

# AUSTRALIAN MARINE PARKS - STRATEGY

## *Environmental Incident and Emergency Response*



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# *Environmental Incident and Emergency Response Strategy*

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## 1. Introduction

The management of Australian Marine Parks (AMPs) requires a balance between protection of the marine environment and opportunities for sustainable use and enjoyment. The Director of National Parks (DNP) who has responsibility for managing AMPs works to ensure that marine parks are healthy, resilient and well-managed to enhance Australia's wellbeing.

In supporting responses to serious or critical environmental incidents and emergencies in and adjacent to Australian Marine Parks (AMPs), the DNP seeks to prevent or minimise impacts on marine park values (natural, cultural, heritage, social and economic), users and staff.

Generally the DNP is not responsible for coordinating responses to environmental incidents but provides advice on values and safety relating to AMPs in accordance with the National Plan for Maritime Environmental Emergencies (the National Plan) or under the Offshore Petroleum Incident Coordination (OPIC) Framework for incidents relating to oil and gas activities.

## 2. Legislation / Regulations

The DNP manages 58 AMPs proclaimed as Commonwealth reserves under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). The DNP's functions under the EPBC Act include to:

- (a) administer, manage and control Commonwealth reserves declared under the EPBC Act; and
- (b) to protect, conserve and manage biodiversity and heritage in Commonwealth reserves (s.514B).

Incident and emergency response activities in AMPs must be carried out in accordance with the respective management plan which are legislative instruments. The South-west, North-west, North and Temperate East Networks and the Coral Sea Marine Park management plans are in force from July 2018 – 2028, with the prescriptions for responding to incidents and emergencies contained in 'Part 4 - Managing Activities'. The South-east Marine Parks Network Management Plan is in force from July 2013 – 2023 with the prescriptions for responding to incidents and emergencies contained in 'Part 5 - Managing Use'.

## 3. Scope

This Strategy applies where serious or critical incidents and emergencies occur in or adjacent to AMPs. Such events may include: maritime infrastructure or transportation incidents resulting in oil/chemical spills, land based oil/chemical spills which have the potential to spread to the marine environment, vessel grounding causing damage to the marine environment, cyclones, tsunamis, heatwaves and pest and disease outbreaks.

## 4. DNP response to incidents and emergencies

The DNP is committed to working closely with government and non-government stakeholders in the event of an environmental incident or emergency response that occurs in or adjacent to AMPs. Attachment A outlines the Commonwealth Agencies responsible for critical maritime incidents.

The below information indicates the broad role of the DNP in critical incident or emergency response management in or adjacent to AMPs and includes:

- a) involvement in existing incident planning frameworks to ensure critical incident response actions consider marine park values, and park users and staff safety (e.g. the provision of information on marine park values);
- b) participation in critical incident responses in accordance with roles established under the National Plan and other coordination arrangements;
- c) ensuring marine park staff or contractors, if aware of an incident in advance of a lead agency, are aware of their obligations to notify the relevant lead response agency and, if practicable, assess the situation and render assistance (e.g. evacuate or warn others);
- d) where an environmental incident arises as a result of a **mining operation** authorised under the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006 (OPGGs Act), actions to monitor or remediate the situation may be conducted in AMPs without a direct authorisation issued by the DNP, however the DNP will work with the responsible titleholder to identify values and stakeholders of the marine park/s that need to be considered with regard to response actions;
- e) working with the responsible agency for various suspected **biosecurity** incidences of introduced species and disease (marine and terrestrial) outbreaks in or adjacent to AMPs to minimise impacts on values to these parks; and
- f) providing advice to AMSA regarding the hazards, risks and implications for AMPs where certain exemptions under the EPBC Act exist under the National Plan for actions taken for the purposes of training and operations for defence, customs, border protection, law enforcement or emergency response. Responses to maritime environmental emergencies in accordance with the National Plan can be conducted without the need for a permit or class approval from the DNP.

