

Management of Volunteers in Coastal Pollution Response

Operational Guide

ARCOPOL



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Cover photo:
Initial clean-up: manual recovery on riprap.
Happy Bride spill, France, January 2006, © *Cedre*

Management of Volunteers in Coastal Pollution Response

A Guidance Manual for Response Authorities and Non Governmental Organisations

This guide was produced by *Cedre* within the framework of the European project Arcopol (Interreg IV B transnational cooperation project), with financial support from the French regions of Aquitaine and Brittany.

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This guide was produced from the document drafted by Steelhenge Consulting Ltd, as part of the European project EROCIPS. *Cedre* has integrated its knowledge, acquired during major spills in France, as well as its experience promoted through its own guides and its contributions to the IPIECA publications.

The information contained in this guide is the result of *Cedre*'s research and experience. *Cedre* cannot be held responsible for the consequences resulting from the use of this information.

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Purpose of this guide

This publication was prepared within the framework of work package 5.3 of the European project ARCOPOL, to assist the response authorities and NGOs in the regions participating in ARCOPOL to make the best possible use of volunteers.

It draws heavily from a draft guidance manual with the same title written by Steelhenge Consulting Ltd

within the framework of work package 3.2 of the EU supported EROCIPS project.

It is intended to be used in conjunction with the “Local Authorities Guidelines: What to do in the event of a spill” prepared within the framework of ARCOPOL package 5.5.

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Preparation

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Volunteers in the response

The recent major oil spill incidents in Europe (*Erika*, *Prestige*), the far East (with the *Hebei Spirit* in Korea) and the United States (*Deepwater Horizon* platform) have shown that the successful management of volunteers used in response to coastal pollution, with all due care taken for their health, safety and welfare, is of paramount importance to support development of a faster and more efficient response to coastal pollution incidents with greater co-operation between local, regional and national partners.

The different volunteers

A **volunteer** is an individual who, beyond the confines of paid employment and normal responsibilities, contributes time and service to assist in the accomplishment of a mission. Volunteers can be classified into two main categories: professional and spontaneous volunteers.

- **Professional** volunteers are people who have specialised skills in emergency situations and experience in volunteering in social / environmental / health / industrial crises. They generally belong to a recognised volunteer organisation that has trained them for disaster response and has a mechanism in place to address their mobilisation and use in an emergency.
- **Spontaneous** volunteers are people who have no specific skill related with the needs of emergency situations, and who volunteer individually in the aftermath of a disaster or an emergency because they are keen to help, feeling concerned by the situation and having understood that labour was lacking.



Manual clean-up, Hebei Spirit spill, South Korea, December 2007

Whether professional or spontaneous, volunteers may come from the area, the whole country, or even from abroad. However they will do so without warning and they will expect to find on site arrangements to fulfil their needs and to use them in the best possible way. They are willing to help, they have made efforts to come and they do not expect to be told that they may not be needed. Yet, because they are not associated with any part of the existing emergency response system, their offers are often underutilised and even problematic to professional responders. The paradox is clear: people's willingness to volunteer is confronted with the system's capacity to utilise them effectively.

Benefits, risks and challenges

There are many benefits, risks and challenges for managers and NGOs to consider in the use of volunteers.

Benefits

- Availability and motivation of highly mobile, no cost personnel.



Manual clean-up: emptying buckets. Hebei Spirit spill, South Korea, December 2007

- Fast mobilisation capacity of a population with positive social image.

Risks

- If volunteers are poorly welcomed and deployed, they provide no useful contribution and may present a negative image of the organisation to the media.
- If volunteers are poorly equipped, informed and supervised, they may be putting themselves at risk.

Challenges

- Providing food, beverages, accommodation, training, equipment and supervision for heterogeneous groups of individuals.
- Avoiding competition for the same tasks between volunteers and paid staff.
- Prioritising volunteers able to stay for several weeks over occasional week-enders.
- Preventing added management pressure for response leaders (e.g. Health & Safety issues).



Volunteers are an asset to response, but only as part of a solid organisation led by a team of experienced managers.

Interview: with Barrie Evans

(MCA Regional Operations Manager, designated Deputy Oil Pollution Officer leading the on-shore response to the Sea Empress disaster)



Deployment of Transrec system on board a French Navy oil spill response vessel. Sea Empress spill, Wales, 1996

"The crude 40s we were dealing with was still giving off very strong fumes as it came ashore and it was recognised that the clean-up was not going to be a place for well intentioned but untrained and unprotected volunteers. There were cases of people running into the sea on Pendine Beach to rescue birds and emerging covered in oil creating additional concerns for the responders. This reinforced our resolve that the clean-up must be carried out in a managed and professional way.

We did however recognise that there was a place for volunteer organisations in providing support to the operational responses. [...] The wildlife volunteer organisations were set up back from the beaches in an industrial unit where controlled and appropriate cleaning of birds and seals could be undertaken. The birds were deposited in makeshift holding pens by the clean-up staff from where the volunteers collected them."

Tasks for Volunteers

The importance of well managed volunteer contributions is not only recognised by responder agencies in their emergency response plans, it is also acknowledged by the oil and shipping industries in their documentation on oil spill response .

As an example, ITAC, the oil Industry Technical Advisory Committee for oil spill response, suggests the following tasks for Volunteers in its Technical Paper "Management of Volunteers in Spill Response":

- **Logistics, medical:** inventory control, first Aid attendants, procurement, dispatching supplies, distribution of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), transport of sick or injured personnel, cleaning of PPE, construction of support structures.
- **Shoreline clean-up support and transportation:** recovery of non-oiled debris and materials, carpool services, trucking teams, vehicle cleaning, crowd control, security services, scheduling, dispatching.
- **Personnel services:** accommodation, lodging attendants, laundry services, message centre.
- **Food services:** purchase, cooking, serving, cleaning up.
- **Administrative tasks:** escorting visitors, phone answering, dispatching, messaging.
- **Wildlife rehabilitation:** (specific training with supervision provided by wildlife experts) beach patrol and wildlife notification, oiled wildlife retrieval and transport, bird and mammal cleaning and rehabilitation.



To train volunteers for such tasks, response managers with limited experience in the use of the voluntary sector in an emergency should seek guidance from experienced professionals.

Wildlife care

A number of NGOs such as the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and their national affiliates have trained volunteer members who can respond to coastal pollution events, capturing, cleaning and caring for animals (mostly birds and mammals) impacted by a pollution incident.

Such organisations are experienced in setting up and running wildlife clinics in emergency situations. They can place operators at oiled wildlife rescue sites, who will be able to supervise their packaging before transportation.

Auk contaminated by the oil from the MSC Napoli, following a storm in the Channel, France, January 2007



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Regulations in the Atlantic area

FRANCE

The French rules concerning marine pollution (so-called Polmar regulations) state that members of nature protection and civil security NGOs, with proper insurance and previous training, should be integrated in the pollution response forces as occasional contributors to the technical services of the local communities, under the responsibility of the mayors. These rules recommend establishing a list of the possible manpower contributions from nature protection NGOs and professional organisations for each level of emergency plan.

The use of volunteers provided by established NGOs is strongly recommended over the mobilisation of individual responders. To be called in an emergency, NGOs should demonstrate their contribution capabilities and preferably request a civil security agreement from the authorities.

French volunteer management therefore involves:

- The registration with the authorities, outside of emergency periods, of NGOs able to ensure the supervision and operational management of volunteers in an emergency situation.
- The administrative management of volunteers arriving on scene by communes as spontaneous responders.

