

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

WASHINGTON D.C. 20590

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

WASHINGTON D.C. 20590

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENTS OF THE INTERIOR AND  
TRANSPORTATION CONCERNING RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE NATIONAL OIL AND  
HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES POLLUTION CONTINGENCY PLAN

In order to assure the most efficient use of resources under the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan, the Secretaries of the Departments of the Interior and Transportation agree that the following provisions shall be observed by the agencies of the two Departments in the exercise of their authority and the discharge of their responsibilities under the Contingency Plan.

1. The U.S. Geological Survey has the expertise and capability for coordination and direction in respect to measures to abate the source of pollution when the source is an oil, gas or sulfur well.

2. The U.S. Coast Guard has the expertise and capability for coordination and direction in respect to measures to contain and remove pollutants.

3. With respect to spills originating from operations conducted under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act of 1953, the U.S. Coast Guard shall furnish or provide for the On Scene Coordinator (OSC) with authority and responsibilities as provided by the National Contingency Plan subject to the following qualifications:

a The authorized representative of the U.S. Geological Survey on the scene shall have the exclusive authority with respect to coordination and direction of measures to abate the source of pollution.

b The authorized representative of the U.S. Geological Survey on the scene shall make the determination, which shall be binding upon the On Scene Coordinator, that pollution control activities within a 500 meter radius of the source of pollution should be suspended to facilitate measures to abate the source of pollution.

c The authorized representative of the U.S. Geological Survey on the scene shall make the determinations necessary under Section 250.43 of Title 30 of the Code of Federal Regulations, which shall be binding upon the On Scene Coordinator.

d In regard to those matters arising under Section 1334 et seq of Title 43 of the U.S. Code and the regulations and Outer Continental Shelf Orders issued thereunder, the On Scene Coordinator shall communicate with the lessee through the authorized representative of the U.S. Geological Survey on scene.

e The On Scene Coordinator and the authorized representative of the U.S. Geological Survey on scene shall maintain close liaison in all matters.

4. With respect to spills originating from operations conducted under the Submerged Lands Act of 1953 or in internal waters of the United States, the U.S. Geological Survey, upon request of the U.S. Coast Guard, will furnish expertise, guidance, and such other assistance as may be appropriate in respect to measures to abate the source of pollution when the source is an oil, gas, or sulfur well.

5. This memorandum of understanding shall be reviewed annually and shall continue in force until it shall be amended or terminated by mutual agreement.

Done this Sixteenth of August, 1971, at the City of Washington D.C.

FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
UNDER SECRETARY OF INTERIOR

WILLIAM T. PECORA

FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
UNDER SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

JAMES M. MEGGS