



JANUARY 23, 2014

CIRCULAR NO. 05/14

TO MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Dear Member:

UNITED STATES VESSEL RESPONSE PLANS – NON-TANK FINAL RULE – UPDATE

Reference is made to recent Circulars in regard to the above. This Circular reports on several important developments which have recently taken place.

NTVRP implementation date - January 30, 2014

Members are reminded that the US Non-Tank Vessel Response Plan (NTVRP) final rule will come into force on January 30, 2014. Despite an approach by the International Group, among 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 January 30, 2014, 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 Authorization. Members are referred to earlier Circulars on these issues for further details.

The NTVRP Final Rule was published on September 30, 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 USCG, recognizing 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.

As mentioned in [Circular No. 40/13 of December 30, 2013](#), 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 20593-7500
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 December 19, 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 January 31, 2014

On January 14, 2014 the USCG published a notice concerning the deactivation on January 31, 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.

Accordingly, on January 31, 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 SMFF contracts and Funding Agreements

Since publishing [Circular No. 29/13 of October 22, 2013](#), some salvors have changed their agreements and rates. A complete list of the conforming contracts is as follows:

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.

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.

MSRC and NRC OSRO contracts

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

MSRC – September 27, 1996

NRC – September 15, 2004

Alaska – Alternative Planning Criteria for non-tank vessels

Reference is made to [Circular No. 40/13 of December 30, 2013](#). The Alternative Planning Criteria for non-tank vessels for Western Alaska can be viewed by clicking on the link "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 enroll 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 authorization 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 enroll are advised to contact their Club for updates.

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

On January 12, the USCG issued some guidance on Alternative Planning Criteria (APC) for D14 Remote Zone.

The region in question encompasses American Samoa, Guam and the Northern Marianas. Various interim operational 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. It is understood that 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 plus a contract with either of NRC or MSRC.

A salvor contract or funding agreement.

Available local OSROs are as follows:

Solar

Green Ops & National

The International Group has reviewed a contract with Solar and while 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 seen a contract with Green Ops & National. Once a copy is obtained, this will be reviewed and comments circulated to Members.

Your Managers are not aware of any official list of 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. A contract with NRC or MSRC is not required.

A salvor contract or funding agreement.

Available local OSROs are as follows:

Guam Response Services Limited (GRSL)



Oil Spill Response Operations Company LLC/T&T (OSROCO T&T)

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

The contracts with OSROCO 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 conform to 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.

Your Managers are not aware of any official list of appropriate salvors within the area.

Please note that APC requests for non-tank vessels with a fuel or cargo oil capacity of less than 2,500 bbls will not be accepted, since they are required to meet the Final Rule requirements by January 30, 2014 (see 33 CFR 155.5050).

It is hoped that the foregoing is helpful in providing Members with updated information in these important areas. Should any further explanation be required, Members are invited to contact the Managers who will, as always, be pleased to respond.

Yours faithfully,

Joseph E.M. Hughes, Chairman & CEO
Shipowners Claims Bureau, Inc., Managers for

THE AMERICAN CLUB