UNITED KINGDOM

In the UK, the use of volunteers is not a legislative requirement. However it is acknowledged that the voluntary sector can provide an extensive and diverse range of operational and support skills and services to statutory responders.

Through local multi-agency liaison arrangements, the statutory responders will maintain an overview of the services that are offered across a range of voluntary organisations and will provide an agreed system for co-ordinating the Third Sector response including members of the public who may volunteer their services in response to an incident (convergent volunteers). It is strongly recommended to use trained volunteers from voluntary organisations. A number of established voluntary organisations can provide supporting roles which are stated in the National Contingency plans, mainly with roles in wildlife conservation and protection. Local authorities may also have in their response plan contracted arrangements with voluntary sector agencies for specific tasks.

PORTUGAL

Under the “Plano Mar Limpo” or Clean Sea Plan (1993) it is the responsibility of the Maritime Port and Local Authorities to develop the combined response for an oil or HNS incident or accident, under the direction and coordination of the local, regional or national competent Maritime Authority.

The “Plano Mar Limpo”, and the more detailed, Local and Regional Action Plans (1996) considered all the possible resources available to the above mentioned authorities to combat an incident or accident, including fire-fighters, military personnel, fishermen, local authorities’ staff as well as unqualified manpower. Only in the last decade, and certainly after the *Prestige* accident, was the integration of volunteers in the operational manpower to be taken seriously in Portugal. The “Plano Mar Limpo” is sufficiently flexible to allow the use of volunteers in pollution response operations without any change. However, there are both public health and volunteer health issues to consider when volunteers are involved in response operations; volunteers have the right and the duty to help the country in times of crisis, but the State has the duty to avoid putting them in harm’s way. Recent drills at local and regional level have tried to address these issues and to improve the coordination with relevant organisations, like universities and research centres, which are a source of scientific and technical support in these crises, but also a source of volunteers.

IRELAND

Under the Sea Pollution Acts (1991-2006) it is the responsibility of harbour, port and local authorities to prepare an oil and HNS spill contingency plan for shoreline clean-up, which is subsequently approved by the Irish Coast Guard (IRCG).

Plans are a standard format, based on risk assessment and the tiered response concept. Each plan lists the required resources to combat a spill and training needs. In addition, each plan states communications and health & safety plans for managing clean-up personnel.

While resourcing is the responsibility of each individual authority, the Irish Coast Guard runs annual IMO level training courses for the authorities, during which it is re-iterated that a duty of care is due to volunteers. In addition, during a spill incident the IRCG operates in an oversight role for shoreline clean-up operations.



Waste transfer by the fire brigade. Prestige spill, Galicia, November 2002

SPAIN

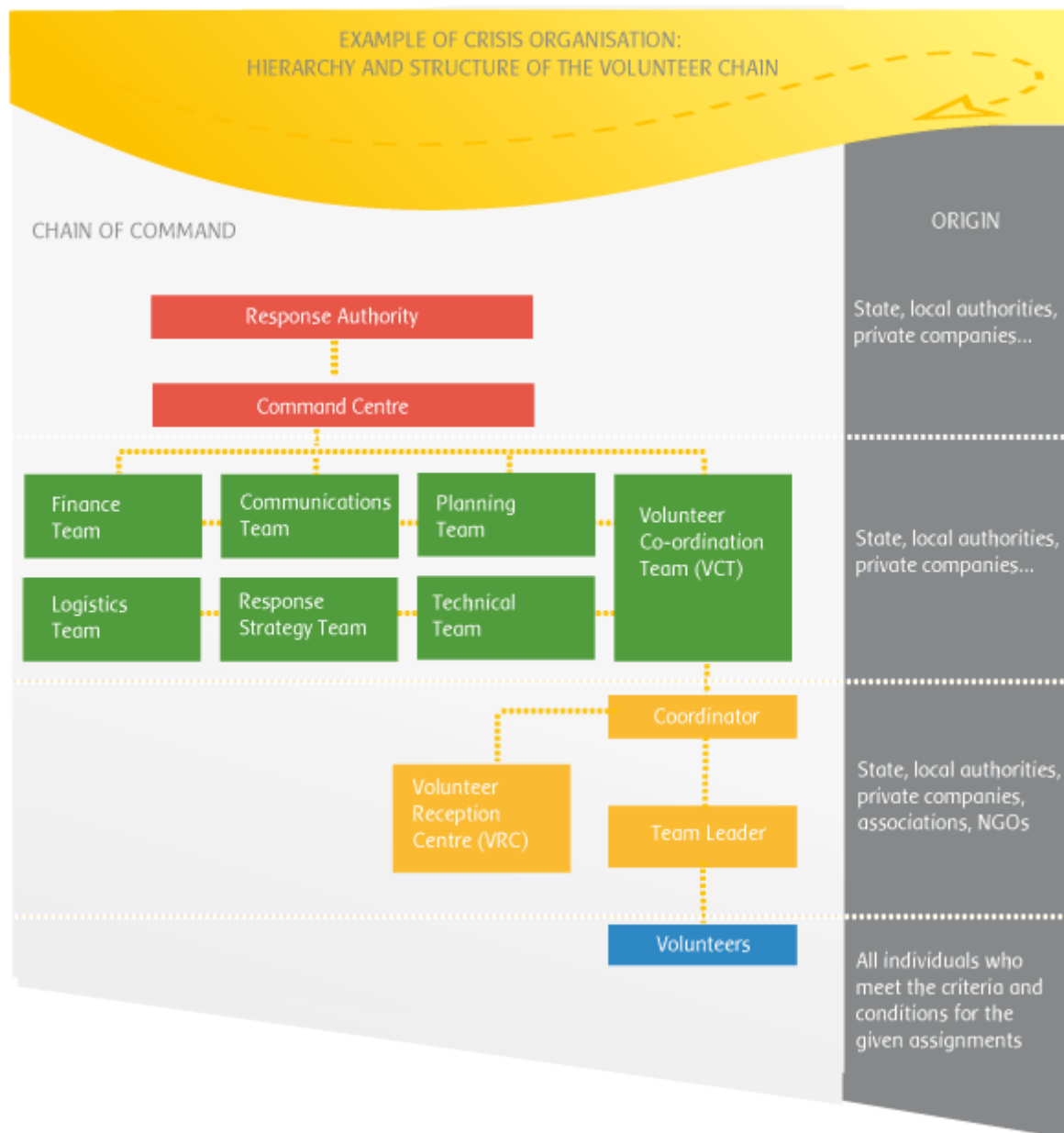


Involvement of sea professionals in the Prestige spill – Galicia, January 2003

In Spain, the contingency planning and response are shared tasks between National Government and regional authorities. The National Contingency Plan, which is more focused on the response at sea, does not consider the participation of volunteers.

Nevertheless, most of the different regional contingency plans include the participation of volunteers in the response. In general, volunteers are categorised into three groups:

- Those belonging to civil defence organisations (Red Cross volunteers, firemen, etc.) that regularly collaborate during emergencies with well established tasks.
- Sea professionals affected by the contingency that support response operations with their own means (boats, tools, etc.). These volunteers usually participate in the response at sea.
- Non-professional volunteers that appear during the contingency and are involved in certain tasks for on land response: coastal clean-up, logistical support and bird recovery.



Volunteer management

Long before an emergency, information should be made available to the public, encouraging potential volunteers to affiliate with a suitable NGO and not to converge individually to locations they have a specific interest in. It is also recommended that a Volunteer Co-ordination Team (VCT) is formed as part of the response plan activation process. The VCT should sit within the Logistics Team of the

Shoreline Response Centre (SRC) and, on activation, should immediately consider the following:

- **Establishing a policy** for utilising external help. In consultation with the Logistics, Technical and Financial Teams, VCT should consider and list the roles that volunteers from external organisations can undertake as part of the response, if not outlined in the response plan.

