

CLAIM SUMMARY / DETERMINATION FORM

Claim Number	: S14006-0001
Claimant	: Global Diving and Salvage, Inc.
Type of Claimant	: Corporate
Type of Claim	: Removal Costs
Claim Manager	: [REDACTED]
Amount Requested	: \$3,226.85

**FACTS:**

***A. Oil Spill Incident:***

On December 12, 2013, the USCG Sector Puget Sound Incident Management Division (IMD) received notification of a sunken vessel (the P/C Deeta Lee II) in the McGinnis Marina on Salmon Bay in the Lake Washington Ship Canal, all navigable waterways of the US. When IMD personnel arrived on-scene, approximately five gallons of recoverable diesel fuel were observed in the water coming from the vessel. The Claimant, Global Diving and Salvage, Inc. (GDS), was hired to mitigate the pollution threat. The owner, Mr. [REDACTED] (the named Responsible Party (RP)), arrived on-scene, took over full financial responsibility for the response and continued using GDS for the removal of the pollution threat. The USCG had originally opened a Federal Project Number (FPN) when the RP could not be reached, but eventually cancelled it.

This spill was reported to the National Response Center via Report # 1049732, dated December 12, 2013.

***B. Description of removal actions performed:***

GDS arrived on-scene on December 12, 2013, deploying 150 feet of boom and two bales of sorbent pads to quickly contain the runoff. Over a period of two days, GDS performed cleanup and removal actions. The owner indicated that there could be 15 gallons of fuel in a day-tank. However, when the GDS diver removed the tank in its entirety, it was found to only contain water. The owner then proceeded with a different contractor for salvage services and GDS was demobilized. There was no disposal associated with this incident.

***C. The Claim:*** On February 20, 2015, GDS submitted a removal cost claim to the National Pollution Funds Center (NPFC), for reimbursement of its uncompensated removal costs in the amount of \$3,226.85 for the services provided from December 12-13, 2013. This claim is for removal costs based on the rate schedule in place at the time services were provided. A copy of the vendor rate schedule is included in the claim file.

**APPLICABLE LAW:**

Under OPA 90, at 33 USC § 2702(a), a responsible party for a vessel or facility from which oil is discharged or which poses a substantial threat of a discharge of oil, into or upon the

navigable waters or adjoining shorelines is liable for removal costs and damages resulting from such incident.

"Oil" is defined in relevant part, at 33 USC § 2701(23), to mean "oil of any kind or in any form, including petroleum, fuel oil, sludge, oil refuse, and oil mixed with wastes other than dredged spoil".

"Removal costs" are defined as "the costs of removal that are incurred after a discharge of oil has occurred or, in any case in which there is a substantial threat of a discharge of oil, the costs to prevent, minimize, or mitigate oil pollution from an incident". 33 USC § 2701(31).

Removal costs referred to in 33 USC 2702(a) include any removal costs incurred by any person for acts taken by that person which are consistent with the National Contingency Plan. 33 USC 2702(b)(1)(B).

The Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund (OSLTF), which is administered by the NPFC, is available, pursuant to 33 USC §§ 2712(a)(4) and 2713 and the OSLTF claims adjudication regulations at 33 CFR Part 136, to pay claims for uncompensated removal costs that are determined to be consistent with the National Contingency Plan and uncompensated damages.

With certain exceptions all claims for removal costs or damages shall be presented first to the responsible party of the source designated under 2714(a). 33 U.S.C. § 2713(a). If the claim is not settled by any person by payment within 90 days after the date the claim was presented, the claimant may elect to commence an action in court against the responsible party or present the claim to the Fund. 33 U.S.C. §2713(c)(2).

"Claimant" means "any person or government who presents a claim for compensation under this subchapter." 33 USC § 2701(4).

33 USC § 2712(f), which is entitled "Rights of Subrogation," provides that payment of any claim or obligation by the Fund under this Act shall be subject to the United States Government acquiring by subrogation all rights of the claimant or State to recover from the responsible party.

Any person, including the Fund, who pays compensation pursuant to this Act to any claimant for removal costs or damages shall be subrogated to all rights, claims, and causes of action the claimant has under any other law. 33 USC § 2715(a).

