

Property of Oil Spill Response 	Document Title Oiled Wildlife Service Level Agreement	Document Number OSRL-OPER-SCP-00617	
		Revision	1



Oiled Wildlife Service Level Agreement

REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Date	Description	Author	Reviewer	Approval
0	13/7/2017	Moved to Blueprint	Rob Holland	Daniela Barreras-Biesot	Rob James
1	13/10/2017	Revised with SAF	Rob Holland	Daniela Barreras-Biesot	Rob James

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Oiled wildlife preparedness and response

Details of SAF's SLA services to Oil Spill Response Members

Under the Service Level Agreement (SLA), a Member of Oil Spill Response Ltd (OSRL) has “access to expert oiled wildlife advice” via the SAF Foundation (see SLA June 2017, section 3.0.G). This is made possible under an original 2005 contract and now revised version signed in Dec 2016 between OSRL and SAF (SAF).

Who is SAF?

SAF is a small non-governmental organisation with a 3-person team that works to improve global preparedness for and response to oiled wildlife incidents. SAF's personnel have a unique expertise that includes wildlife incident assessment and management, wildlife planning and preparedness development, response network management and alignment, best practice dissemination, design and development of training and exercises. SAF's expertise and services are widely known and respected in the community of oil spill responders, intergovernmental cooperation, industry and NGOs. SAF experts do not handle animals, but as advisers, help to create the environment and conditions that mobilised hands-on experts need to make a difference during an incident. Any OSRL Member (“Client”) can contact SAF via the OSRL Duty Manager (DM).

What does SAF provide if activated for an oiled wildlife incident?

Under the SLA, SAF can be activated 24/7 as part of the wider OSRL mobilisation. Under the SLA the full-time availability of 2 persons is guaranteed as follows:

1. Full time availability of one SAF expert for advice and potential mobilisation to the affected site.
2. Full time availability of one SAF expert for advice and response support. This expert will not be mobilised but provide advice and support from SAF office in Brussels or OSRL Premises.

SAF's requested involvement needs to be contracted via OSRL's DM. Depending on circumstances, availability and in respect of SAF's small size (total of 3 staff members), one additional SAF expert may be mobilised if needed and if available. This can be agreed for short periods of time, not to compromise SAF's ability to rotate staff on an incident.

If activated by Client, SAF staff will act as follows:

- Fill the role of Wildlife Advisor and provide specialist advice to the Client's Incident Management System via the designated Wildlife Branch Director and Wildlife Planning Coordinator. SAF staff will act in a technical advisory role as opposed to a decision-making role within the IMS
- Work closely with the Client to determine the appropriate level of wildlife response and resource needs
- Pre-assess capabilities and preparedness levels with local government and local responders, maximizing their involvement
- Assist Client to integrate these local resources into the Incident Management System
- Notify the Global Oiled Wildlife Response System (GOWRS) Coordinator (none of whose participants are part of the current SLA arrangements) who will check availability for potential mobilisation, and will directly liaise with the Client and DM pending further decision making on level of mobilisation needed
- Depending on the severity and availability of external response capacity, SAF staff can:
 - provide distant management advice and coach local responders remotely,
 - mobilise one member of staff as part of an assessment team of 2-4 experts to visit the site to determine which assistance is needed and at what scale and/or
 - liaise with the GOWRS Coordinator to provide information during the assessment phase.
- Assisting discussions on services to be agreed between the Client and selected GOWRS personnel before their mobilisation. GOWRS personnel will not be contracted via OSRL nor via Sea Alarm; the Client will need to contract these personnel direct
- Providing advice and support to GOWRS Coordinator and mobilised GOWRS personnel as needed to optimise their effectiveness in cooperation with the Client
- Together with OSRL and GOWRS personnel, co-ordinate mobilisation of stocks of oiled wildlife response equipment from OSRL bases, plus an OSRL Response Specialist to be responsible for use and maintenance on site and to organise reordering and replenishment of consumables

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- Assist with the integration of GOWRS personnel into the Wildlife Branch and ensure the optimal integration of their activities into the overall oil spill response and the support for those activities by local authorities and resources.

What does a mobilised team of oiled wildlife response experts do?

The principle aim of oiled wildlife response is to mitigate the effects of oil on wildlife (seabirds, marine mammals and sea turtles). This is achieved via the following:

- Initial wildlife response assessment and incident response planning, including discussions with authorities about objectives (e.g. euthanasia, rehabilitation, priority rating for species), preferred strategies and methodologies, response limitations, and decision-making powers.
- Mobilisation of oiled wildlife response equipment (from OSRL or other).
- Hazing operations (techniques to deter wildlife away from oiled areas).
- Search and collection of oiled wildlife (alive and dead) on the beach or coastline.
- Setup of temporary rehabilitation facilities and/or transformation of existing rescue centres to handle large numbers of oiled animals.
- Transport of oiled wildlife to a forward holding centre or rehabilitation facility.
- Triage of animals for either long-term rehabilitation or euthanasia.
- Cleaning and rehabilitation.
- Euthanasia of wildlife as appropriate and authorised by regulators.
- Monitoring and release
- Scientific wildlife impact assessment
- Liaising and working with key representatives of the international compensation regimes (e.g. ITOPF, P&I Clubs, IOPC Fund) to maximise the probability of cost reimbursement.

If mobilised, SAF does not engage in hands-on oiled wildlife response activities but works impartially with all parties (Clients, local authorities, mobilised experts and local experts and response groups), aiming to maximise the effectiveness of the above activities.