- **Defining a time & place where it is safe to use volunteers.** Once the volunteer use strategy is established, it is important to identify the time, place or conditions in which it will be safe to deploy volunteers as part of operational response.
- **Deciding to recruit or refuse willing volunteers.** Volunteers will be welcomed and registered at the Volunteer Reception Centre so as to record all volunteers contributing to response and to ensure their safety, accommodation (if necessary), nourishment, transport and equipment.
- **Preparing a training programme.** The VCT will review the current situation and roles defined for volunteers, establish what training needs are required to allow the volunteers to be operationally deployed and arrange the provision of competent trainers with suitable training materials.
- **Ensuring the logistics and management of volunteers on site,** including the enforcement of safety instructions, supervision of work conducted, rest times, nourishment, transport to and from the worksite, administrative management and possibly accommodation.

It is recommended that the VCT be headed by a designated Volunteer Co-ordinator, whose responsibilities should include:

- **Directing individuals** seeking employment to the organisations already working on the spill for the purpose of job hire.
- **Screening offers** of volunteer services by groups, associations, companies, and individuals.
- **Using the media** and internet to post advice and directions for groups/persons wishing to volunteer.
- **Working with planning, operations and logistics teams** to identify suitable roles for volunteers.
- **Determining logistical, catering, accommodation and supervision requirements.**
- **Determining the training requirements** for each work group and worksite.
- **Scheduling events** and meetings and making sure that supervisors, volunteers, site safety plans, and logistics are in place for each site.
- **Informing** supervisors and site managers of their responsibilities.
- **Establishing a reporting channel** from each site.
- **Giving a debriefing** of action taken (every day if necessary).
- **Keeping records** of volunteers and assignments.

An example: the *Braer* Incident

The Wildlife Response Co-ordinating Committee (WRC) received many offers of assistance from people worldwide. From the outset it was agreed that people should be discouraged from travelling to Shetland except where they had expertise.

Nevertheless, some came, either on their own initiative or as representatives of organisations, and arrived at the WRC unannounced. Some were incorporated into the field effort and provided valuable help, but others had to be turned away, and not always in harmonious circumstances.

Planning for the use of volunteers

Requests for volunteers

If the use of volunteers in response in the event of a spill appears necessary, requests should first be addressed to voluntary organisations.

Such requests must be clear, concise and timely and the requirements clearly outlined .

Uses and organisation plan

The Coastal Pollution Contingency Plan (CPCP) should include the roles that volunteers can undertake in supporting response actions. Where a plan defines the use of volunteers, they should be previously identified and trained. To avoid self and disorganised activation, public calls for volunteers should be avoided.

Volunteer requests

The request should contain, but not be limited to, the following information:

- Number of volunteers required
- Rendez-vous point and time, officer to report to on site
- Transport & initial accommodation
- Self sufficiency requirements
- Welfare arrangements
- Role to be undertaken
- Basic equipment required and not provided by responders
- Reimbursements agreed
- Insurance & liability



Clean-up site, bucket brigade. Hebei Spirit spill, South Korea, December 2007

Various specialised approaches to dealing with coastal pollution incidents involving oil or chemicals can be deployed:

- Mechanical or chemical dispersion
- In situ burning
- Containment and mechanical or manual recovery
- Clean-up of polluted areas (pressure washing, flushing...)
- Monitoring of natural cleaning (no response).

The main techniques for which volunteers can be used to increase the response capabilities are containment and recovery. Coastal pollution response has become a very specialised industry that calls upon specialised professionals who use a wide range of mechanical aids to allow for a rapid and effective clean-up after an incident.

This machinery saves a considerable amount of time and requires less labour. It cannot be used by untrained responders, due to the risk of generating major environmental damage (for instance erosion) as well as substantial quantities of waste, leading to disposal problems (both in technical and financial terms).

To ensure that the mobilisation of volunteers is well organised, the contingency plan should:

- Reference the most experienced NGOs in coastal clean-up and determine the type of volunteers they are able to provide or supervise
- Help these associations to train and supervise volunteers for their future role.

Responder briefing prior to on site training. France, May 2009



Getting ready for volunteers

Working rules

To receive arriving volunteers a Volunteer Reception Centre (VRC) needs to be established and staffed. A VRC Manager should be appointed as soon as the decision to use or call for volunteers is made.

A board within the VRC will establish the working rules and schedule working hours with appropriate rest periods. Working time should be adapted to daylight hours: the risk of injury is heightened when required to work after dark.

Management and supervision

Managers and supervisors should be appointed in advance of the arrival of volunteers so that they can make their own preparations for the arrival and be there to meet them. This will also allow them to plan any shift systems that may be put in place.

Volunteer reception

Volunteers can only be accepted after a Volunteer Reception Centre (VRC) has been established, staffed and administrated, where large numbers of individuals can be efficiently processed and accommodated. This implies the availability of a suitable facility with adequate space for all VRC functions, parking, accessibility, proximity to the affected area and protection from media intrusion. An agreement on facility use should establish all incurred costs (such as rent, maintenance, damages, and utilities) and who will pay them.

A team of experienced volunteer resource managers should be delegated to manage VRC activities, with assistance from a service provider, possibly a local volunteer organisation, in the administration of the facility.

Paid workers should be informed of the decision to accept or call for volunteers without delay, told what kind of work those volunteers will undertake on site, under what management, and shown that these volunteers will not be competitors for them, but useful helping hands.

Briefing responders, France, September 2009



Health and safety

Clean-up sites in the case of coastal pollution incidents must be considered hazardous environments. Whether it is oil or chemicals being washed ashore, or containers, wreckage and cargo, there is a risk for those undertaking the clean-up work and the following must be put in place.

Across the European Union, there is a basic principle of a duty of care placed upon managers for the staff for which they are responsible. In many member States this Directive is reinforced by specific legislation commonly referred to as Health & Safety regulations. When establishing a response to a coastal pollution incident it is important to immediately involve a H&S expert to address the duty of care to the responders.

If volunteers are from an established volunteer organisation, that organisation should have a Health & Safety regime in place (see Volunteer Handout).

On-site health monitoring

The registration process should record any health or medical conditions the volunteers have and any medications they are on. This may give rise to sufficient concerns to limit their operational capabilities. There will be a requirement for daily health checks for cuts, abrasions or indications of skin damage from pollutants or cleaning materials. Briefing and debriefing interviews enquiring about shortness of breath, headaches etc. may be appropriate to check the workers' well-being.

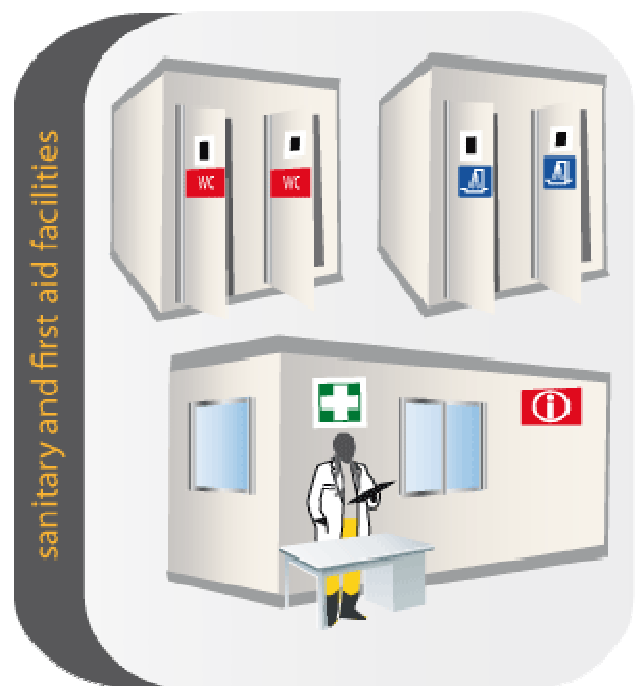


Where the incident being dealt with involves the use of any chemicals or where the pollutants carry a health risk, the cleanliness of catering and feeding areas must be strictly monitored and enforced.

