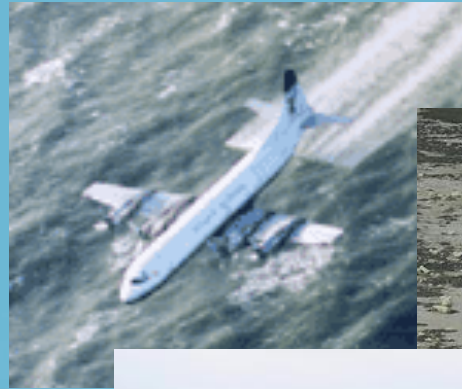




# Preparedness is vital

Training/Planning happens for

- Spill response
- Shoreline clean-up
- Contingency planning
- Environmental advice



## NATIONAL CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR MARINE POLLUTION FROM SHIPPING AND OFFSHORE INSTALLATIONS

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency  
Spring Place  
125 Commercial Road  
Southampton  
SO15 1EG  
Tel: +44(0) 23 8032 9482  
Fax: +44(0) 23 8032 9485  
Web: [www.mca.gov.uk](http://www.mca.gov.uk)

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But we have not pre-prepared and exercised for major (or even minor) marine environmental monitoring programmes!



# Why Do Post Incident Monitoring?

- Human health and safety.
- Understanding what the impact to the environment is (including the long-term!).
- Understand impact on commercial resources.
- Effective use of technology and resource.
- Input to compensation issues.
- Effectiveness of response and clean up.
- Learn for the future.



Develop procedures and practices to ensure a fast, pre-considered and efficient response to impact assessment and monitoring.

# Improvement through

- Guidelines
- Structure
- Preparedness
- Best practice
- Co-ordination

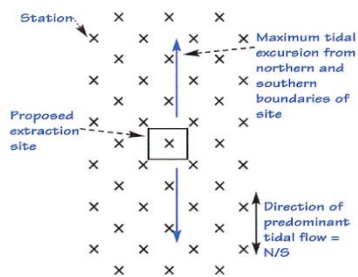
# Guidelines

# What needs to be included

## • Recommended survey design

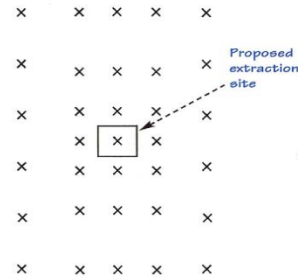
### i. Systematic (conventional) grid

Relative uniformity in substratum type and other influential variables.



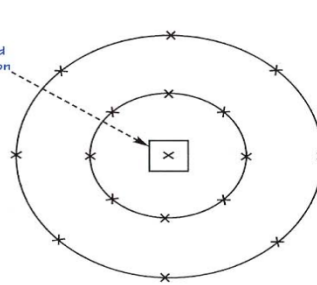
### ii. Systematic (weighted) grid

Stations are spaced (e.g. logarithmically) in relation to predicted zones of maximum settlement of particulates from sea-bed disturbance (dredging, screening, plume decay). (Tidal information as in i.)



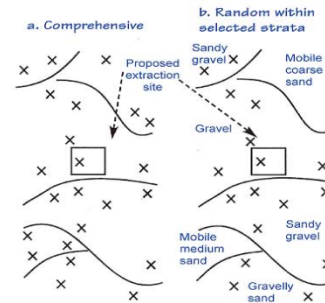
### iii. Systematic (radiating) grid

Relative uniformity in substratum type and other influential variables. No expectation of unidirectional transport of fines. The concentric design has a comparable effect to ii., by increasing sampling effort, relative to surface area covered, to the near vicinity of the proposed extraction site.



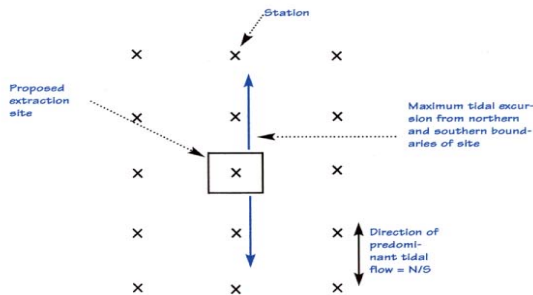
### iv. Stratified random grid

Substratum types occupy well-defined strata (as determined from desk study or pilot survey). Numbers of stations may be allocated to strata in proportion to size or ecological significance. (Tidal information as in i.)