## 5. Whole-of-government coordination and participation

The DNP contributes to marine oil spill response preparedness through the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment's participation in the Australian Government National Plan Committee (AGNPC) for maritime environmental emergencies related to marine pollution incidents from shipping; and the National Plan Oiled Wildlife Working Group; and other committees that may be stood up alongside, or in place of these.

The DNP participates in exercises under the National Plan and the Offshore Petroleum Incident Coordination Framework.

## 6. Monitoring and review

This strategy will be reviewed annually or as necessary to reflect best-practice in the response of the DNP to environmental incidents and emergencies.

## 7. Additional resources

[National Plan for Maritime Environmental Emergencies \(The National Plan\)](#)

[Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006 \(OPGGs Act\)](#)

[International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation 1990 \(OPRC\)](#)



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### **8. Reporting and contacts**

To report an incident or emergency in or near an Australian Marine Park please call the Marine Duty Officer on **0419 293 465** as well as a follow up email to [marine.compliance@environment.gov.au](mailto:marine.compliance@environment.gov.au).

The Duty Officer will then notify the relevant response agency or if the call is from a response agency/titleholder, notifying the DNP of an incident, the Duty Officer will begin processes within Parks Australia to provide the information needed by the responder.

For enquiries in relation to this Strategy please contact:

Marine and Island Parks Branch  
Parks Australia  
[marineparks@awe.gov.au](mailto:marineparks@awe.gov.au)

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### ATTACHMENT A – COMMONWEALTH AGENCIES RESPONSIBLE FOR CRITICAL MARITIME INCIDENTS

(Source: Australian Government Coordination Arrangements, AMSA) <b>Incident</b>	<b>Agency responsible for overseeing preparedness</b>	<b>Agency responsible for overseeing response operations</b>	<b>Control agency responsible for conducting preparedness and response</b>	<b>Response plans</b>	<b>Coordination Committee</b>
<b>Offshore petroleum vessel or facility (oil pollution)</b>					
Fixed platform; Floating Production Storage and Offloading vessel, FPSO; Mobile Offshore Drilling Unit, MODU; Construction, decommissioning and pipe laying vessel; Subsea infrastructure, biofouling in relation to offshore oil and gas activities.	NOPSEMA Duty phone 1300 674 472	NOPSEMA Duty phone 1300 674 472	Titleholder	Oil Pollution Emergency Plan (OPEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offshore Petroleum Incident Coordination Committee (OPICC) – led by the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources</li> <li>• Australian Government Crisis Committee (AGCC) or National Crisis Committee (NCC) – chaired by Home Affairs or Prime Minister and Cabinet (in the event of a crisis)</li> </ul>
Seismic survey; Supply or support vessel. Off-take tanker.	NOPSEMA/ AMSA AMSA	AMSA Response Centre 1800 641 792	AMSA  AMSA		
<b>Shipping</b> (drifting, pollution, physical damage)	AMSA	AMSA Response Centre 1800 641 792	AMSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Plan for Maritime Environmental Emergencies (National Plan)</li> <li>• AMSA Marine Pollution Contingency Plan</li> <li>• AMSA Casualty Management Guidelines</li> <li>• Ship Oil Pollution Emergency Plans (SOPEP) required by all registered Australian or foreign flagged vessels</li> </ul>	Maritime Emergency Strategic Coordination Committee (MESCC) – led by AMSA



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<p><b>Biosecurity</b> (marine pests and aquatic animal health)</p>	<p>DAWE</p>	<p>DAWE</p>	<p>DAWE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Environmental Biosecurity Response Agreement (NEBRA).</li> <li>• Emergency Marine Pest Plan (EMPPPlan) and Biosecurity Incident Management System-Marine Pest Version.</li> <li>• Aquatic animal health (excluding reptiles, birds and mammals)- AQUAVETPLAN</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultative Committee on Introduced Marine Pest Emergencies (CCIMPE); and</li> <li>• Aquatic Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Disease (CCEAD)</li> </ul>
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