An important part of the Health and Safety regime that must be made clear to volunteers and staff in the briefings given is the reporting of accidents and near misses. A reporting procedure must be established within such a regime to take preventative or mitigating actions to prevent reoccurrence.

Long term health monitoring

Part of the Health and Safety regime put in place may include long term health monitoring where there is a risk that responders may be put at risk of long term health issues through contact with or inhalation of pollutants.



Once volunteers have left the incident this can only be achieved through their home health providers and therefore long term monitoring may have to be passed to another authority, possibly in another country. An appropriate procedure must therefore be established for the exchange of confidential information and the transfer of the duty of care.

Care for volunteers

Accommodation

Providing accommodation for large numbers of responders can be a major challenge to emergency managers and, in the UK for instance, volunteers should not expect accommodation. Whenever accommodation is provided, the location and timing of the incident is a key factor: a spill outside of the holiday season may mean that holiday accommodation is available while there would be little availability in high season.

The location of the accommodation is also a factor:

- Accommodating volunteers too close to the incident can cause the event to have heavy psychological impact on them, as well as subjecting them to the possibility of media intrusion.
- Accommodation a reasonable distance from the polluted area also protects them from any possible pollutant vapours.
- Accommodation too far from the incident can lead to isolation and have a detrimental moral impact.

The choice of accommodation must take into account the use to which it will be put, as volunteers returning from clean-up operations will place considerable wear and tear on it. Military barracks, training centres or educational accommodation blocks should be considered before commercial hotels.

The availability of communications at the accommodation facilities must be considered so as to allow volunteers to be in contact with their families and organisations; as well as the incident management team.

Booking accommodation

Inspector G. Jackson, Manager in the Metropolitan Police Service, Victim Recovery and Identification Team

Contracting of accommodation must be done at the earliest possible time as the media will also be booking rooms for their broadcast teams.

“When we tried to secure hotel accommodation for our team, within 5 hours of the bringing down of PA103, we found that hotels close to Lockerbie were already booked by the world’s media. We ended up booking in a hotel some distance away in Carlisle.”

Daily transportation

The provision of regular and routine transportation from the volunteers’ accommodation to worksites is an important part of ensuring that the management of volunteers is as efficient as possible. Providing transportation can also eliminate problems such as parking at worksites and facilitate the entry of the volunteers to work areas in a controlled manner.



Coaches transporting volunteers. Hebei Spirit spill, South Korea, December 2007

Catering

Maximum consideration must be given to the provision of a good standard of sanitation and catering at the accommodation facilities.

- **On site catering** is vital to sustain the commitment of workers, both voluntary and contracted, to the tasks they are required to perform. The worksite may be remote and the weather bad, so warm food will boost morale and well-being.
- **Off site catering** is normally undertaken at marshalling or rendez-vous points, or at accommodation areas. Such provision can therefore be quite proficient as it can utilise catering facilities at schools, police stations, etc. The downside of having such facilities is that workers have to come off task and be transported to the feeding station, taking time out of the working day. This is sometimes overcome by the workers being fed before going on task and taking snack packs with them for the day.
- **Self sufficiency** may be the option for less organised work such as beach patrols and observations by volunteers. Many walking groups for example can be utilised to patrol and observe the pollutant coming ashore. Such groups will of course be used to packing a bag with their day's supplies.

Rest periods

There should be provision for social activities and entertainment for rest and relaxation. If it is not possible for volunteers to go to their accommodation during rest periods then such facilities need to be provided close to the work areas.

Protective Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) means all equipment designed to be worn or held by workers to protect them against one or more hazards likely to endanger their safety and health at work, and any addition or accessory designed to meet this objective.

The requirements for PPE should be established with the Safety Team and a procedure agreed for free delivery to volunteers and cleaning/disposal after use.

PPE must comply with the relevant local and national provisions on design and manufacture with respect to health and safety. The VRC manager shall ensure that it is compliant, is in good working order and hygienic condition, is appropriate for the risks involved, without itself leading to any increased risk, is compatible with existing conditions at the workplace, takes account of ergonomic requirements and that it fits the wearer correctly after any necessary adjustment.

The VRC manager shall arrange for demonstrations on the use of the PPE .



Marking out of response and restoration areas



Decontamination

The work undertaken by volunteers may well require some form of decontamination of their work clothes, equipment and person. If so the decontamination process, substances used and risks associated must be recorded.

Volunteer-related liabilities

The response to coastal pollution incidents involves a large number of risks that must be assessed and managed. A key factor in the assessment is the liabilities of each and every organisation with regard to the staff they deploy.

Risk assessment

Appropriate measures and controls must be put in place by the senior management of the response prior to deploying volunteers. This will include a risk assessment and a written protocol for the use of volunteers that clearly define their roles and responsibilities. This protocol must be enforced and strictly adhered to by managers, supervisors and team leaders as it will form a key part of any subsequent compensation claims or litigation.

Insurance

All organisations must hold some form of insurance for their day to day working practices. However, it must not be assumed that the insurance held covers the exceptional work being undertaken in coastal pollution response. As soon as an organisation knows that it is going to be involved in coastal pollution response, it should check the validity of its insurance in those particular circumstances, including for the use of unsalaried workers such as volunteers.

Clean-up equipment

The use of clean-up equipment by volunteers should only be permitted when there are no other means of establishing a specialist work force. Cleaning up of coastal pollution is a specific activity with number of aids such as booms, skimmers, pumps, mixers, back hoes, diggers, etc. Volunteers must therefore be prevented from using or deploying them without prior training and/or a valid license or certificate.

Clean-up materials

Volunteers should not work with clean-up agents without the appropriate training. Most detergents, dispersants, solvents and other chemicals that may be used in clean-up processes carry some form of hazard warning with regard to their use. This advice must be strictly adhered to and persons working with, or close to, such materials must be informed of the risks.

MSC Napoli incident

John Hayes, Dorset County Council, UK



Oiled packets of biscuits on the foreshore due to the MSC Napoli incident, France, January 2007

"Risks must be adequately assessed and minimised to acceptable levels before using volunteers. If this is achieved volunteers working under the umbrella of the responding organisation, in this case Dorset County Council, through its Ranger Service, is acceptable.

Risk assessments must be reviewed properly, volunteer PPE provided, supervision and training provided, and lines of communications in place. For this incident we brought in students from the local agricultural college and all of the above was achievable. We did, however, find it impossible to manage volunteers turning up ad hoc looking to assist. Numbers can rapidly become unmanageable and it is impossible to provide training, supervision, PPE, information and communications required."

