



# COVID-19- Antarctica Response Plan



**Purpose**

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, many governments and companies have imposed restrictions limiting the movement of people. This working document describes at a country level how OSRL will approach supporting Members during spill response incidents. It is intended to be referred to as guidance only, based on best-available information at the time of writing. It should be read in conjunction with the latest COVID-19 statement on OSRL’s website: <https://www.oilspillresponse.com/news--media/news/coronavirus-statement/>

**COVID-19 Response Readiness Dashboard**

OSRL Members' Information Hub - a single location to cover your needs, keep you up to date and provide you with the latest information on our response readiness. <https://www.oilspillresponse.com/external-links/covid-19>

To discuss the country plan or for further information please contact: the authors [jamieanderson@oilspillresponse.com](mailto:jamieanderson@oilspillresponse.com) and [jamespage@oilspillresponse.com](mailto:jamespage@oilspillresponse.com) , the Duty Manager, or your OSRL representative.

Service aspect	Normal service	Disruption / Restrictions	Amended approach
OSRL’s Emergency Operations Centre	Remote technical advice from OSRL Duty Manager	None	As per normal
	Provision of 2D and 3D oil spill modelling	None	As per normal
	Provision of satellite imagery	None	As per normal



## COVID-19- Antarctica Response Plan



Service aspect	Normal service	Disruption / Restrictions	Amended approach
Mobilisation	Mobilisation of OSRL response team to incident location assisted by mobilising party	<p>There are currently no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Antarctica. All Governmental agencies working on the continent have a commitment to ensure there is zero transmission. It is currently the only continent with no known cases.</p> <p>Travel to Antarctica is restricted by COVID-19 and dependant on weather conditions as we head into their winter (March-October).</p> <p>There are no scheduled air links to the Territory and there are no road links within the Territory. Almost all access to Antarctica is by sea only.</p> <p>In winter (March-October) the Territory is mostly inaccessible. During the Austral summer (November-February) there will be times when, because of the prevailing westerly winds and lack of sheltered anchorage, landings may be difficult.</p> <p>Several air route options to Antarctica must be considered including transiting through the Falkland Isles on military aircraft or through air charter via Chile, Argentina or South Africa. Travel through these countries is dependent on Covid-19 restrictions and FCO advise for British Travellers can be found here <a href="https://www.fcctravel.com/en-ae/travel-news/situation-update-coronavirus#restrictions">https://www.fcctravel.com/en-ae/travel-news/situation-update-coronavirus#restrictions</a></p>	<p>OSRL will deploy resources in the event of an incident provided it can be done safely and legally, with appropriate precautions in place to safeguard the health of staff and contractors.</p> <p>At this time, it is unclear if OSRL would be able to gain entry into Antarctica due the restrictions of COVID-19 and the uncertainty of weather during the winter months (March- October). OSRL would need to request assistance from the Member to understand if OSRL could enter under a special dispensation.</p> <p>OSRL would liaise with the British Antarctic Survey to seek guidance on travel into the continent.</p> <p>The risk of oil pollution is lowered during the winter months from limited vessel movement from sea freight and tourist operations ceasing.</p> <p><b>Initial Response:</b> In terms of resourcing the response OSRL would call upon its global pool of response personnel who remain ready to respond, despite working from home. The number of personnel deployed would be dependent on requirements, up to a maximum of 18, in line with our SLA with members.</p> <p><b>Ongoing Response:</b> OSRL would continue to deploy additional responders as appropriate for the nature of the incident, but take into consideration the logistical challenges of personnel shift rotation due to the remote nature of this region. These responders would be able to fill IMT / technical advisory / field-based roles. As the response continued OSRL retains the ability to call upon Response personnel from our other bases around the globe.</p> <p><b>Remote support</b> For all the above, remote support will be provided to the in-country team from OSRL's EOCs in Singapore and Southampton.</p>



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	Mobilisation of dispersant aircraft and aircrew to incident location, assisted by mobilising party	<p>According to IATA, aircrew are exempted from the 14-day self-isolation requirement with the appropriate personal protective equipment.</p> <p>Airline crew are advised to take particular care on lay-overs, to use dedicated private transport and to avoid crowded public spaces.</p>	<p>Any 727 mobilisation would be dependent on receiving guidance on the use of dispersants in Antarctic waters. There is currently no guidance on dispersant use in Antarctica. CONMAP would need to be consulted prior to its use.</p> <p>2Excel have confirmed their ability to respond, however mobilisation would be reviewed on a case by case basis.</p> <p>The normal level of support would be required from mobilising party to secure aviation support services at airport dispersant missions (e.g. supply of fuel, airport logistics, permit application for low-lying flight and dispersant spray, etc.)</p> <p>Airline crew would follow the same risk mitigation measures as other OSRL responders, including use of appropriate PPE, enhanced personal hygiene and physical distancing.</p> <p>The flight times detailed below are for guidance purposes only and are subject to obtaining flight clearances, landing permits, ground handling time, local security situation, adverse weather conditions or any other unforeseen circumstance which could delay the flight. As with any response there will be factors outside of our control which could affect the response times and every endeavor will be taken to ensure a timely mobilisation.</p> <p>727 Flight times: Falklands (in range of Antarctic operations) DSA-MPN 13 hrs (+ fuel stop)</p>
	Mobilisation of surface response equipment and dispersants to incident location, assisted by mobilising party	<p>The sea and airfreight markets are disrupted and currently fluid as a result of wider COVID-related disruption.</p> <p><i>* Currently, the air charter market is extremely busy and as such Boeing 747 and other similar aircraft are being heavily utilised to support the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The AN-124 market is as part of this effort being utilised for standard cargo freight charter. As such, normal charter lead times have increased based on current scheduled charter commitments for the aircraft, and the immediate availability of aircraft has therefore reduced. The availability of aircraft for a response will be determined by market conditions on the day and "spot" market availability to respond to an immediate emergency charter request. OSRL remains in close contact with our logistics providers &amp; charter brokers who are monitoring the situation. OSRL will continue to keep you informed and notify immediately if there are significant changes in availability. Please contact OSRL directly for further information.</i></p>	<p>As normal, the optimal routing for equipment and dispersant mobilisation will be based on availability of the spot market. Anticipate potential for delay due to disrupted freight market.</p> <p>The normal level of support would be required from mobilising party to clear customs and provision of in-country logistics.</p> <p>The 'Emergency Response Logistics and Travel Tactical Impact Assessment Plan' written by the Logistics team and reviewed by the Business Continuity Team (BCT) is linked below. The plan gives an overview of how OSRL mobilise equipment to an incident location: <a href="#">Plan link here</a></p>
	Mobilisation of global dispersant stockpile (*Applicable to members subscribed to GDS supplementary agreement)	<p>Being a highly environmentally sensitive area, Antarctica still lacks a resolution on dispersant use and therefore any dispersant usage will be subject to appropriate approval. This needs to be verified before shipping dispersants.</p> <p>Logistics access to GDS stockpile across all locations are constantly being monitored by our Global Logistics Team. Currently access to all locations are not restricted and are able to be mobilized out of the storage location countries.</p> <p>The sea and airfreight markets are disrupted and currently fluid as a result of wider COVID-related disruption.</p> <p><i>*Full charter of aircraft will be preferred option in the event of response. Please contact OSRL directly for further information.</i></p>	<p>As normal, the optimal routing for equipment and dispersant mobilisation will be based on availability of the spot market.</p> <p>Anticipate potential for delay due to disrupted freight market.</p>
In-country response <i>Typical roles performed by OSRL shown here – not exhaustive</i>	IMT-based technical advice	<p><u>Personne</u> Most IMT's for managing an Antarctic oil spill will be based outside of the continent, therefore, this will be assessed on a case by case basis.</p> <p>Our 5 x 5 free Technical Advisory service will still be applicable.</p>	Remote IMT-based technical advice from our Southampton base via video conferencing platforms such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom.

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	Aerial surveillance operations (inc UAV)	<p><u>Personnel</u> Assuming OSRL are able to enter/access Antarctica through special exemption from the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, OSRL will be able to provide this service using BAS aircraft although during the Antarctic winter BAS stop all aviation operations due to extreme weather conditions and zero/limited daylight hours.</p>	<p>Aerial Surveillance in Antarctica is highly unlikely until the end of the Antarctic Winter (November). Prior to that daylight hours are zero or very limited and aviation operations are unsafe due to the climatic conditions.</p> <p><u>Personnel</u> OSRL is able to provide remote support and advice to member on the aerial surveillance operation, spill identification and spill quantification with assistance from related personnel carried the operation on the ground (pilots, etc)</p> <p><u>Equipment</u> OSRL to search for UAV contractor to perform the operation with member's application for approval from the government as an essential services provider.</p> <p>Aerial surveillance can be done without personnel involvement with UAV technologies to record surveillance findings. OSRL can support the operation by providing technical advice and analysis on the findings.</p> <p>Member may have to seek for resources such as chartered helicopter/aircraft when there is a need to carry out surveillance operation with OSRL personnel onboard.</p>
	Shoreline and inland operations (Will update this list based on tier 3 incident: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of manpower needed based on different scenario</li> <li>Expertise needed for specific situations</li> </ul>	<p><u>Personnel</u> See above</p> <p><u>Equipment</u> Operators such as British Antarctic Survey have limited stockpiles of Tier 1 and tier 2 response equipment at their bases. BAS have some training in oil spill response techniques although they are currently understaffed at many stations due to COVID.</p> <p><u>SCAT operation</u> SCAT operation by OSRL personnel may be restricted due current COVID-19 restrictions weather and access limitations.</p>	<p><u>Personnel</u> See above</p> <p><u>Equipment</u> OSRL is still able to mobilise equipment if needed. The normal level of support would be required from mobilising party to clear customs and provision of in-country logistics. Road or Air freight options would both be considered at the time.</p> <p><u>SCAT operations</u> SCAT operations can be done without direct personnel involvement with vessels or UAV technologies to record surveillance findings should the relevant permissions be given for UAV usage. SCAT operations in Antarctica are hugely dependant on access and weather conditions.</p> <p>OSRL can support the operation by providing technical advice and analysis on the findings and produce the report remotely from the UK.</p>
	Offshore vessel based operations	<p><u>Personnel</u> See above</p> <p><u>Equipment</u> See above</p> <p>Vessels are limited in the polar region, especially during winter months. Supply ships and research vessels in proximity of Antarctica maybe able to support during an incident. Vessels would need to be classified as ice class to support a response in the region.</p>	<p><u>Personnel</u> See above</p> <p><u>Equipment</u> See above</p>
	Aerial dispersant operations	<p>Dispersant use is still not approved in Antarctica and therefore consultation with the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs ( CONMAP ) <a href="https://www.comnap.ag/">https://www.comnap.ag/</a> through BAS should be sought prior to any flights or loading of dispersant.</p> <p><u>Personnel</u> See above</p>	<p><u>Personnel</u> The operation could be conducted by the trained aircrew with remote support from OSRL personnel via video conferencing.</p> <p>However dispersant operations may, depending on scale and location need a level of manning that would depend on the availability/restrictions on OSRL staff flying with the 727. Relevant airports and FOB's would be sourced at the time depending on which airports are currently fully operational and can guarantee a high level of security.</p> <p><u>Equipment</u> The normal level of support would be required from Members to perform loading operation on site before the dispersant spraying.</p>



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	Oiled wildlife response	<p><u>Personnel</u> OSRL members have access to Sea Alarm Foundation's Technical Advisors based in Belgium, for which one advisor can be deployed to site to provide oiled wildlife response advice and supervision. However, this may be difficult due to the travel restrictions.</p> <p>OSRL would rely heavily on BAS's marine wildlife experts on assessing the impacts to wildlife in the event of a spill.</p> <p><u>Equipment</u> The sea and airfreight markets are disrupted and currently fluid as a result of wider COVID-related disruption.</p> <p>*Full charter of aircraft will be preferred option in the event of response. Please contact OSRL directly for further information.</p>	<p>Personnel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remote IMT-based technical advice from our Southampton base via video conferencing platform.</li> <li>• OSRL will link client to SEA ALARM Foundation for further guidance.</li> </ul> <p>Equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oiled wildlife resources can be obtained locally in country based on advice given by SEA ALARM</li> </ul>