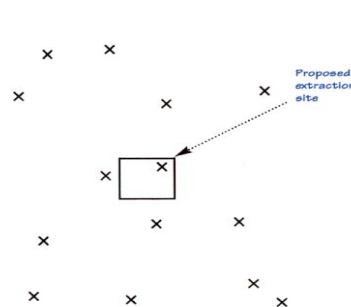
### i. Systematic (conventional) grid

No directional gradients anticipated in substratum type or depth.



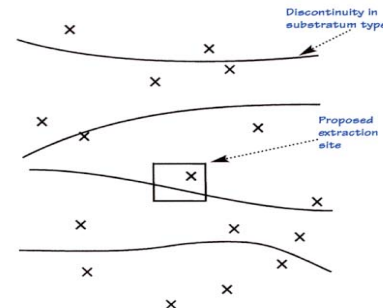
### ii. Random grid

No information on gradients in substratum type or other influential environmental variables. (Tidal information as in i.)



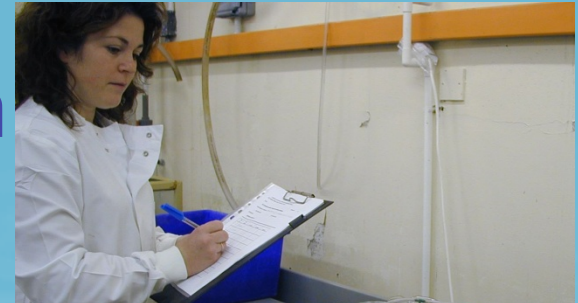
### iii. Stratified random grid

Known gradients in substratum type of a magnitude likely to be ecologically significant. Stations are randomly allocated within defined strata. (Tidal information as in i.)



# What needs to be included

- Recommended survey design
- Analytical Techniques



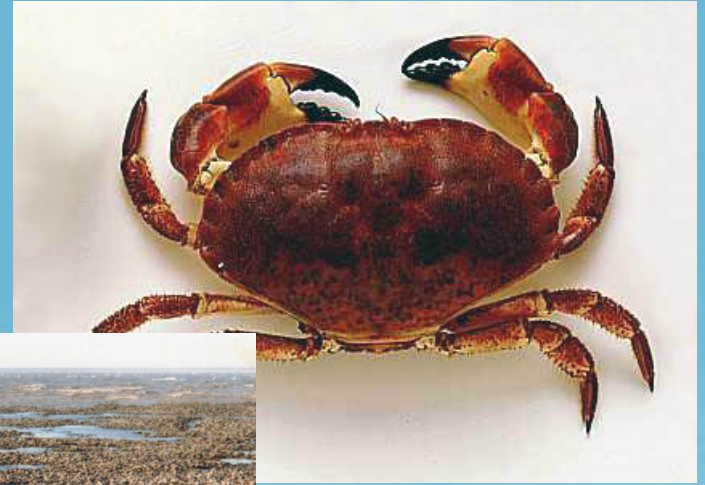
# What needs to be included

- Recommended survey design
- Analytical Techniques
- Ecological survey approaches



# What needs to be included

- Sampling and storage
  - Water
  - Sediments
  - Biota
- QA/QC

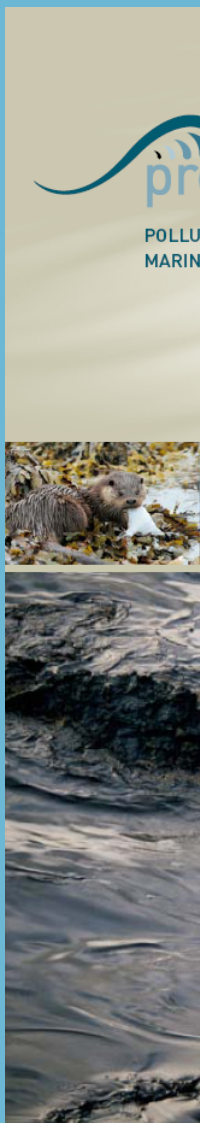




POLLUTION RESPONSE IN EMERGENCIES  
MARINE IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING

POST-INCIDENT MONITORING GUIDELINES





PREMIAM  
POST-SPILL  
MONITORING  
GUIDELINES

## IMPLEMENTING A MONITORING PROGRAMME: HOW DO WE MONITOR?

PREMIAM  
POST-SPILL  
MONITORING  
GUIDELINES

IMPLEMENTING A  
MONITORING PROGRAMME:  
HOW DO WE MONITOR?

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### 2.1

#### IMMEDIATELY, IDENTIFY AND ACCESS ANY PRE-EXISTING BASELINE DATA

Information on pre-existing baseline data is gathered by Standing Environment Groups as part of their role between incidents, and so the local SEG(s) should be the first port of call. Monitoring programmes undertaken by the relevant environmental regulator (e.g. the Environment Agency in England and Wales) may also yield useful information, as may the UK's national marine monitoring programme (the Clean Seas Environmental Monitoring Programme). Relevant surveys and studies may also have been undertaken by local Wildlife Trusts and other nature conservation agencies, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the British Trust for Ornithology, universities and research institutes.

### 2.2

#### IMMEDIATELY, COLLECT SAMPLES AND STORE TO PROVIDE A BASELINE

The availability of pre-incident monitoring data is one of the topics which the Standing Environment Groups in each area should have addressed. They should be contacted very rapidly in order to establish what is available and where it can be obtained from. In the absence of pre-existing baseline information, samples (sediments and biota, preferably) can be collected from selected locations and stored frozen against future need for analysis. This will be particularly useful in the case of chemicals (HNS compounds) where, for the vast majority of chemicals transported by sea, there is very little likelihood of data having been collected before. Ideally, sampling locations should be chosen so as to represent both reference sites (those which are unlikely to be impacted during the incident) and sites which are likely to be impacted. In order to help define these, computer modelling of the likely movement of slicks or floating or dissolved chemicals should be used, as was done successfully during the MSC Napoli container ship incident in 2007 (Law, 2008). Also, the characteristics of the samples taken from the two sets of locations should be similar wherever possible – e.g. muddy sediment; mussels or fish/invertebrates of the same species. When selecting species, consideration should also be given to the commercial fishery activities in the local area so that those contributing significantly to the local landings in terms of quantity or value are included. Similarly, species of significant nature conservation importance should be considered for inclusion.

#### REFERENCE

Law, R., 2008 (compiler). Environmental monitoring conducted in Lyme Bay following the grounding of MSC Napoli in January 2007, with an assessment of impact. Science Series, Aquatic Environment Monitoring Report, Cefas, Lowestoft, 61: 36pp. <http://www.cefas.co.uk/publications/aquatic/aemr61.pdf> accessed 26 May 2010.



## 2.3

### SURVEY DESIGN

Designing a damage assessment study for a particular ecological resource must be undertaken with considerable attention to detail. A large number of decisions need to be taken which will affect the value of the study and its ability to provide useful conclusions. The following sections aim to provide guidance on how to design appropriate studies, but more technical guidance on specific methods requires reference to other literature. Various methodological manuals are available, providing standard methods and procedures that have been used in previous oil spill studies (e.g. Australian Maritime Safety Authority, 2003a & b; Moreira et al., 2007; Robertson, 2001).

- After careful prioritization, each damage assessment study would typically be based on:
- ▶ selected biological features key indicators, chosen according to their ecological significance and their sensitivity;
  - ▶ essential environmental parameters (chemical/physical characteristics of the habitat which help identify changes from previous environmental conditions);
  - ▶ chemical analysis of the pollutant (to confirm its identity and to allow monitoring of the decline of the pollutant toward baseline level).