ACTION CARD: Calling for volunteers

- ▶ **What are the gaps/shortfalls in response?**
- ▶ **Can volunteers fill them?**
- ▶ **To request volunteers we need to determine:**

Checklist

- ☐ Number of volunteers required
- ☐ Skills required
- ☐ Focal point to contact
- ☐ Rendez-vous point, time & method of arrival
- ☐ Accommodation/catering arrangements
- ☐ Role to be undertaken & minimum participation period
- ☐ Reimbursements agreed
- ☐ Insurance & liability

- ▶ **What communication means are available (internet, phone, fax...)?**
- ▶ **Is the Volunteer Reception Centre set up?**
- ▶ **Is the Registration Process established?** (identification passes, administrative documents...)
- ▶ **Have health and safety aspects been organised?**
 - Health monitoring partnership with local health authorities
 - PPE: issue, training, use management
- ▶ **Have the briefing and training been prepared?**
- ▶ **What compensation arrangements have been made in the case of claims?**

Action

- Volunteers arrive on scene..... B1
- Volunteer welfare..... B2
- Clean-up site management..... B3
- Specific example: wildlife rescue..... B4
- Volunteer dispersal..... B5

Volunteers arrive on scene

Registration

Documentation

A VRC “Grab Bag” should be prepared and contain:



Registration

Volunteers attending will need to be registered and issued passes to allow access to the site and work areas. It means that various levels of access have to be determined and appropriate passes issued. Any organisation that may have to manage an emergency response by large numbers of people from a variety of organisations should consider investing in an identity card creator that allows on site passes to be created. Alternatively, arrangements for the use of a card creator already held by a local company or organisation may be made.

Interviews

Many NGOs that manage volunteers for international disaster response strongly recommend that face-to-face interviews with volunteers be conducted to fully understand their commitment and capabilities.

Although time-consuming, this can be an important filter in identifying the appropriate volunteers for supervisory or specialist roles. Such a process may also help to identify media personnel trying to gain access to closed areas.

Welcome Briefing

Welcome

Arriving volunteers should be welcomed hospitably, with refreshments if possible, to reinforce the importance of them joining your teams. This time also offers the opportunity to introduce the volunteers to the staff, team leaders, and managers, taking care that volunteers understand the command structure. Wherever possible, hand out photos of key managers with whom volunteers may be in contact.

Briefing

Volunteers, like all persons arriving to assist in the response, must receive a welcome briefing, be familiarised with the incident and be given adequate handbooks and lists of dos and don'ts. It may not be possible to organise a briefing for all those involved at the same time. Cascade briefing or briefing information points can be put in place. Time spent in preparation of the volunteer briefing process is a good investment for a better managed response.

Personal property

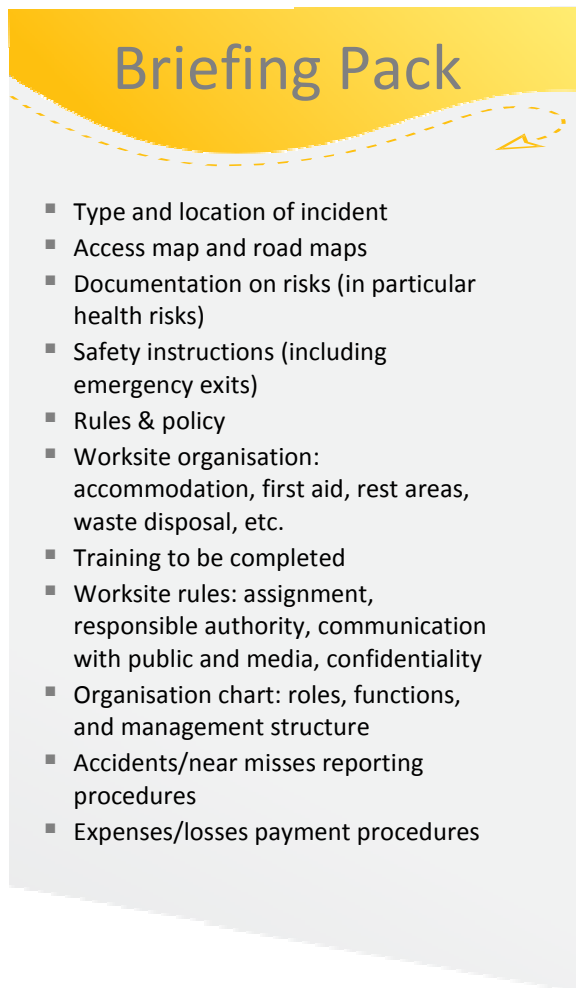
A policy should be set and outlined to the volunteers, at their arrival briefing, regarding compensation for loss or damage to personal items. It is not unreasonable for volunteers to expect compensation for damage or loss of personal clothing worn underneath the protective clothing with which they are provided.

However it is unreasonable for them to expect to be compensated for loss and damage to watches, jewellery, personal electronic items etc. that they might take with them into work areas, against the rules in force.

Reimbursement for expenses

A clear and appropriate policy on reimbursement for expenses such as washing, medicines, dietary requirements etc. should be in place from the moment volunteers are taken on.

Ideally, volunteers should be given the documents listed below:



A process for recording all compensation and reimbursement must be included in the financial management of the incident, as such expenses may be recoverable from other sources after the event. This is a key responsibility of the Finance Team within the response operations management structure.

Safety, Equipment and Training

Personal Safety

This cannot be overemphasised and the Health and Safety regime must be reinforced at all briefings and on a daily basis. Two different aspects also need to be considered:

- **Prevention of risks related to the potentially carcinogenic nature of the pollutant** in contact with skin, eyes or respiratory tract: gloves, face masks, glasses, etc.
- **Prevention of risks of physical damage:** bruises, cuts, muscular damage, broken bones, etc.

Personal Protective Equipment

It must be made clear to the volunteers that PPE items must be returned upon the completion of daily work, to be correctly cleaned or disposed of. They must be prevented from taking such items home with them.

Familiarisation

Before deploying the volunteers that may have been trained or deemed to have the appropriate skills and technical knowledge for the tasks they are assigned to, managers should ensure volunteers are familiar with their roles, responsibilities and equipment. This can act as a last chance to identify a volunteer that may have been inappropriately allocated a task.

One of the regular uses of volunteers is to assist wildlife organisations in decontaminating recovered sea birds or mammals. To undertake this process volunteers need to be trained. Several wild fauna rehabilitation NGOs run training courses for their own volunteers and may be called upon to assist in such operations.

ACTION CARD: Volunteers arrive

- ▶ **VRC is established**, equipped, staffed and ready to receive them
- ▶ **Registration process is in place**
- ▶ **Briefing is ready**
- ▶ **Supporting materials are in place:**
 - Grab Bag
 - Briefing Pack
 - PPE are ready for distribution
- ▶ **Finance and Logistics Teams have been consulted** on processes and procedures for the use of volunteers
- ▶ **First Aid/Medical cover are in place**
- ▶ **Accommodation and catering are ready**
- ▶ **Training programme for all training requirements is ready**
- ▶ **Worksite organisation is ready** to facilitate familiarisation with the site
- ▶ **Command Structure is in place** and briefed on volunteers arrival and the agreed protocols for their use

Volunteer welfare

The welfare of volunteers will depend on a number of factors being addressed .

Recognition & respect

This is essential. People volunteer for a number of reasons, but none of them involve being treated poorly. Recognise what volunteers can offer and treat them with the respect they deserve. One common theme is an “us versus them” mentality between volunteers and staff. Knowing that this potential exists enables you to address this issue actively by conducting teambuilding activities with volunteers and staff. They will enable both parties to air differences and emphasize the importance of working toward a common goal.