Who makes up an international team?

Neither SAF nor OSRL have wildlife response organisations on a retained contract basis. The GOWRS project has been set up to develop tools and mechanisms by which appropriate expertise can be identified and mobilised. The GOWRS SOP currently being tested will identify qualified available responders who can carry out an assessment and/or response if considered feasible. It is important to understand that participation of GOWRS organisations and personnel is currently on an *ad hoc* basis and their services are not guaranteed under the SLA. The Client will contract these resources directly and NOT through OSRL, nor through Sea Alarm.

Experts are experienced in different aspects of dealing with oiled wildlife, including managers/staff of permanent wildlife rescue centres (many routinely deal with oiled wildlife), specialists in search and collection of oiled wildlife, wildlife veterinarians, and scientists trained in impact assessment. Each organisation has its own specialism regarding species, and has in turn their own network of external experts who can be identified and mobilised.

What about local expertise and work forces?

No mobilised response team can successfully carry out an oiled wildlife response without the explicit assistance of local experts and work forces. Local authorities and NGOs therefore need to be approached by the Client as one of the highest priorities, ideally before international resources are arriving. Without the explicit approval from local wildlife authorities the international experts are not able to carry out any hands-on work. Without the availability of local work forces that can be dedicated to the wildlife response the international experts will not be able to make a difference at any scale.

SAF develops Country Wildlife Response Profiles, which summarise information to support a national wildlife response. Through this process, SAF aims to identify any local wildlife responders or scientists who could play a role in an oiled wildlife incident, including key persons from scientific groups, institutes or NGOs with local up to date knowledge on the species and habitats at risk from an oil spill. SAF would routinely try to contact these persons in the initial stages of an incident. Country Profiles are published at <http://www.sea-alarm.org>.

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Client in-country support for mobilised international resources

As is the case for an OSRL mobilisation, an oiled wildlife response can only be effective if responders are provided with key administrative, logistics and financial support from the Client to assist smooth running of oiled wildlife operations on site. This includes safety and personal well being for all members of the team.

What does the Client need to provide as part of the IMS to integrate international resources?

If not determined by local or national authorities, the Client should seek to assign its own personnel in key decision-making positions for oiled wildlife response. The role of Wildlife Branch Director (who oversees the whole wildlife response and takes overall decision-making responsibility) and the role of Wildlife Planning Coordinator (who acts as a liaison for OSRL’s DM and SAF’s adviser in the notification and mobilisation of the response) are both best covered locally, by the Client or a local authority.

Client’s Incident Management System should be prepared to accommodate the specific logistic and financial requirements for the full range of wildlife response requirements, which should mean 3-5 dedicated personnel that are made available to the selected Wildlife Branch Director before the arrival of the international resources.

Wildlife response planning

The best guarantee for a fast and effective wildlife response mobilisation is provided by a pre-spill developed wildlife response plan. Such a plan is best integrated with the overall oil spill response plan that a client has in place for its oil exploration, production or transportation activities in a country or area. The wildlife response plan specifies alerting and mobilisation procedure and indicates which local and international resources are identified for a tiered response, so that trained expertise is more readily available. A wildlife response plan has both generic and specific elements and is best based on internationally agreed principles and guidelines (e.g. the 2015 IPIECA-OGP Oiled Wildlife Response Preparedness Good Practice Guidelines, see http://oilspillresponseproject.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Wildlife_response_preparedness.pdf). SAF and GOWRS project partners can assist a client with developing an integrated oiled wildlife response plan and procedures that enable swift mobilisation and optimal use of resources based on tiered response and good practices. These services are not included under the SLA but must be arranged for via separate contracting.

Responding without a pre-spill plan in place

A response without the availability of a pre-spill agreed plan typically will have a large potential for delays and inefficiency due to slow contracting, on-site negotiations, delayed arrivals of key expertise and/or equipment, and the potential counterproductive interference of local groups, inexperienced individuals, opinion leaders and/or media. These complications could mean that the short windows of opportunity to mitigate the impacts of an oil spill on marine wildlife are missed.

Training and exercises

Spill response managers who have to manage the integration of an oiled wildlife response into the overall oil spill response require a minimum basic knowledge of what a wildlife response is and what kind of support and management it requires from an Incident Management System. The functions of Wildlife Branch Director and Wildlife Planning Coordinator need competent personnel who have received dedicated standard training. Together with expert organisations in its network, SAF offers various training courses for industry personnel. Courses are also best offered pre-spill to local wildlife response personnel (e.g. local wildlife groups, scientists or wildlife authority personnel identified to play a role in the tiered response) including theoretical and practical modules. Courses are tailor-made with regard to the requirements of the region and/or the agreed response plan and could last from 0.5 to several days, depending on the level of knowledge of participants and the level of training required. SAF also offers assistance with the design and implementation of oil spill exercises in which a wildlife component needs to be integrated. Multi-year training and exercise programmes to build reliable tiered response capabilities are strongly recommended to go hand in hand with the development of an oiled wildlife response plan (http://oilspillresponseproject.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Wildlife_response_preparedness.pdf).

For further information, contact:

SAF Foundation Rue du Cyprès 7-B10, 1000 Brussels, Belgium Tel +32(0)22788744	Hugo Nijkamp nijkamp@sea-alarm.org Mob +32(0)494900012	Saskia Sessions saskia@sea-alarm.org Mob +32(0)499624772	Paul Kelway pkelway@sea-alarm.org Mob +32(0)497410368
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