It is not usually necessary to investigate all the ecosystems' components in order to build-up a picture of the damage caused by the accident. Sometimes indicator species can be selected to give a general indication of the scale and extent of the impact. In general, amphipods (a diverse group of small shrimp-like crustacea widespread in the marine environment) are sensitive to hydrocarbons in water and are often used as indicators in biological effects studies or sediment bioassays. On rocky shores, limpets are another indicator species that may act as a surrogate for the whole rocky shore community.

Studies should also aim to establish a link of causation between the damage and the spill, and this will be a strict requirement if compensation is to be sought under the International Oil Pollution Compensation Conventions.

#### REFERENCES

Australian Maritime Safety Authority, 2003a. Oil spill monitoring handbook. AMSA, Canberra. [http://www.amsa.gov.au/marine\\_environment\\_protection/national\\_plan/contingency\\_plans\\_and\\_management/research\\_development\\_and\\_technology/Oil\\_Spill\\_Monitoring\\_Handbook.pdf](http://www.amsa.gov.au/marine_environment_protection/national_plan/contingency_plans_and_management/research_development_and_technology/Oil_Spill_Monitoring_Handbook.pdf) accessed 24 May 2010.

Australian Maritime Safety Authority, 2003b. Oil spill monitoring background paper. AMSA, Canberra. [http://www.amsa.gov.au/marine\\_environment\\_protection/national\\_plan/contingency\\_plans\\_and\\_management/research\\_development\\_and\\_technology/oil\\_spill\\_monitoring\\_background\\_paper.pdf](http://www.amsa.gov.au/marine_environment_protection/national_plan/contingency_plans_and_management/research_development_and_technology/oil_spill_monitoring_background_paper.pdf) accessed 24 May 2010.

Moreira, S., Santos, M., Cunha, I., Sousa, A., Lima, D., Coimbra, J., Reis-Henriques, M.A., Guilhermino, L., 2007. EROCIIPS Report for Task 7.3.5: Environmental monitoring report. [http://www.eroicips.org/reports\\_press\\_releases.htm](http://www.eroicips.org/reports_press_releases.htm) accessed 24 May 2010.

Robertson S.B., 2001. Guidelines and methods for determining oil spill effects. Proceedings of the 2001 International Oil Spill Conference. American Petroleum Institute, Washington D.C. pp. 1545-1548.

## 2.3.1

### Design process

The following points describe a logical process for designing a survey of a natural resource:

1. Select the natural resource for which there is concern and carry out reconnaissance surveys to assess the spatial extent and level of exposure to oil.



2. Define aims and objectives of the study – first understand clearly what question(s) you want answered. Examples of typical questions and their consequences are given in Appendix 2.



3. Define the geographic scope, time limits and the scale of the study. A balance is needed here between the desire to understand the full extent of the effects in space and time and the imperatives of budgets and deadlines. A focus on the worst affected areas and typical timescales of effects, with an associated but less intensive strategy for the wider area, may be appropriate.



4. Examine information from studies of the resource in the affected area or elsewhere to evaluate whether the methodologies used are appropriate for application to oil spill impact assessment, whether a modified methodology would work or whether a new methodology needs to be devised. Evaluation of the pre-spill data from the affected area should also be made to assess its usefulness as a baseline.



5. With the above in mind, select suitable parameters / attributes for measurement – ensuring that they are suitable for detecting relevant change, that they are technically and logistically feasible within the timescale of the study, and that they will produce reliable and reproducible results.



6. Select or design an appropriate method to obtain the necessary data, including preparation of detailed protocols to ensure quality and consistency.



7. Analyse existing pre-spill data from the site or from similar resources elsewhere to understand the potential levels of natural variability (temporal fluctuations and spatial patchiness).



8. Decide on the level of accuracy that is required. A specialist in the resource, possibly with the aid of a statistician, will be able to interpret the available information on natural variability and advise on the consequences of under or over sampling. This will be particularly important if it is expected that the results of the study will be used as part of a claim for compensation or could be challenged in a legal or scientific forum.

## NG BASELINE DATA

Environment Groups as d be the first port of call. al regulator (e.g. the i information, as may the i rontmental Monitoring ndertaken by local Society for the Protection arsh institutes.

### IDE A BASELINE

as which the Standing hould be contacted very r obtained from. In the s and biota, preferably) it future need for (HNS compounds) re is very little likelihood hould be chosen so as mpacted during the lp define these, computer d chemicals should be ship incident in 2007 re two sets of locations sels or fish/invertebrates ld also be given to the buting significantly to ilarly, species of l for inclusion.

ay following the grounding eries, Aquatic Environment blications/aquatic/aemr61.



## 2.3

### SURVEY DESIGN

Designing a damage assessment undertaken with consideration of the following sections aim to provide various methodological procedures that have been taken by the Safety Authority, 2003a & b. After careful prioritization of selected biological features, significance and their essential environmental factors which help identify chemical analysis of the decline of the pollutant.

It is not usually necessary to take a picture of the damage selected to give a general impression of the damage (a diverse group of environments) are sensitive to biological effects studies or indicator species that may be used. Studies should also aim to identify the spill, and this will be a strict International Oil Pollution Convention (IOPC) requirement.

#### REFERENCES

Australian Maritime Safety Authority. [http://www.amsa.gov.au/marlin/management/research\\_development/24\\_May\\_2010](http://www.amsa.gov.au/marlin/management/research_development/24_May_2010).

Australian Maritime Safety Authority. [http://www.amsa.gov.au/plans\\_and\\_management/research\\_development/24\\_May\\_2010](http://www.amsa.gov.au/plans_and_management/research_development/24_May_2010).

Moreira, S., Santos, M., Cunha, Guilhermino, L., 2007. EROCIPI: <http://www.eroicip.org/reports>

Robertson S.B., 2001. Guidelines 2001 International Oil Spill Convention

## 2.4

### SAMPLING STRATEGIES AND METHODS

Sampling should include both impacted and reference (unimpacted) sites, ideally with similar characteristics as outlined in section 2.3.3 above. Sites which are not impacted at the time of sampling but which are thought likely to be impacted later on during the incident (for instance, as indicated by predictive modelling of the trajectory of the spilled material) can provide excellent reference (pre-spill) information.

The range of samples to be collected can be very wide, including water, subtidal and intertidal sediments, subtidal and intertidal biota, commercial fish and shellfish, and samples of the spilled oil or chemicals from the sea surface or from beaches. Dissolved concentrations of determinands are usually very low in marine incidents, and great care must be taken in selection of sampling devices, their cleaning prior to use and the avoidance of cross-contamination. Plastics are generally not suitable materials as they are not resistant to solvents commonly used to clean sampling devices, and phthalate esters added as plasticizers (substances added to plastics to increase their flexibility, transparency, durability, and longevity) can leach into water samples. For oils and chemicals generally, glass is the preferred material. A simple subsurface water sampler is described in Kelly et al. (2000). Glass Winchester solvent bottles (2.7 l volume) are mounted in a weighted stainless steel frame which is deployed by means of a nylon rope. The bottle is sealed using a PTFE stopper which may be removed when the sampler is at the required sampling depth by means of a second nylon rope. The stopper is spring-loaded so that the bottle may be resealed when full, being open therefore only during sample collection, and sealed during deployment and recovery. This prevents contamination by any surface films which may be present on the sea. Sample bottles are rigorously cleaned with pentane (the solvent used for extraction of water samples) before use. The sampler (particularly the stopper) is cleaned with pentane at the start of each day's sampling, periodically during sampling, following a period of inactivity, or after use in areas in which high concentrations of the determinands may have been encountered.

This shallow water sampler has been in use for over 25 years, and has proved to be both robust and reliable. It has been shown to be capable of collecting uncontaminated samples for a variety of other trace organic contaminants as well as hydrocarbons, including iso-propyl benzene, tetrachloroethene and phthalate esters in the low ng/l concentration range. When deployed from a hydrowire following the addition of mounting clips and an aluminium vane to prevent spinning (see Figure 6), the bottles can be used to a depth of at least 50 m without imploding (Law and Whinnett, 1993); whilst for sampling at depths of 10 m or less, the sampler can be operated by hand using two lines. When deployed from a hydrowire (Kevlar preferred) only the opening/closing line is used once the sampler is at the required depth.

Recent experience in the Gulf of Mexico following the Deepwater Horizon oil spill suggests that sampling may also be needed in deeper waters, such as those to the west of the Shetland Islands. Oil production is already underway in water depths of 140-600 m. Production in the Foinaven, Schiehallion and Clair oilfields began in 1997-2005. Drilling in the Lagavulin prospect, in a water depth > 1500 m, began in 2010. Water sampling for oil and chemicals can be undertaken using hydrographic sampling bottles, preferably with a PTFE internal lining, such as available for the GO-FLO bottle produced by General Oceanics in the USA. These are deployed by hydrowire and the bottles closed at sampling depth using either a messenger or by signal from the deploying vessel via a rosette sampler. Oil concentrations in deeper water can be monitored semi-continuously using a Chelsea Instruments Ltd (UK based) UV-AQUATRACKS fluorimeter, which is towed behind a

Figure 5.  
Design of a Cefas  
shallow water  
sampler.

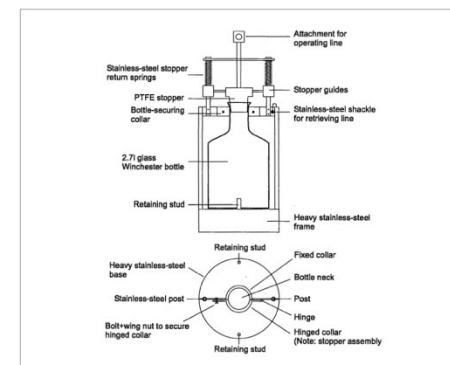


Figure 6.  
Cefas shallow water  
sampler rigged for  
use. The sampler is  
lowered using the  
white rope, and  
opened and closed  
using the red rope.



# Network

# **It's no good having guidelines without anyone primed to use them!**

- Scientific/analytical services
- Sampling services
- Transport and storage
- Modelling services
- Local knowledge/advice



