

Open consultation: UK National Standard for Marine Oil Spill Response Providers

Consultation description

The Merchant Shipping (Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation Convention) Regulations 1998 (SI 1988 No.1056) (as amended) state that UK ports, harbours and oil-handling facilities must submit oil spill contingency plans (OSCP) to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), or, for responsible persons for offshore installations, Oil Pollution Emergency Plans (OPEPs) to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), for approval.

As part of the approvals process for category A&B ports, harbours and oil handling facilities (as detailed in the [OPRC Guidelines for Ports](#)), the MCA require contingency plans to detail the contract they hold with accredited third-party Tier 2 Marine Pollution Response Service Providers (hereafter referred to as “provider”).

BEIS similarly require responsible persons to detail in OPEPs any arrangements in place with a specialist oil spill response provider (as detailed in the [Guidance Notes for Preparing Oil Pollution Emergency Plans](#)).

As it stands, other than the requirement for the response provider to be accredited, there are no mandated standards for this service provision.

Through the implementation of a UK National Standard for Marine Oil Spill Response Providers, the MCA and BEIS seek to develop their oversight of an industry with strategic importance to the UK and to ensure that minimum standards are adhered to which are commensurate to the threat from marine oil pollution. The UK Standard will be applied by any accrediting body which submits a proposed scheme of accreditation to the MCA and BEIS for approval.

The UK Standard, as published on this website, is a draft version. The MCA and BEIS seek comments from all stakeholders on this document. Anyone can comment, but the MCA and BEIS would envision the main stakeholders to be accrediting bodies which may apply the Standard, the marine pollution response industry and those who do or may in the future contract a response provider. Comments and questions should be submitted to: ukresponderstandard@mcga.gov.uk.

The consultation will run for two months from 08/01/2018 to 09/03/2018. During the consultation, any questions on the Standard will be answered; questions and answers may be published on the consultation page to ensure all stakeholders remain informed.

Upon conclusion of the consultation comments will be considered and

reasonable amendments made to the Standard. The current timetable will see the implementation of the Standard in late spring to early summer 2018. Following implementation, response providers wishing to continue to hold Tier 2 contracts will have a one-year grace period during which to be re-accredited under a scheme which applies the UK Standard.