

# DEEPWATER HORIZON VESSEL ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL

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## I. PURPOSE & SCOPE

The following vessel assessment protocol has been developed and reviewed by members of the area's Unified Command, including British Petroleum Company, Inc. (BP), the United States Coast Guard (USCG), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), in addition to consultation with local industry partners in response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill incident.

The protocol below directs how vessel assessment efforts are to be conducted by following a two phase construct and should be used as a reference while conducting assessments of vessels that are suspected of having encountered oiled waters.

Should a vessel pose a threat, as determined by a Phase One or Phase Two assessment, to the area's infrastructure as a result of the Deepwater Horizon incident, vessels **WILL** be required to undergo decontamination at sites designated in this protocol. Should it be determined that a vessel needs decontamination, the subject vessel **MUST** operate in accordance with the area's *Deepwater Horizon Vessel Decontamination Plan*, in addition to the provisions of this protocol.

The term "vessel" as referred to in this plan shall include, but not be limited to, all self-propelled and non-self-propelled craft (e.g. barges, MODUs, etc).

-Recreational vessels will be subject to a different plan to be developed.

Compliance with this protocol is **MANDATORY** unless otherwise directed by the area's Unified Command, Pollution Investigators (PI), or designated representative. Failure to comply with the provisions of this protocol could result in unnecessary delay of vessels.

## II. VESSEL ASSESSMENT PHASES

The assessment of vessels transiting from oiled waters to any of the ports within the Unified Command's AOR will be conducted in two phases, as follows:

1. Phase One

Phase one shall be implemented as soon as practicable on May 3rd 2010 and require the self-assessment of vessels for oil contamination by vessel owners and operators.

2. Phase Two

Phase two shall be implemented as soon as resources are available. It will require USCG Pollution Investigators (PIs) to conduct on-scene surveys of inbound deep and shallow draft vessels. Throughout this phase, vessels

are still required to self-assess and report to the Unified Command Decontamination Cell.

### **III. PHASE ONE ASSESSMENTS**

Phase One assessments shall be conducted by vessel owners and operators; these results will be reported to the Unified Command. The following information will be in every vessel's report:

1. Was any oil slick, sheen, or residue sighted during the vessel's transit into port? If so, where did your vessel sight this oil slick, sheen, or residue?
2. Did your vessel transit through any part of the slick, sheen, or residue at any time during the vessel's voyage?
3. Was there or is there now any evidence of oil on your vessel's hull/structure? If so, estimate how much and what percentage of the vessels hull is covered by oil?
4. What procedure and steps were taken to determine if oil was present on your vessel's hull?

It is requested that harbor pilots, assist tug crews, and any other mariners also pay special attention and report any evidence of oil on vessels' hulls to the Unified Command. These reports will be reported to the Unified Command Decontamination Cell. Reports shall be submitted verbally by calling 251-445-8983. Vessel owners and operators **MUST** include a functioning vessel contact number with each report.

If during the self-assessment of a vessel, it is determined by an owner or operator that decontamination is needed, a request for decontamination must be submitted to the Unified Command Decontamination Cell as soon as possible so the vessel can be directed to a specific decontamination site.

A trust, but verify, approach shall be taken by the area's Unified Command. To verify the accuracy of reports coming in and to assist in the stand-up of Phase Two, Unified Command assets will be used to conduct report verification assessments of 50% to 75% of all vessels transiting into ports located in the states of Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida. The percentage of Unified Command assessments may be increased or decreased accordingly by the PI.

These verifications will consist of Unified Command assets to conduct visual assessments to verify the accuracy of self-assessment reports. Should a vessel be deemed to have oil on the hull/structure, the vessel will be directed to a specific site to receive

decontamination in accordance with the provisions of this protocol and the *Deepwater Horizon Vessel Decontamination Plan*.

--Unified Command verifications will cease following the stand-up of Phase Two of this protocol.

Self-assessments by vessel owners and operators and the submitting of reports **MUST** continue concurrently with Phase Two of this assessment protocol.

#### **IV. PHASE TWO ASSESSMENTS**

Phase Two assessments will be conducted by PIs as soon as resources become available.

While conducting Phase Two assessments, PIs **MUST** be on hand at each designated assessment screening zone (vessel decontamination site) to conduct assessment surveys of 75% of all inbound vessel traffic. The percentage of vessels surveyed by PIs may be adjusted at any time by the Unified Command.

PIs will log results on-site and report assessment results to the Unified Command Decontamination Cell. PIs should direct all vessels that need decontamination to specific decontamination zones for deep-draft or shallow-draft vessels as applicable.

Phase One self-assessments and reporting **MUST** continue concurrently with Phase Two PI surveys.

The assessment order of priority will be determined by taking into account the quality of information contained in self-assessment reports, vessel routes, and the impact of delays on commerce.

#### **V. DEEP DRAFT VESSEL ASSESSMENTS**

Deep draft vessel Phase One and Two assessments shall take place at the following locations:

- Mobile, AL anchorage
- Pascagoula, MS anchorage
- Gulfport, MS anchorage
- Pensacola, FL anchorage (potential)
- Panama City, FL anchorage (potential)

Should it be determined through Phase One or Two assessments that a vessel needs decontamination, the PI will direct the vessel to undergo preliminary decontamination at a designated zone in the anchorage.

Following preliminary decontamination, deep draft vessels may proceed inbound to their respective port as planned with an oil ring stain or "bath-tub ring" left over following preliminary decontamination. The vessel may undergo refined decontamination at a designated site if desired. No additional hull cleaning is authorized outside designated refined cleaning sites.

## **VI. SHALLOW DRAFT VESSEL ASSESSMENTS**

Shallow draft vessel assessments shall remain as Phase One self-assessments and should follow the requirements for Phase One reporting. If requested by the vessel's owner or operator, a PI or designated representative of the Unified Command may also conduct a vessel assessment.

Should it be determined through assessment that a vessel needs decontamination; the vessel shall undergo refined decontamination at a location specified by the PI or Unified Command Decontamination Cell. Bath-tub rings will be used as appropriate or as directed.