

Ref. T5/1.11(b)

**QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE IMO OIL POLLUTION  
PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE AND CO-OPERATION INFORMATION SYSTEM  
(OPRC QUESTIONNAIRE)**

1 A questionnaire seeking information about national contact points and national capability to provide oil pollution response equipment and expert assistance was circulated among Member States in June 1992<sup>1</sup>. Providing IMO with such information is a requirement under the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation, 1990 (OPRC Convention)<sup>2</sup> and the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973 as modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto (MARPOL 73/78)<sup>3</sup>. On the basis of information received, databases were developed and the OPRC Guide to International Assistance (MEPC/Circ. 291) was compiled from print-outs of the databases for dissemination. To implement regulation 26 of Annex I of MARPOL 73/78 (Shipboard Oil Pollution Emergency Plan), the list of agencies or officials of administrations responsible for receiving and processing oil pollution reports from ships has also been developed, the most recent being MEPC/Circ. 299.

2 In case of oil pollution emergencies, this information is very useful in finding appropriate contact points and, in particular, allowing IMO to act as a "Clearing House" for offers of assistance from donor States and co-ordinate these services with receiving States. IMO has on several occasions assisted States in responding to marine pollution emergencies. In each case, information provided by States from the OPRC questionnaire proved extremely useful.

3 However, as of 13 November 1995, only 33 States and one Associate Member<sup>4</sup> have replied to the OPRC questionnaire. The OPRC Questionnaire has therefore been reissued in order to seek new information from States that have not previously responded. **The prompt response of States is requested to enable revision and expansion of this important and widely used document.** Items addressed in the OPRC Questionnaire include information on: national oil pollution response authorities; national operational contact points for the receipt and transmission of oil pollution reports; authorities dealing with mutual assistance in cases of oil pollution emergencies; oil pollution response equipment; oil pollution experts and national contingency plans.

4 There is ample justification for all coastal states to participate in this information gathering process. A major oil spill has potentially devastating effects on nearby coastal states irrespective of their status regarding the Conventions. Thus, a complete and accurate list for use by both the stricken vessel and affected coastal states can expedite response and minimize damage.

5 States which have not replied to the previous questionnaire are requested to complete the

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<sup>1</sup> The Questionnaire on the IMO Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation Information System (OPRC Questionnaire) (OPRC.2/Circ.1)

<sup>2</sup> Article 6 of the OPRC Convention

<sup>3</sup> Article 8 of MARPOL 73 and regulation 26 of Annex I of MARPOL 73/78

<sup>4</sup> **States:** Australia, Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Congo, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, India, Ireland, Japan, Liberia, Mauritius, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Oman, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Seychelles, Spain, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom, United States and Vanuatu. **Associate Member:** Hong Kong

OPRC questionnaire annexed hereto and submit it not later than 30 April 1996 to the address in paragraph 6. **For reasons stated above, all coastal states, not solely Parties to the relevant Conventions, are requested to respond.**

6 **States and Associate Members which have already replied to the previous questionnaire need not reply to the OPRC questionnaire annexed hereto.** The officer in-charge who completed the previous questionnaire will receive separately print-outs of applicable portions of the databases for validation. Corrections and changes, if any, are requested by 30 April 1996 and can be mailed or faxed to:

Information Officer  
Oil Pollution Co-ordination Centre  
Marine Environment Division  
International Maritime Organization  
4 Albert Embankment London SE1 7SR  
United Kingdom Fax: +44 171 587 3261

7 This information will be maintained in the databases in the Oil Pollution Co-ordination Centre and will be used to assist States in responding to oil spills. The information required under the provision of article 8 of MARPOL 73 and regulation 26 of annex I of MARPOL 73/78 will be updated and circulated among Member States in the first quarter of 1996.

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