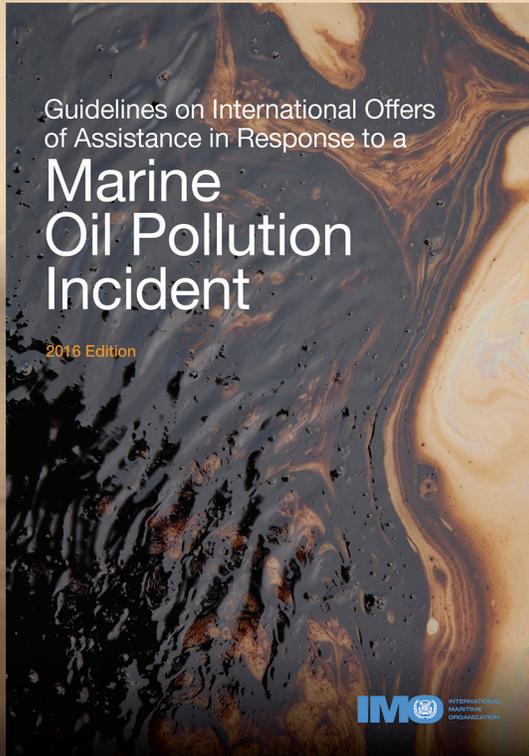


Guidelines on International Offers  
of Assistance in Response to a  
**Marine Oil Pollution  
Incident**



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# Guidelines on International Offers of Assistance in Response to a Marine Oil Pollution Incident

Countries facing a major pollution emergency may require external resources to augment national response capacity for large, complex or significant oil spill incidents. In such cases, the Requesting Country may wish to issue a request for international assistance. This can be done bilaterally, multilaterally, or possibly through a regional mechanism, where these exist. Correspondingly, major oil spills may trigger spontaneous offers of assistance from governments and international organizations, usually in the form of equipment, technical specialists, vessels and other resources. Regional and international organizations may also assist in facilitating and coordinating assistance in support of national level efforts.

The **Deepwater Horizon (DWH)** Mobile Offshore Drilling Unit (MODU) spill incident in the Gulf of Mexico in April 2010 highlighted the importance of international stakeholder planning and coordination to ensure maximum resource availability and utilization during a catastrophic oil spill or hazardous substance event. Several nations stepped forward to assist the United States during the DWH incident. These offers included equipment, technical expertise and general assistance. The extensive support from the international partners of the United States cannot be overstated; however, the event highlighted the

need for guidelines for procedures for requesting and receiving emergency assistance in events of this scale including a common lexicon of equipment terminology and an international equipment inventory.

This publication provides guidelines on international offers of assistance (IOA) in response to a marine oil pollution incident and is designed for use by any country, particularly parties to the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation, 1990 (OPRC 1990), as a tool to assist in managing requests for spill response resources and offers of assistance from other countries and organizations when confronted with large, complex or significant oil spill incidents. These guidelines could be used during large, complex or significant oil spills within inland areas as well as marine or coastal environments. While these guidelines can play an important role in the implementation of the OPRC 1990 Convention, they are not prescriptive or legally binding, and are meant as a tool to assist as needed.

This publication complements IMO's existing series of titles (manuals, guidelines) relating to oil pollution. The appendices in the publication present various sample forms, an extensive equipment and personnel lexicon glossary with acronym listing.

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