Volunteers' complaints

The following are some of the common complaints expressed by volunteers that a manager should consider addressing to keep his volunteers motivated:

- I'm always told what to do but never asked to participate in planning the work.
- Salaried staff get or take the credit for my good ideas and work.
- No one says, “Thank you.”
- I always seem to get the “grunt work.”
- I never get feedback on my work.
- Salaried staff are always given the benefit of the doubt in any dispute.
- Can't I have a title more gratifying than “Volunteer?”
- I am never assigned sufficient work space or storage space.

Rest and recovery

Regular breaks for rest and undisturbed sleep in good conditions are vital to the well-being of any person. They are particularly important for those working in stressful situations. Undisturbed sleep is the most important factor required for the human body to recover from exertion or excessive work periods. Managers must maintain the well-being of those that they are managing by checking the quality of accommodation and ensuring that rest time is provided.

Pressure and intrusion

If the public or the media become too intrusive on volunteers' activities and working areas, this may mean posting security to accommodation areas.



Taking a break, France, June 2009

Social activity

Football matches, board games... such activities are part of the rest and recovery process. The provision of social or sporting activities should be carefully considered.

Hygiene

The ability to bathe or shower and remove the grime of a days work is a key factor in shutting off from operations for many people and leads to more productive rest periods. Managers should ensure that the provided washing facilities are maintained in a clean and hygienic condition. An inspection regime should be put in place with the providers of the facilities or those responsible for their up keep.

Sustenance

The provision of catering has been covered earlier. However, it is worth reiterating that access to additional food and drinks of choice is good for morale and allows volunteers to boost their substance intake.

It is worth having additional nutritional items such as fruit, high energy foods etc. made available at rest areas or accommodation blocks.

Using local shops and suppliers is a simple solution which, in addition, helps to involve local stakeholders.

Medical cover

The provision of on site medical cover may well be a role that volunteers from one of the many established First Aid providers can perform to minimise the draw on local professional emergency medical services. The same team could record incidents and prepare the documentation needed for long term health monitoring.

Relations with the media

The media have huge resources that they can use to react to and reach the scenes of newsworthy events.

Environmental impact events are indeed newsworthy and will draw the attention of media from around the world. Managers of volunteers must establish what the media policy is and who is responsible for its co-ordination in the command structure. Requests for interviews or statements should be referred to the central media liaison point. Volunteers should be advised to direct any members of the media to their manager and avoid engaging with the media, even by saying “No comment”.

Managers of volunteers should be aware that the more determined members of the press may attempt to gain access to the incident by taking on the role of a responder.

Media in the *Braer* Incident

The Wildlife Response Co-ordinating Committee (WRC) had underestimated the scale of media interest. *“The sheer number of film and radio crews and journalists reflected in a constant barrage of requests for interviews. There were also continual calls from media world-wide. This distracted key personnel from their duties.*

In addition, journalists persistently tried to get inside the WRC and particularly wanted to see and film live birds in the building; this posed problems for animal welfare and security.

There was less of a problem on beaches. Volunteers were advised to co-operate with the press provided there was no interference with their work. They should restrict comments to simply describing what they were doing at the time.”



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A local councillor under media pressure, Lebanon, September 2006

Clean-up site management

Before response begins, the team leader must ensure that the site organisation rules are fully understood and followed.

- ▶ **Are potential hazards identified?**
- ▶ **Is this a safe working environment?**
 - Health and Safety risks assessed
 - Health and Safety training given
 - First aid stations in place
- ▶ **Are decontamination methods understood?**
- ▶ **Is the team organisation in place?**
 - Supervision by competent personnel
 - Incident reporting procedure in place
 - Logging in/out procedure established
- ▶ **Has PPE been issued?**
 - Users understand PPE single use or re-use
 - Training or instructions given
 - PPE stockpiles in place
 - Procedures for packaging, labelling and discard of contaminated items set
- ▶ **Welfare considerations**
 - Meals and refreshments arranged and scheduled
 - Cleaning and toilet facilities appropriate and maintained
 - Accommodation appropriate and booked
 - Working time and shift working defined
- ▶ **Worksite area** defined and understood by all: clean-up area, storage area and waste disposal area adequately marked out and signposted
- ▶ **Media policy** has been explained and understood by all involved. All volunteers are familiar with those in charge of media relations.
- ▶ **Image rights:** organisations working on site may be required to take photographs of operations for monitoring and feedback purposes. Each volunteer should fill in a form to state whether they grant or refuse the right to use such images.

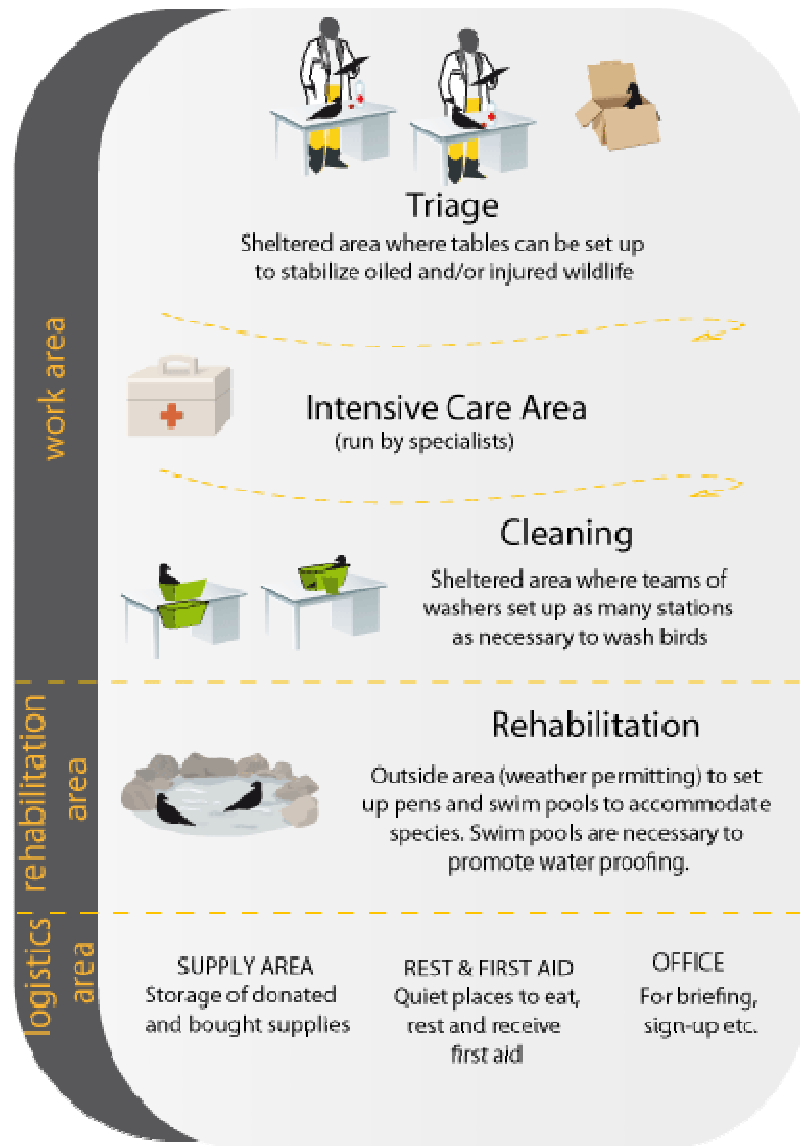


Briefing by site manager during a POLMAR training course, France, September 2006

Specific example: wildlife rescue

A dedicated site for the rescue and rehabilitation of polluted wildlife should be set up:

- ▶ close to the spill area
- ▶ near a major road
- ▶ where a water supply and discharge system is available
- ▶ to provide the following definable areas :



Volunteer dispersal

Demobilisation

Equipment returns

The return of equipment upon the completion of operations is always a challenging issue. Much of the equipment issued may be written off as it will have become unusable for other purposes or contaminated. As such it must therefore be accounted for and its disposal recorded. Many volunteers may wish to take gloves or helmets home as 'trophies' of their work. As those items could carry contamination or be inappropriately used in future, volunteers can only be allowed to take them home upon signature of an individual discharge of responsibility.



