

CLAIM SUMMARY / DETERMINATION

Claim Number:	917010-0001
Claimant:	Sea Gate Marina
Type of Claimant:	Corporate
Type of Claim:	Removal Costs
Claim Manager:	██████████
Amount Requested:	\$686.39

FACTS:

Oil Spill Incident: On March 8, 2017, Sea Gate Marina responded to and conducted removal actions of a diesel fuel discharge into a ditch which leads to Core Creek, a navigable waterway of the United States. Sea Gate Marina deployed sorbent boom to soak up the diesel fuel.¹

Description of Removal Activities for this claimant: Sea Gate Marina personnel responded with Coast Guard and deployed 100' of sorbent boom. The sorbent boom successfully absorbed much of the diesel in the ditch as well as in the waterway, the remaining sheen was determined unrecoverable and left to dissipate naturally.²

Responsible Party: The Responsible Party (RP) is ██████████ of Newport, NC. The Claimant is in receipt of a signed statement from the RP stating that he will not take financial responsibility for clean-up costs associated with the spill.³

The Claim: On March 31, 2017, Sea Gate Marina submitted a removal cost claim to the National Pollution Fund Center (NPFC) for reimbursement of their uncompensated removal costs of sorbent boom in the amount of \$686.39.⁴ This amount was based on the assumption that there were 10 feet of boom in each package, however, each package of boom contained 40 feet.⁵

APPLICABLE LAW:

Under OPA 90, at 33 USC § 2702(a), responsible parties are liable for removal costs and damages resulting from the discharge of oil into navigable waters and adjoining shorelines, as described in Section 2702(b) of OPA 90. A responsible party's liability will include "removal costs incurred by any person for acts taken by the person which are consistent with the National Contingency Plan". 33 USC § 2702(b)(1)(B).

"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".

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. 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".

¹ See Sea Gate Marina Claim Package 917010-0001 dated March 18, 2017.

² See Sea Gate Marina Claim Package 917010-0001 dated March 18, 2017.

³ See Sea Gate Marina Claim Package 917010-0001 dated March 18, 2017.

⁴ See Sea Gate Marina Claim Package 917010-0001 dated March 18, 2017.

⁵ See quote from ██████████ received on April 14, 2017.

Under 33 USC §2713(b)(2) and 33 CFR 136.103(d) no claim against the OSLTF may be approved or certified for payment during the pendency of an action by the claimant in court to recover the same costs that are the subject of the claim. See also, 33 USC §2713(c) and 33 CFR 136.103(c)(2) [claimant election].

33 U.S.C. §2713(d) provides that “If a claim is presented in accordance with this section, including a claim for interim, short-term damages representing less than the full amount of damages to which the claimant ultimately may be entitled, and full and adequate compensation is unavailable, a claim for the uncompensated damages and removal costs may be presented to the Fund.”

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, the claimant bears the burden to prove the removal actions 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. PO [REDACTED] of Coast Guard Marine Safety Detachment Fort Macon provided FOSC coordination 33 U.S.C. § 2702(b)(1)(B) and 2712 (a)(4);
2. The incident involved the discharge of “oil” as defined in OPA 90, 33 U.S.C. § 2701(23), to navigable waters;
3. 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;
4. The claim was submitted on time;
5. The NPFC Claims Manager has thoroughly reviewed all documentation submitted with the claim and determined which of the 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 NPFC has determined that a portion of the amount claimed by the Claimant in this determination are reasonable and necessary to mitigate the effects of the incident. Upon review of the information provided by the Claimant, the NPFC has determined that the payable costs were billed in accordance with the cost of materials used at the time the services were rendered and were determined by the NPFC to be consistent with the NCP. The amount denied by the NPFC is the differences in the tax rate used and amount of boom per package. Disposal of spoiled materials was conducted by the responsible party.

The NPFC hereby determines that the OSLTF will pay \$170.40 as full compensation for the reimbursable removal costs incurred by the Claimant and submitted to the NPFC under claim # 917010-0001. All costs claimed are for charges incurred 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.

AMOUNT: \$170.40


Claim Supervisor: 
Date of Supervisor's review: <i>4/26/17</i>
Supervisor Action: <i>Approved</i>
Supervisor's Comments: