

DEEPWATER HORIZON RESPONSE

Gulf of Mexico, United States

Following an explosion at an exploration well, the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig sank on 20 April 2010 in the Gulf of Mexico. The ensuing oil spill response became unprecedented in the history of major oil spills with over 45,000 people involved and with resources deployed to the states of Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi and Florida. The leaking well was capped on 15 July and finally sealed on 19 September.

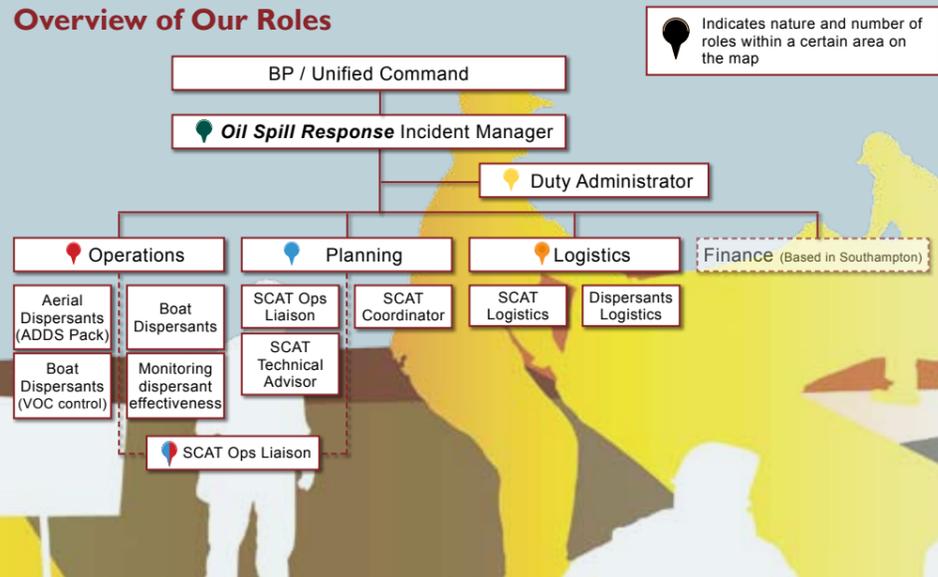
Our involvement began on 28 April with the dispatch of an Incident Commander to provide logistic support to the shoreline cleanup assessment teams and was quickly followed by additional personnel who provide support to BP in a variety of roles as the response unfolded.

The extent and depth of our involvement in this landmark incident was unlike any other previous response in our 25-year history. Reporting to BP and the Unified Command, our involvement took the form of varied roles in several locations across the four affected states. To date we have achieved the following:

70	> 3,542	1,000	18	10
Oil Spill Response staff deployed	Man-days accumulated	Daily SCAT Ops Liaison reports issued	Counties and parishes we operated in	Community Town Halls we assisted in



Overview of Our Roles



Reflection On Our Involvement

It is interesting to note that our involvement in the Deepwater Horizon incident has been at a much more influential level than in many previous responses. With over 45,000 responders involved in the overall effort it was important that our Spill Response Specialists were deployed in key positions within the response structure that deliver best benefit to the mobilising party.

In this case BP adopted the established Incident Command System (ICS) structure to create nine SCAT* / Operations Liaison roles, embedded within the shoreline clean-up function. This innovation played to our strengths as it enabled our Spill Response Specialists to perform a high profile technical advisory role by providing experience-based practical interpretation of the Shoreline Treatment Recommendations issued by the SCAT teams. This influential role was well appreciated by the parish leaders and other local administrations as it provided vital channels of communication between the civic leaders, the operational branches and the clean-up contractors.

Andy Nicoll, Oil Spill Response Incident Manager

* Shoreline Cleanup and Assessment Techniques

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Recognising Our Staff's Involvement



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Sharing Our Staff's Experiences

The task of Incident Manager at the start of a response is very challenging; the way that you focus your energy dictates the success of the role. It is very easy to be distracted by the scale of the event; however, you must understand how to give maximum value with the resources available. The *Oil Spill Response* team were mobilised from all three of our bases and were tasked to undertake aerial dispersant, vessel dispersant, dispersant monitoring, shoreline survey and assessment support and operation liaison.

To fully support the Incident team the underpinning knowledge and experience of oil spills globally greatly helped me when engaged in face to face meetings, strategic planning, liaising with government representatives, non-government bodies and environmental organisations. However in the end having experienced, well trained staff and the right equipment was key to the success of roles and tasks we took part in.

Stuart Gair
Incident Manager



Our staff's multi-disciplinary capabilities helped us perform our duties in the offshore, near shore and shoreline response arenas well. Our all-round technical knowledge and practical skills helped in setting up monitoring programmes, interpreting data, installing equipment, monitoring safety and advising on best practice.

Marcus Russell
Coordinator for ADDS Pack, Boat Spray Ops and Fluorometry in Houma ICP



As a Technical Advisor for SCAT, I was involved with a number of activities including the production of technical reports and assessment of alternative response technologies that may help in the shoreline cleanup. The in-depth knowledge and understanding of the critical issues facing SCAT that I gained from my consultancy background in the Company was essential in the successful fulfillment of the role.

Joselito Guevarra
SCAT / Technical Advisor



I worked together with an external agency on fluorometry, sediment and water sampling. We looked at processing and analysing the samples to detect the short / long term effects of dispersant and dispersed oil in the water column so as to determine the impact on the ecosystem and to come up with a more eco-friendly process to combat oil spills.

John Kizhakethil John
Fluorometry / Simultaneous Operations (SIMOPS)



In the early stages of the spill I ran the safety and logistics for the 10 Louisiana SCAT teams. Using a variety of information sources I prioritised the team missions, sourced vehicles, vessels and helicopters, and made logistical arrangements for transporting the teams to the locations that needed surveying, ensuring that all the teams had the necessary safety and operational equipment.

The roles of our staff included providing technical information and advice, carrying out training on technical elements of the Shoreline Treatment Recommendations written by SCAT, and providing assurance that cleanup operations were carried out effectively.

To perform well in this role, good interpersonal skills need to complement strong technical and operational knowledge. *Oil Spill Response* staff added value because they had this blend and were able to hit the ground running, gaining credibility and authority very quickly.

Dave Rouse
SCAT / OPS Liaison



It was interesting how dispersant was used in the control of Volatile Organic Compounds at the spill source allowing the capping of the well to continue. In addition, using the AFEDO dispersant application system in a real oil spill response situation was very exciting.

Hannah Curd
Dispersant / SMART / SIMOPS / SCAT / Logistics