Clean-up

Prior to their departure, volunteers should be utilised where appropriate to ensure that facilities or areas they have used or been accommodated in are as clean and tidy as they can be for the return to normal use. Nevertheless, such facilities will often need to be thoroughly cleaned after the volunteers have left.

Record keeping

The administrative processes of managing volunteers are important requirements.

Across all areas of the management of an incident there will be a number of processes involving paperwork that will need to be collated, filed and a registry created to complete a full incident record. Each section of the management structure will be required to submit its records for filing in the overall incident registry, whether in paper or electronic form. With regard to the volunteers, the following paperwork will need to be finalised by those responsible for the relevant areas of activity:

Record-keeping

- Volunteer Registration
- Individual discharge of responsibility
- Training records
- Timesheets
- VRC records
- Catering accounts
- Accommodation accounts
- Transportation contract costs
- Facility management records
- Agreed hire and room rental charges
- Agreed reimbursements
- Additional incurred costs
- Lost and damaged records
- Equipment records (issue and return)
- Health/First Aid cover
- Accident/near miss Log
- Management reports
- Debriefing reports

All managers must at all times give due consideration to the possibility of subsequent litigation from their actions implemented during the events they are managing. It is therefore recommended that the above-mentioned paperwork, files and registry be kept for a minimum of five years after the completion of response and recovery activities.

The lead response authority will undoubtedly be attempting to recover the costs of the response and recovery from those responsible for the pollution caused. The supporting organisations will be requesting their costs from the lead authority. Individuals who have suffered injury or loss as a result of the incident may take legal action for compensation. Finally, there may be legal action taken as a result of mismanagement, negligence or criminal responsibility that will require the records of the incident to be used as evidence.

Debriefing arrangements

Debriefing manager

For large scale events it can prove beneficial to designate a member of the Management Team with appropriate training or experience to manage the debriefing process throughout the lifespan of the operation. A Debriefing Manager should be appointed for this purpose and should be excused from operational response or volunteer management in plenty of time to allow them to organise the debriefing.

Debriefing

There are various levels of debriefing:

- **Quick debrief**, undertaken daily, preferably before departure from worksite, to sort out any pending problems.
- **Hot wash**, undertaken at the end of a phase of work on a site, consisting in an informal discussion between supervisors, team leaders and team members to examine the lessons learned that day or during a given operation and any improvements that may be required, as well as to critically review the tasks performed.
- **Cascade debriefing**, undertaken at the end of mobilisation of a group of volunteers to try and gain as much feedback as possible: each Team Leader (TL) debriefs his own team, and is then debriefed by his Supervisor who is debriefed himself by his Manager who contributes to the Post Incident Report (PIR) collation. This process is dependent upon the reporting chain. It can lead to dilution of critical lessons identified.
- **Debrief questionnaires** are sometimes used to collect information but are not very effective as many people cannot convey the detail or emphasis in writing which they can get across in discussion. Questionnaires are often seen as a final chore before departure and rushed or ignored. Their structure has to be carefully organised to ensure that the required information is collected. However, questionnaires can provide some anonymity to responders or can be used to identify key experiences to be developed by post questionnaire interviews.

Recognition of work done

The work of volunteers should be recognised prior to their departure from the incident.

Always take time to thank volunteers that have worked for you, during or after the debriefing. It is worth bearing in mind that your organisation or many of the others involved will have such recognition systems in place but that the volunteers do not have such an allegiance. Remember you may need volunteers again in the future.

Recognition during the MSC Napoli response

In the *MSC Napoli* incident the volunteers from the Agricultural College that were utilised by the Dorset County Council Ranger Service were all given certificates of appreciation. Such civic recognition is a good

way for the volunteers to demonstrate their commitment to others.

Volunteer departure checklist

- Equipment has been collected and accounted for.
- Facilities have all been cleaned up as much as possible (accommodation, rest areas, etc.).
- All paperwork is in order and is being filed appropriately.
- Appropriate debriefings have been held.
- Recognition has been given and volunteers have been thanked.

Delegation of volunteer management to an association

The main aspects of volunteer management may be delegated to a single voluntary association:

- ▶ Welcoming volunteers
- ▶ Recruiting and selecting volunteers for clean-up sites and other logistical roles
- ▶ Organising or ensuring that logistical provisions are made for volunteers:
 - accommodation
 - food
 - transport
- ▶ Training or organising the training of volunteers for each of their assignments
- ▶ Managing teams of volunteers on site
- ▶ Contributing to the running of volunteer work on site
- ▶ Giving a debriefing of the action conducted.

→ To do so, the competent authority must:

- Reference the most experienced associations in coastal response and identify them as the key contacts for volunteers
- Train (possibly before an emergency occurs, as part of a planning and exercise programme) the referenced associations so that they can in turn train volunteers
- Provide basic equipment to these associations in case they are required to manage volunteers' equipment.

After action reviews

- Recognition and long term monitoring..... C1
- Lessons identified and learnt..... C2

Recognition and long term monitoring

Management does not come to an end because the volunteers have departed. Two further actions remain to be taken:

- Express authorities' recognition
- Ensure long term health monitoring.

Departing recognition

It is important that, where recognition has been given to volunteers upon their departure, this is followed up to bring it to the attention of their organisations, employers or civic leaders.

Organisations that provide volunteers often use such recognition to persuade others to join them and build up a capacity that you may require in the future.

- Employers may have allowed volunteers to leave work or take time off to work for you. By acknowledging their good work you could provide the company with a good public relations opportunity that will encourage them to allow volunteers to attend such incidents in the future. It may also persuade an employer to consider compensating a volunteer for lost leave or lost earnings.
- Raising the recognition of volunteers with civic leaders can encourage volunteerism in the community. This recognition may well encourage others to undertake such activities within their communities.

Health monitoring

A specific health debriefing and case conference should be held where health risks have been identified and injuries have occurred. Monitoring records and the accident/near miss log should all be assessed to establish whether any post-event health monitoring is required.

If it is identified that any person or persons are required to be monitored they should immediately be informed. Depending on local legal restrictions on the sharing of data their consent is likely to be required to pass their incident medical record to their home medical practitioner/doctor.

The health professionals involved will then transfer a copy of the incident medical record to that person's doctor or home medical practitioner. The original will be filed by the lead health agency involved in the response to the incident with all other relevant health records. A register of such documentation should be provided to the lead authority in the response as a reference in the incident files.

Manual clean-up by volunteers. Hebei Spirit spill, South Korea, December 2007



Lessons identified and learnt

It is the responsibility of the response authority to organise a structured debriefing (or cold debrief) once the incident is over, to identify the main lessons learnt and build their consequences into improved response procedures.

The NGOs having provided volunteers should be invited to participate in this debriefing.

Where lessons have been identified at debriefings, in post incident reports or after action reviews, they must be acted upon and turned into lessons learnt. The best way to achieve that goal is to create a lessons matrix from all the post event reports. The sources of such information will be:

- Debriefing Reports
- After Action Reviews (AAR)
- Post Incident Reports (PIR)
- Management Reports
- Accident/Near Miss Log
- Collated Media Reports
- Feedback Surveys from participants.

All identified lessons should be listed in the matrix with a recommendation for action to be taken to implement changes to plans, protocols, procedures or training that the identified lessons have highlighted as necessary. Each lesson should be assigned a leader who is responsible for seeing through the recommended actions.

Documentation templates

- Volunteer registration form..... D1
- Volunteer handout..... D2
- Accident/near miss reporting..... D3
- Certificate of volunteering..... D4

The following pages contain four templates you may choose to use to assist in the management of volunteers for response to coastal pollution incidents.

Volunteer Registration Form



Contact Details

Date (DD/MM/YY):

Time:

Full name:

Address:

Email:

Phone number: Home: Mobile: Work:

Result ☐ Assigned to team (specify) ☐ Assistance declined (specify reason)

Availability ☐ 1 week ☐ 2 weeks ☐ Other, specify.....



Skills & Training

Organisation membership? Specify.....

Profession:

Specific training:



Health & Welfare

Disability ☐ None ☐ Yes, specify:

Medical conditions ☐ None ☐ Yes, specify:

Allergies ☐ None ☐ Yes, specify:

Dietary requirements ☐ None ☐ Yes, specify:

Blood group ☐ A+ ☐ B+ ☐ AB+ ☐ O+

☐ A- ☐ B- ☐ AB- ☐ O-

Vaccinations ☐ Tetanus ☐ Polio ☐ Hepatitis A

☐ Hepatitis B ☐ Rabies

Doctor

Full name:

Address:

Phone:

Point of contact in case of emergency

Full name:

Relationship:

Address:

Phone:



Image Rights

While volunteering, I am liable to be photographed and videoed for non-commercial use, for educational and worksite monitoring purposes. I agree to give up my image rights by ticking this box ☐

NOTES:

RECORDED BY:

Full name:

Date & location:

Signature:

THE VOLUNTEER:

Full name:

Date & location:

Signature:

Volunteer handout

This is a suggested handout taken from the Northern Ireland Department of Environment Shoreline Response System.

As a volunteer considering attending an oil spill shoreline response, please note the following and complete a Volunteer Registration Form.

▶ Age, medical issues, requirements

Human safety is the primary concern and supervisory personnel will seek to eliminate or minimize hazards from the worksite. Volunteers who are not fit and healthy will therefore not be selected.

All volunteers must be 16 years or over and in good health with no substantive medical conditions. If you are pregnant, taking certain types of medication, allergic or you have a kidney, liver or lung disorder, it is recommended that you consider consulting a doctor before volunteering.

In order for response operations to be efficient and ongoing, all volunteers must sign up for a minimum duration of X days.

▶ Hazards

It is important for you to be aware of the following hazards that you may encounter during training and actual oil spill response :

D2

- Exposure to sun, wind and rain.
- Hypothermia, hyperthermia.
- Exhaustion.
- Injury from birds while handling them.
- Injury while walking on oily or uneven surfaces, such as rocks at beaches.
- Drowning while wading into the water to execute clean-up or capture birds.
- Possible exposure to noxious chemicals, which can affect the skin by contact.
- Tetanus (make sure your vaccination/booster dates from less than 10 years).
- Exposure to bacteria, fungi, viruses, parasites, and animal dander.
- Exposure to potentially harmful fumes such as those arising from hydrocarbons
- Domestic hazards associated with food preparation, slippery floors, detergents
- Possible injury while operating or being around vehicles/heavy machinery.

▶ Working conditions and duties

Volunteers are expected to obey all safety regulations and follow the instructions of supervisors and the site safety officer during training, induction and when on the oil spill response site. In particular, they are required to:

- **Fill in their volunteer registration form** accurately, in particular as regards personal information about: emergency contact details, current medications, allergies, and special health considerations.
- **Ensure that the supervisor or safety officer is aware** of or is made aware of, any signs of illness and any injuries.
- **Be able to complete a minimum number of shifts** within a seven day period.
- **Refrain from smoking** anywhere in the spill response area.
- **Wear PPE and appropriate clothing** in terms of the climate and identified risks, and bring changes of clothes. Protective gear will be provided.
- **Bring no items that may pose a significant sparking hazard**, such as mobile phones, lighters, matches, cigarettes, flashes, etc.
- **Bring sufficient food and water for the first few hours** from arrival. Food and drink will be provided thereafter.

▶ Media issues

- The **Media Co-ordinator is responsible for supplying information** requested by the media. Only specifically authorised persons should communicate with the media.
- Volunteers receiving direct requests from the media should ensure that the request gets to the appropriate Response Co-ordinator.

▶ Photos and videos

- **Volunteers wishing to take photographs or videos must ask permission** from the supervisor responsible for the area.

▶ Security of possessions

- You are **responsible for the safety of your personal possessions**.
- We suggest that you do **not bring valuables** to the spill site.

Accident/near miss reporting

▶ Accidents and near misses log

Date (DD/MM/YY):

Time:

Location:

Persons involved:

1. Full name:	Occupation:
2. Full name:	Occupation:
3. Full name:	Occupation:

Accident/near miss:

Description.....

Injuries sustained.....

Treatment received.....

Damage caused.....

Notification: Police ☐ Work authority ☐ Insurer ☐ Other ☐ (specify).....

Other actions:

Implemented.....

Needed.....

Ways to prevent further occurrence.....

Writer

Full name:

Position:

Date:

Signature:

Certificate of volunteering

Certificate template

Within the framework of the management of the incident (*Name ship, location, spilled products*)....., the
Authority of (*Name of local authority concerned*).....
benefited from the devoted services of (*Name of Volunteer*)
..... who made an invaluable contribution to the following
tasks (*indicate tasks performed, location and dates*):

-
-
-
-

Working in compliance with the health and safety rules in force, he/she
was involved in the response to this incident from to
..... (*dates*).

Date

Name

(Position of writer)

Signature

Adapted by Cedre, from the "Guide méthodologique d'aide à la création d'un centre de sauvetage temporaire et de soins aux oiseaux mazoutés", produced by the *Ligue de Protection des Oiseaux* within the framework of the "Observatoire des Marées Noires", 2003.

Further information

▪ Glossary and acronyms.....	E1
▪ Useful websites.....	E2
▪ Bibliography.....	E3

Glossary and acronyms

AAR - After Action Review

ARCOPOL - Atlantic Regions' Coastal Pollution Response

Cedre - Centre of Documentation, Research and Experimentation on Accidental Water Pollution

CPCP - Coastal Pollution Contingency Plan

EROCIPS - Emergency Response to coastal oil, chemical and Inert Pollution from Shipping

EU - European Union

HNS - Hazardous and Noxious Substances

IFAW - International Fund for Animal Welfare

IMO - International Maritime Organization

IRCG - Irish Coast Guards

LPO - Ligue de Protection des Oiseaux

MCA - Maritime and Coastguard Agency

NGO - Non Governmental Organisation

PIR – Post Incident Report

PPE - Personal Protective Equipment

SRC - Shoreline Response Centre

UK - United Kingdom

VCT - Volunteer Co-ordination Team

VIGIPOL - Syndicat mixte de protection du littoral breton

VRC - Volunteer Reception Centre

WRC - Wildlife Response Co-ordinating Committee

WWF - World Wildlife Fund

Useful websites

CEDRE (Centre of Documentation, Research and Experimentation on Accidental Water Pollution). Spills. [online].

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<http://www.cedre.fr/en/response/response-on-land/fiche/worksites-records.pdf>

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