



SPECIAL CIRCULAR

No. 13-023
24 January 2014

To the Members

Dear Sirs,

US Vessel Response Plans – Non-tank vessels Final Rule – Update

- **NTVRP Implementation Date – 30 January 2014**
- **Deactivation of Old Non-tank Vessel Response Plans on 31 January 2014**
- **Alaska – Alternative Planning Criteria (non-tank vessels)**
- **Pacific Region – Alternative Planning Criteria (tank and non-tank vessels)**

This circular refers to the Special Circular [No.13-017](#) dated 9 December 2013.

- **NTVRP Implementation Date - 30 January 2014**

Members are reminded that the US Non-Tank Vessel Response Plan (NTVRP) final rule will come into force on 30 January 2014. Despite an approach by the International Group, amongst others, requesting an extension to the deadline, the US Coast Guard (USCG) has stated that there will be no extension of the deadline. Thus, by 30 January, shipowners must have filed a Vessel Response Plan under this rule and either have received approval of the plan or have filed a plan containing sufficient elements to obtain Interim Operating Authorisation. (See the Special Circular [No.13-020](#) dated 26 December 2013)

The NTVRP Final Rule was published on 30 September 2013 and requires compliance within four months. Non tank owners are required for the first time to enter into salvage funding and firefighting agreements which involve detailed contractual arrangements. The Coast Guard, recognising that time may be limited for plan holders and preparers to complete all elements of their NTVRPs, has said that it will issue 6-month Interim Operating Authorization (IOA) letters, as necessary. In order to meet the requirements to receive an IOA letter, vessels must submit a plan containing the minimum following information to COMDT (CG-CVC) at the following address - Inspections and Compliance Directorate Contact: VRP Program - 2703 Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE STOP 7501 Washington, DC 20593-750. Phone: (202) 372-1226. E-Mail: vrp@uscg.mil.

- (1) identification of a qualified individual (QI) and alternate QI;
- (2) identification of an OSRO by contract or written consent as appropriate;
- (3) identification of a salvage and marine firefighting provider and submission of a salvage contract and funding agreement or written consent agreement as appropriate;

and

- (4) signed certification statement as required by 33 CFR 155.5023(b).

If the plan is not fully compliant with other Sub-part J requirements, i.e., pre-fire plan or vessel specific information is lacking, the certification statement should identify those plan elements that are incomplete.

(For Sub-part J see: <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2013/09/30/2013-22059/nontank-vessel-response-plans-and-other-response-plan-requirements#h-46>)

Marine Safety Information Bulletin (MSIB) 42-13, issued on 19 December 2013, identifies the minimum NTVRP requirements necessary for issuance of new six-month IOAs. These can be viewed by using this link <http://homeport.uscg.mil> and using the following path to find MSIB 42-13:

Missions > Environmental > Vessel Response Plan Program > Non-tank Vessel Response Plans > Important NTVRP Documents.

- **Deactivation of Old Non-tank Vessel Response Plans on 31 January 2014**

On 14 January 2014 the USCG published a notice concerning the deactivation on 31 January 2014 of old non-tank vessel response plans which were created under the interim provisions of NVIC 01-05 CH-1. This is regardless of their expiration dates.

The regulations of 33 CFR 155 Subpart J, Nontank Vessel Response Plans (NTVRPs), supersede the interim NTVRP guidance of Navigation and Inspection Circular (NVIC) 01-05 CH-1.

THEREFORE, on 31 January 2014, the USCG Vessel Response Plan Program will deactivate all NTVRPs created under the interim provisions of NVIC 01-05 CH-1, regardless of expiration dates, some of which may extend until 2015. The only NTVRPs that will remain active will be those that have been updated, reviewed, and either found to be in full compliance with Subpart J and approved for five years, or issued a new six-month interim operating authorization (IOA) to allow time to review and address any identified deficiencies. New Subpart J compliant approval letters and IOAs will specifically mention compliance with "Title 33, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 155, Subpart J."