Under 33 CFR 136.105(a) and 136.105(e)(6), the claimant bears the burden of providing to the NPFC, all evidence, information, and documentation deemed necessary by the Director, NPFC, to support the claim.

Under 33 CFR 136.105(b) each claim must be in writing, for a sum certain for each category of uncompensated damages or removal costs resulting from an incident. In addition, under 33 CFR 136.203, the claimant bears the burden to prove the removal costs were reasonable in response to the scope of the oil spill incident, and the NPFC has the authority and responsibility to perform a reasonableness determination. Specifically, under 33 CFR 136.203, "a claimant must establish –

- (a) That the actions taken were necessary to prevent, minimize, or mitigate the effects of the incident;

- (b) That the removal costs were incurred as a result of these actions;
- (c) That the actions taken were determined by the FOSC to be consistent with the National Contingency Plan or were directed by the FOSC.”

Under 33 CFR 136.205 “the amount of compensation allowable is the total of uncompensated reasonable removal costs of actions taken that were determined by the FOSC to be consistent with the National Contingency Plan or were directed by the FOSC. Except in exceptional circumstances, removal *activities* for which costs are being claimed must have been coordinated with the FOSC.” [Emphasis added].

### **DETERMINATION OF LOSS:**

#### **A. Overview:**

1. FOSC Coordination has been established via United States Coast Guard Sector Puget Sound.<sup>1</sup>
2. In accordance with 33 CFR § 136.105(e)(12), the Claimant has certified no suit has been filed in court for the claimed uncompensated removal costs.
3. The claim was submitted within the six year statute of limitations. 33 U.S.C. § 2712(h)(1).
4. A Responsible Party has been identified but, to date, has not paid the balance of this claim. 33 U.S.C. § 2701(32).
5. The NPFC Claims Manager has thoroughly reviewed all documentation submitted with the claim and determined that all removal costs presented were for actions in accordance with the NCP and that the costs for these actions were indeed reasonable and allowable under OPA and 33 CFR § 136.205.

#### **B. Analysis:**

NPFC CA reviewed the actual cost invoices and dailies to confirm that the claimant had incurred all costs claimed. The review focused on: (1) whether the actions taken were compensable “removal actions” under OPA and the claims regulations at 33 CFR 136 (e.g., actions to prevent, minimize, mitigate the effects of the incident); (2) whether the costs were incurred as a result of these actions; (3) whether the actions taken were determined by the FOSC, to be consistent with the NCP or directed by the FOSC, and (4) whether the costs were adequately documented and reasonable. The Claims Manager validated the costs incurred and determined they were reasonable and necessary and performed in accordance with the National Contingency Plan (NCP).

GDS provided a well-documented daily to show the actions it performed were for OPA-related costs and that the work performed mitigated the effects of the oil that was released from the compromised vessel. Additionally, the USCG Sector Puget Sound confirmed these actions in its Pollution Report (POLREP) for this incident. Based on the evidence in this claim submission for the actions undertaken by GDS, the Claims Manager hereby determines that the Claimant incurred \$3,226.85 of uncompensated removal costs and that that amount is payable by the OSLTF as full compensation for the reimbursable removal costs incurred by GDS and submitted to the NPFC under claim #S14006-0001. The Claimant states that all costs claimed are for uncompensated removal costs incurred by the Claimant for this incident

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<sup>1</sup> See USCG Sector Puget Sound POLREP # 1, dated 12/23/2013.

from December 12 through 13, 2013. GDS represents that all costs paid by it are compensable removal costs, payable by the OSLTF as presented by the claimant.

**C. Determined Amount: \$3,226.85**

The NPFC hereby determines that the OSLTF will pay \$3,226.85 as full compensation for the reimbursable removal costs incurred by the Claimant and submitted to the NPFC under claim S14006-0001. All costs claimed are for charges paid for by the Claimant for removal actions as that term is defined in OPA and, are compensable removal costs, payable by the OSLTF as presented by the Claimant

Claim Supervisor: [REDACTED]

Date of Supervisor's review: *3/3/15*

Supervisor Action: *Approved*

Supervisor's Comments: