



Application of Dispersants: Approval and Testing methods in Canadian Waters

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Geography of Canada's Pacific Coast

- ✍ **Approximately 30,000 Km of Coastline**
- ✍ **Remote and sparsely populated**
- ✍ **Extreme weather conditions; fog to hurricane force winds**
- ✍ **Ecologically, very rich**

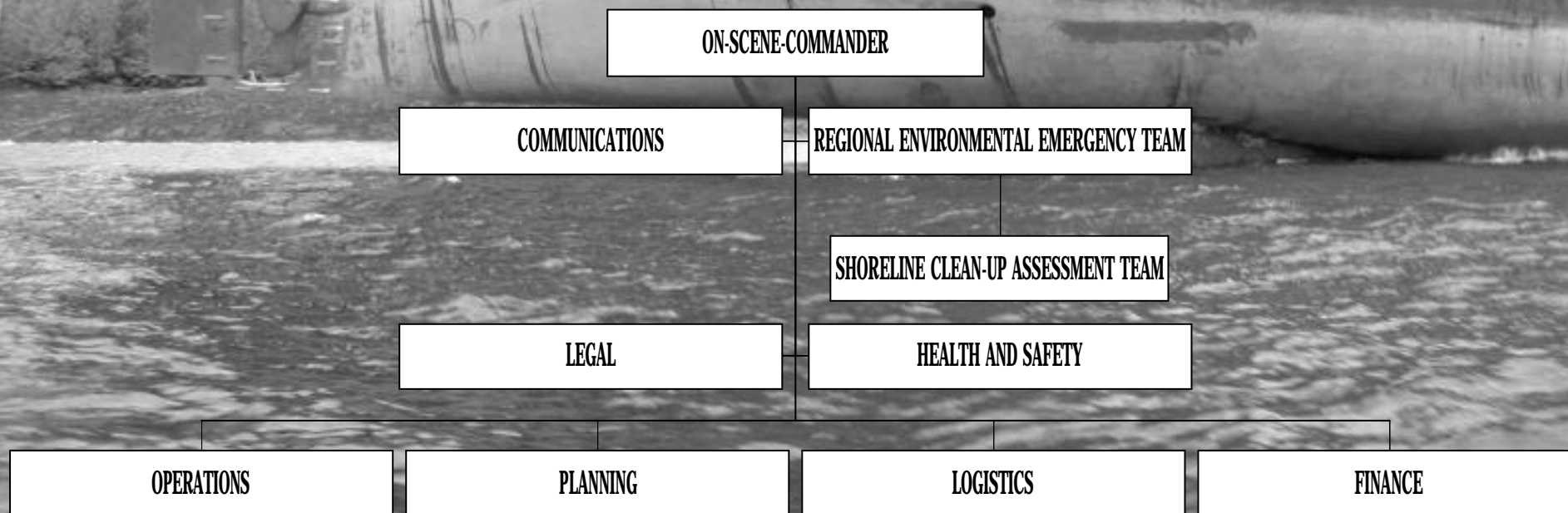


Government Structure and Authorities on Canada's Pacific Coast

- ✎ DFO/Coast Guard**
- ✎ Environment Canada/Canadian Wildlife Services**
- ✎ Province of British Columbia**

Canada's Spill Response System

Coast Guard's Response Management System (RMS)



Canadian Coast Guard Response Management Structure

Regional Environmental Emergency Team (REET)

ON-SCENE-COMMANDER

COMMUNICATIONS

REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCY TEAM

SHORELINE CLEAN-UP ASSESSMENT TEAM

LEGAL

HEALTH AND SAFETY

OPERATIONS

PLANNING

LOGISTICS

FINANCE

Canadian Coast Guard Response Management Structure

Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Team (SCAT)

ON-SCENE-COMMANDER

COMMUNICATIONS

REGION ENVIRONMENTAL EMGENCY TEAM

SHORELINE CLEAN-UP ASSESSMENT TEAM

LEGAL

HEALTH AND SAFETY

OPERATIONS

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Issues to be Addressed by Responders



- ✍ **Limited Window of Opportunity**
- ✍ **Conflicting opinions on effectiveness**
- ✍ **Logistics of effective application**
- ✍ **Logistics of effective supply/stockpiling**
- ✍ **International Commitments**

Coast Guard's Activities on Dispersant Application



✍ **Combined Canada/USA application
exercises**

Coast Guard's Activities on Dispersant Application



- ✍ **Workshop on the use of dispersants and the approval process**
- ✍ **Potential for Pre-approval**



Future for the Coast guard

- ✍ **Industrial Developments**
- ✍ **Development of Regional/National Policy**
- ✍ **Pre-approval**
- ✍ **Stockpiling of**
- ✍ **Agreements/Contracts for aircraft**

Use of Dispersants in Canadian Waters

There is no agreed upon criteria for the use of dispersants in Canadian waters.

The Fisheries Act of Canada prohibits the depositing of 'a deleterious substance in Canadian waters frequented by fish'. As all dispersants have some negative impact on the marine environment, it is technically illegal to use dispersant in Canada, however, under the Canada Shipping Act, the Coast Guard, in an emergency, has extensive powers to prevent or minimize the impact of oil released from a ship. These powers include directing, seizing or even destroying a vessel.

The Coast Guard On Scene Commander (OSC) during a spill is the lead Federal Agency and is ultimately responsible for all clean-up actions, but all actions will be subject to the test of reasonableness.

To complicate the issue further, Coast Guard has been moved from within the Department of Transport to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans who administer the Fisheries Act as well as sections of the Canada Shipping Act (through the Coast Guard).

The current position of the Coast Guard on the Pacific Coast of Canada is that dispersants are a tool that, under suitable circumstances, can be used to minimize the impact of an oil spill. If there were an incident that the OSC, after consulting with all his advisers, felt that the NET ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT could be reduced by the use of dispersants, he would be obligated to use that tool. This action could, theoretically, result in the unpleasant situation where one branch of the Government is charging another branch with a criminal offence.

Fortunately, no such incident has occurred, however, to avoid this situation ever arising, we have held workshops and exercises with Fisheries scientists and regulators, and with Coast Guard spill response personnel. The goal is to try to identify criteria and gain pre-approval for the use of dispersants and to identify geographic areas and physical conditions where their use might be considered. No conditions and/or areas have been agreed upon to date.

In conjunction with the pre-approval process, the Canadian Coast Guard has been working with the US Coast Guard on the operational aspect of applying dispersants, to ensure that the dispersant is applied in the most effective manner with minimal negative impact on the environment.