Conforming OSRO contracts and Funding Agreements

Since publishing the Special Circulars [No.13-011](#) dated 18 October 2013 some of the salvors have changed their agreements and rates. A complete list of the conforming contracts is:

Donjon-Smit – (Tanker and Non-Tank) Version A – October 4, 2013
Donjon-Smit – Consent Agreement for Vessel Response Plans – October 4, 2013

Marine Response Alliance LLC – Version 16 October 2013
Marine Response Alliance LLC – MRA OPA 90 & CA Certificate of Coverage 01 October 2013
Marine Response Alliance LLC – Version 17 January 2014

Resolve Salvage & Fire (Americas) Inc – Version 3 – 1 October 2013
Resolve Salvage & Fire (Americas) Inc – RMG OPA 90 Certificate of Coverage 01 October 2013

Svitzer – USA Companies Version October 1, 2013
Svitzer – INTL Companies Version October 1, 2013
Svitzer Written Consent – Version Oct 2013

T&T Salvage LLC – USA Owner (Tanker and Nontank) Version – 4 October 2013
T&T Salvage LLC - Non-US Owner (Tanker and Nontank) Version – 4 October 2013
T&T Salvage LLC – OPA 90 Written Consent – 4 October 2013

However no guarantee can be given that the rates referred to are the latest.

Conforming OSROs contracts – MSRC and NRC

The footers for conforming versions of the two main Oil Spill Response Organisation (OSRO) contracts, Marine Spill Response Corporation[MSRC] and National Response Corporation [NRC]are:

MSRC – September 27, 1996

NRC – September 15, 2004

MARSALV

US Open Form Salvage Agreement (MARSALV) is a variation of LOF and principally used by US salvors engaged in salvage services on behalf of US based ship owners. This form, however, has been incorporated into a number of the OPA90 SMFF Funding Agreements reviewed by the IG. MARSALV is not a salvage form approved by the Club and therefore any claim relating to a liability to pay special compensation under the terms of MARSALV may not be covered. This form was referred to in certain contracts for Resolve and MRA. It has now been removed from the current forms pending further discussion with the International Group.

- **Alaska – Alternative Planning Criteria for non-tank vessels**

We refer to [No.13-020](#) dated 26 December 2013. The Alternative Planning Criteria for non-tank vessels for Western Alaska can be viewed by clicking on the link "<http://www.ak-mprn.org>". Non-tank vessels in transit through Western Alaska waters coming either from a US port or going to a US port are required to follow Alternative Planning Criteria in order to fulfil federal requirements. At present the only option available is to enrol with Alaska Maritime Prevention and Response Network. However, the terms of the enrolment agreement do not conform with International Group guidelines on Vessel Response Plans. At the request of the International Group, various changes have been made to the enrolment agreement and it is hoped that resolution of outstanding items will be reached shortly. The International Group remains in contact with the Alaskan Maritime Prevention and Response Network.

One of the conditions of enrolling with the Network is that the shipowner gives prior authorisation to his QI to sign a contract with Alaska Chadux in the case of a spill. Members are reminded that the terms of the Alaska Chadux agreement do not conform with International Group guidelines. In the meantime members wishing to enrol are advised to contact their Club for updates.

- **Alternative Planning Criteria for the Pacific Region (D14 Remote Zone)**

On 12 January the USCG published some guidance on Alternative Planning Criteria (APC) for D14 Remote Zone. A copy of the guidance note is attached to this Circular. This region encompasses American Samoa, Guam and the Northern Marianas. Various interim measures will be put in place and members are advised to contact the USCG or their plan writers for further details. Various OSROs are listed in the APC. The contractual requirements are as follows:

American Samoa

Applicable to Tank vessels, Gas vessels & all other vessels greater than or equal to 400 gross tons (Non-tank vessels)

Contractual requirements:-

A Contract with a local OSRO (Solar or Green Ops) plus a contract with either NRC or MSRC

A Salvor contract or funding agreement.

The International Group has reviewed a contract with Solar and whilst there are certain small issues with the contract which the International Group will discuss with Solar, there are no major issues with the contract.

As yet the International Group has not sighted a contract with Green Ops. Once a copy is obtained, this will be reviewed and comments circulated to members.

The guidance note does not give any information with regard to appropriate salvors within the area.

Guam & CNMI (Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands)

Applicable to Tank vessels & Non-tank vessels with fuel or cargo capacity 2,500 bbls or more.

Contractual requirements:-

A Contract with a local OSRO (Guam Response Services Limited (GRSL) or Oil Spill Response Operations Company LLC/T&T (OSROCO T&T)). A contract with NRC or MSRC is not required.

A Salvor Contract and Funding Agreement as appropriate.

The International Group has reviewed contracts with GRSL and OSROCO T&T.

The contracts with OSROCO T&T conform with International Group guidelines. The contracts have the following footers:

OSRO Designation Agreement - 20 January 2014

OSRO Emergency Response Services Agreement, Non-Tank Vessels – 20 January 2014.

The contract with GRSL does not comply with International Group guidelines. Shipowners contracting with GRSL may expose themselves to risks falling outside the scope of club cover for which additional insurance will be needed.

The USCG guidance note does not give any information with regard to appropriate salvors within the area.

Yours faithfully,

The Japan Ship Owners' Mutual Protection & Indemnity Association

Attachment: D14 Remote Zone APC Requirements

12 January 2014

D14 Remote Zone APC Requirements

American Samoa

Tank & Gas Vessels – Conditions of Entry:

- OSRO: Local: Solar **OR** Green Ops & National: NRC **OR** MSRC.
- A Salvor Contract and Funding Agreement as appropriate.
- Prevention Mitigation Measures:
 - Operate at a slower speed, at the discretion of the master, when within 12 nm of the shoreline or any area where there are hazards to navigation;
 - Call port during daylight hours only;
 - Employ a minimum two tug escort;
 - Pre-boom the vessel while in port;
 - Limit fuel oil/crude oil/product transfer operations to seas less than 3 feet;
 - Engage a standby tug in the immediate location of the fuel oil/crude oil/product transfer operation; and
 - Limit fuel oil/crude oil/product transfer operations to daylight hours only.

All Other Vessels ≥ 400 GTs (Nontank Vessels) – Conditions of Entry:

- OSRO: Local: Solar **OR** Green Ops & National: NRC **OR** MSRC.
- A Salvor Contract and Funding Agreement as appropriate.
- Prevention Mitigation Measures:
 - Operate at a slower speed, at the discretion of the master, when within 12 nm of the shoreline or any area where there are hazards to navigation;
 - Call port during daylight hours only;
 - Minimum two tug escort, with the exception of fishing vessels as well as passenger vessels with less than 30,000 gallons fuel capacity; and
 - Pre-stage boom during fuel oil transfer operations.

Guam & CNMI

All Tank Vessels & Nontank Vessels with fuel or cargo capacity 2,500 bbls or more – Conditions of Entry:

- OSRO: GRSL **OR** OSROCO. No contracts with NRC or MSRC required.
- A Salvor Contract and Funding Agreement as appropriate.
- Interim APC Measures:
 - All Tank vessels, and Nontank Vessels with a fuel or cargo oil capacity of 2,500 bbls or more shall contract with an OSRO (GRSL **OR** OSROCO) in Guam or the CNMI that has the capability to respond to MMPD requirements for inland, near shore, and offshore areas within 24 hours, and WCD 1 requirements within 48 hours.
 - Each Tank Vessel or Nontank Vessel's APC needs to address the lack of WCD capabilities with a gap analysis, and include the stage location and ETA of assets that will be needed to meet WCD. This requirement will be considered met if addressed in the OSRO's contract with the vessel.
 - Any changes to an OSRO's Response Resource Inventory (RRI) or in a vessel's ability to comply with their APC shall be immediately communicated to the COTP.
 - Each vessel's movements within the ports of Guam and the CNMI will be subject to the COTP approval, based upon assessment of port conditions and risk environment.
 - APC request for Nontank Vessels with a fuel or cargo oil capacity of less than 2,500 bbls will not be accepted. They must meet the Final Rule as outlined in 33 CFR 155.5050 by January 30, 2014.