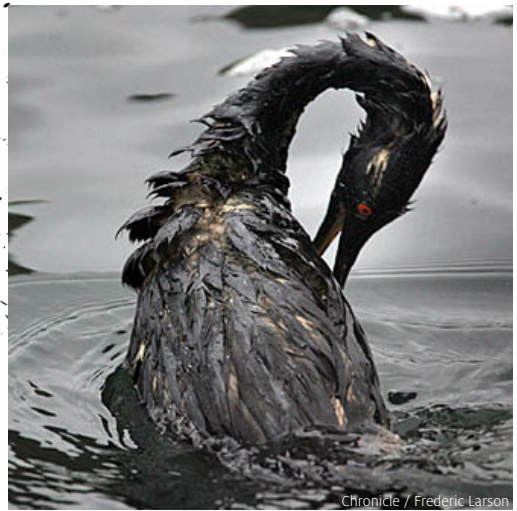


Marine oil spill response



Responses to marine oil spills in New Zealand are carried out under the OPRC International Convention 1990, New Zealand's oil pollution strategy and policy document, Resource Management Act and Maritime Transport Act.

The response system comprises three tiers depending on the scale of the event. Each tier is responsible for providing and maintaining contingency plans, setting out a response capability appropriate for the different levels of responsibility.

Tier 1 – Industry or Oil Transfer Site

Tier 2 – Regional Councils

Tier 3 – Maritime New Zealand

Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) delegates its authority to regional councils for Tier 2 oil spill planning and responses. MNZ provides training and equipment stores for regional councils to help ensure efficient 24 hour responses to oil spills in their regions.

Through its partnerships with regional councils and overseas organisations, MNZ will respond to a marine oil spill of any size. The New Zealand Marine Oil Spill Response Strategy provides the framework to achieve suitable response.

The response system

1. Industry and oil transfer sites

Tier 1 oil spills are generally small and are associated with oil transfer sites (such as a pump on a wharf or a mobile tanker refuelling a boat from a beach). Any industry transferring oil must provide equipment and personnel capable of handling localised spills. Tier 1 plan holders must also provide a suitable contingency plan and exercise it annually. Oil spills outside the capability of a tier 1 response escalate to a tier 2 oil spill.

2. Regional councils

Tier 2 oil spills are within 12 nautical miles of the coastline and/or with a likelihood of associated costs of not more than \$250,000 for the response and cleanup. Regional Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan holders are responsible for approving and auditing tier 1 plans and sites. The Regional Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan is approved by MNZ and exercised annually by carrying out desktop and deployment exercises.

Continued overleaf.



3. Maritime New Zealand

Tier 3 spills are outside 12 nautical miles from the coastline and/or with a total cleanup cost in excess of \$250,000. Tier 3 spills are also declared when spills are complex, large, of long duration and/or when the capacity of the regional council (tier 2) to respond is exceeded. These spills are managed directly by Maritime New Zealand. Regional councils also participate fully in a tier 3 event. MNZ provides and maintains the National Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan.

The Waikato Regional Council has delegated authority to prepare for, and carry out tier 2 responses in the Waikato region. This delegated authority obliges the Waikato Regional Council to fulfil its obligations to provide a suitable and effective tier 2 response for the Waikato region if required.

Oil spill preparedness is funded by a levy on industry sectors whose activities pose a threat to New Zealand's marine environment. This levy is then transferred into the Oil Pollution Fund. Any polluter is still liable for all reasonable costs associated with a required response.

For more information contact Waikato Regional Council on 0800 800 401.