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    - Commercial species (fish)
    - Birds (dead/oiled)
  - [+] Storage
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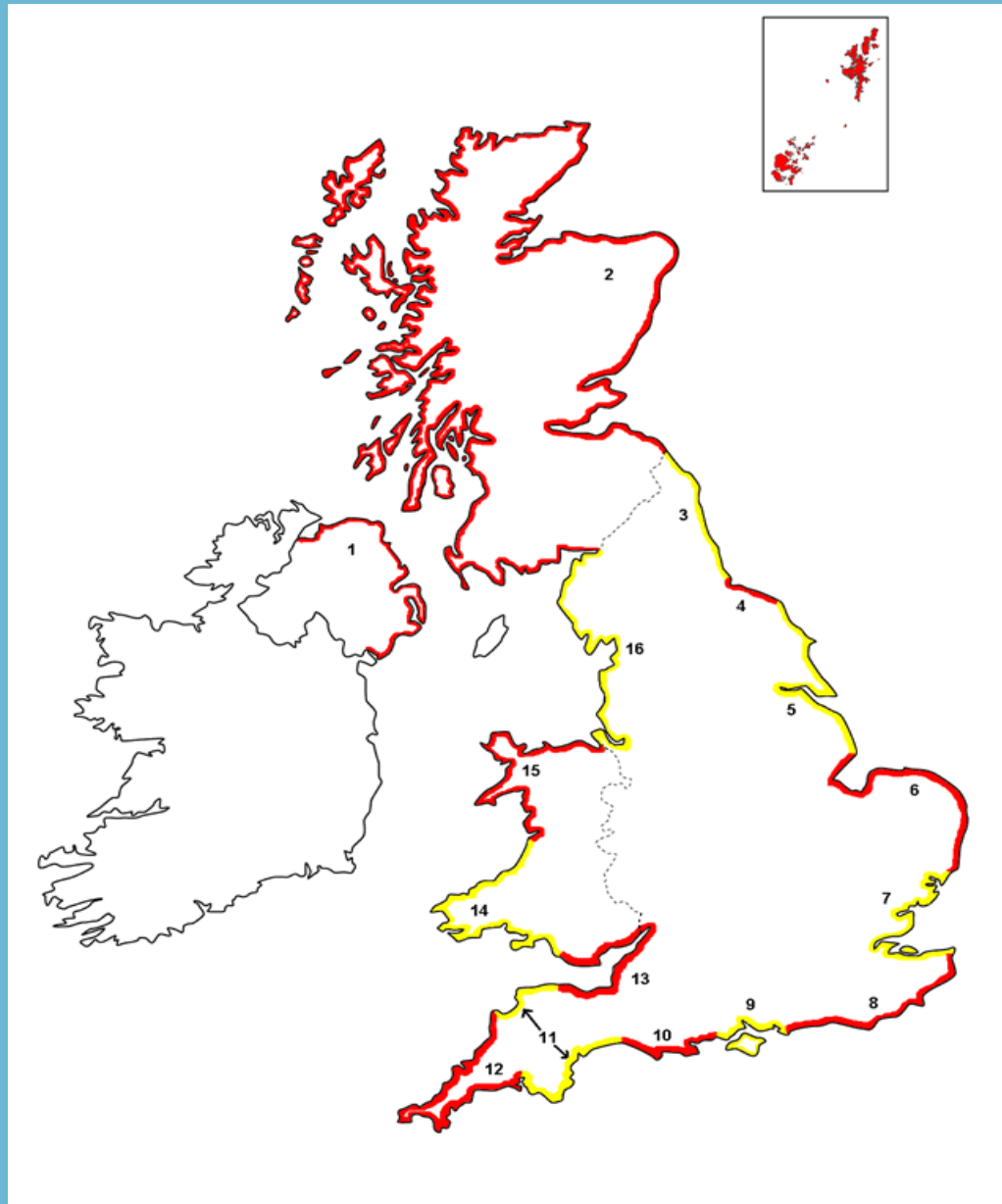
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# UK Standing Environment Groups



# Co-ordination, management and communication

- Integration with plans (e.g. NCP, OPEPs etc.)
- Exercises
- Supplementary guidance
- Integration with Environment Groups
- Links with wider industry, NGO and other response organisations.
- A hub for debate and development.
- Annual Conference?

# The Premium Conference

4<sup>th</sup> July 2012, SOAS, London

- NOAA – DWH
- Guidelines
- Science
- Planning and co-ordination
- Regulation and compensation
- Environmental & commercial sensitivities

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- Invoices will be issued as the standard response
- Confirmation of registration will be acknowledged on receipt of booking form
- Receipts will be issued on payment
- Payment should be completed **BEFORE** the event; otherwise entry may be refused
- Refunds (less £20 administration charge) will only be issued for cancellation more than ten working days before the meeting: substitutes are permitted.



## SOAS, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON



Please pass this to colleagues who might be interested



# The Benefits

- Prompt response
- The right (including cost-effective) response
- Fully integrated and co-ordinated response
- Public reassurance
- Full stakeholder integration



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Accidental spills of oil and chemicals into the marine environment have the potential to cause substantial harm to the marine and coastal resources that many in society use and enjoy.

Great improvements to ship safety and training have been made but the increased volumes of hazardous and noxious substances (HNS) transported by sea mean that future spills from shipping accidents and other sources are inevitable.

In the UK there are well established procedures for search and rescue, salvage, chemical and oil spill clean up and environmental impacts advice covered in documents such as the National Contingency Plan.

BUT - there are no established expert guidelines in the UK for post-incident monitoring and impact assessment nor, indeed, is there a fully co-ordinated mechanism for overseeing the practical aspects of the programme (e.g. survey design, sampling, analysis, interpretation etc.) as an integral part of the emergency response.

This is what the PREMIAM project will address . . .



## Latest News

02 November 2009: Website launched

The website for an exciting new cross-government department sponsored project have been launched



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