



## Oil and Chemical Spill Wildlife Response - Notification and Command Structure

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VERSION 1

AUTHORISED BY A/Director Biosecurity Operations, Biosecurity NSW

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### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the notification sequence for marine and inland waters oil/chemical incidents that require a response for the rescue and rehabilitation of affected wildlife. It also provides the command structure for a Wildlife Unit which will be established to coordinate the wildlife response. The Wildlife Unit sits within the Operations Section of the combat agency's Incident Management Team.

### Scope

This policy applies to personnel involved in the wildlife response component of an oil or chemical spill and does not apply to any other aspect of the wider response.

The NSW State Waters Marine Oil and Chemical Spill Contingency Plan, which is a sub-plan to the NSW State Disaster Plan (Displan), outlines arrangements for dealing with marine oil or chemical spills and marine incidents that could result in an oil or chemical spill into State waters of NSW.

All combat agencies for marine incidents/emergencies have agreed to use a version of the incident control system, titled the Oil Spill Response Incident Control System (OSRICS) to control and manage marine incident/emergency responses. This is the incident control system used for spill response management under the National Plan to Combat Pollution of the Sea by Oil and other Noxious and Hazardous Substances.

In the event of an oil or chemical spill which affects wildlife, the Agriculture and Animal Services Functional Area (AASFA), NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) is responsible for activating and coordinating resources to establish a Wildlife Unit within the OSRICS structure which can be scaled up or down depending on the size and complexity of the response required to effectively control the incident/emergency.

### Policy

Responsibility for combating an oil or chemical spill is determined by the location of the spill as set out in the NSW State Waters Marine Oil and Chemical Spill Contingency Plan.

Depending on its location, a spill will be reported to the nearest Port Corporation, NSW Maritime or Fire and Rescue NSW (if the spill occurs on inland waters). The responsible combat agency will appoint an Incident Controller who must notify all Functional Areas identified under Displan. The Functional Areas will then activate other support agencies as required.

Functional Areas are comprised of government agencies, utility services and private sector organisations involved in the provision of support and resources for emergency responses.

NSW DPI is the coordinating agency for the AASFA which is responsible for activating the Agriculture and Animal Services Plan (a supporting plan under Displan). The AASFA Coordinator (AASFAC) is responsible for coordinating agricultural and animal services resources and providing immediate animal support services and advice on animal welfare in an emergency. For the purposes of the Agriculture

and Animal Services Plan, 'animal' means companion animals, wildlife, horses, and other livestock and includes aviary birds, poultry, invertebrates and fish.

The role of the AASFAC is to activate the Agriculture and Animal Services Plan utilising the assistance of participating and support agencies. In the event of an oil/chemical spill, activation of the Plan may include:

- establishing a wildlife treatment centre
- on-site assessment and capture of wildlife (using sectors established for the overall incident/emergency response)
- coordinating the transport of wildlife as needed
- providing appropriate personnel to the incident/emergency response
- coordinating veterinary support during the incident
- rehabilitation and repatriation of wildlife

The AASFAC, with the agreement of participating and supporting organisations, has the authority to request resources from those organisations. Participating organisations are government departments, statutory authorities and other agencies that are willing to participate in emergency management response and initial recovery operations under the direction of the Incident Controller of a combat agency, or the coordinator of a Functional Area. The Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) is a participating agency.

If a spill impacts on wildlife, the AASFAC can contact the OEH Liaison Officer to request the appointment of a Wildlife Coordinator to coordinate a rescue and rehabilitation operation. The Wildlife Coordinator may establish a Wildlife Unit, within the combat agency's Operations Section, to coordinate the wildlife response.

The Wildlife Coordinator will oversee the operations of the Wildlife Unit which will be comprised of teams responsible for the rescue, transport, triage/first aid, cleaning/drying, rehabilitation and eventual release of affected wildlife. The Wildlife Coordinator will also oversee the establishment of wildlife treatment facilities at a site or sites determined by the incident's needs and available locations.

Oil or chemical spill notification flow chart:

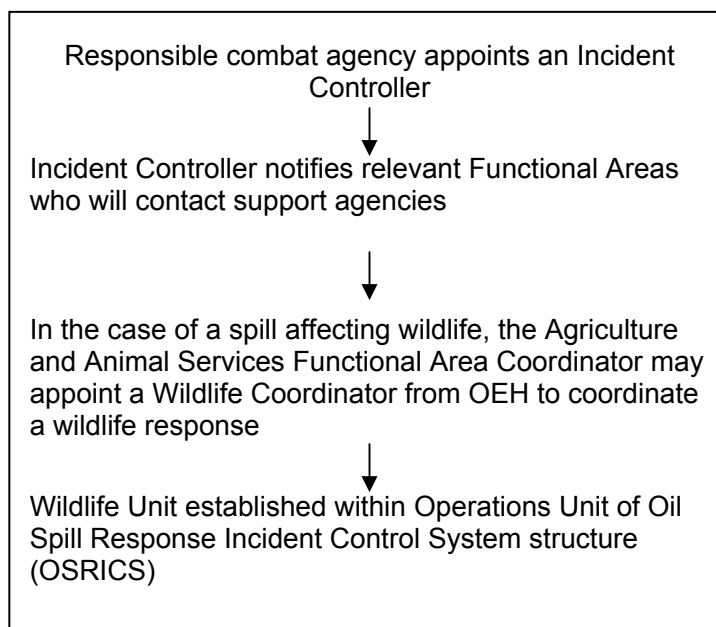


Figure 1 (below) shows the structure of the Wildlife Unit which is part of the Operations Section of the broader OSRICS structure.

### Procedures

- [Wildlife Response - Set Up and Use of Wildlife Treatment Facilities](#)
- [Wildlife Response - Pre-emptive Action](#)
- [Wildlife Response - Search and Rescue](#)

- [Wildlife Response - Triage and First Aid](#)
- [Wildlife Response - Cleaning and Drying](#)
- [Wildlife Response - Transporting Wildlife](#)
- [Wildlife Response - Rehabilitation of Wildlife](#)
- [Wildlife Response - Release of Wildlife](#)
- [Wildlife Response - Scaling Down or Demobilising Response](#)

### Role descriptions

- [Rehabilitation Division](#)
- [Rescue Division](#)
- [Wildlife Coordinator and Logistics Support](#)

### Delegations

- Nil

### Legislation

- [State Emergency and Rescue Management Act](#)

### Related policies

- [Policy O-115 - Oil and Chemical Spill Wildlife Response - Cost Recovery](#)

### Other related documents

- [Agriculture and Animal Services Functional Area Plan](#)
- [National Plan to Combat Pollution of the Sea by Oil and other Noxious and Hazardous Substances](#)
- [NSW State Disaster Plan](#)
- [NSW State Waters Marine Oil and Chemical Spill Contingency Plan](#)
- [Oil Spill Response Incident Control System \(OSRICS\)](#)

### Definitions

- AASFA: Agriculture and Animal Services Functional Area
- AASFAC: Agriculture and Animal Services Functional Area Coordinator
- Displan: NSW State Disaster Plan
- NSW DPI: NSW Department of Primary Industries
- OEH: Office of Environment and Heritage
- OSRICS: Oil Spill Response Incident Control System

### Superseded documents

This policy replaces:

- NSW NPWS Procedural Guidelines for the Rescue and Rehabilitation of Oiled Wildlife

### Revision history

Version	Date issued	Notes	By
1	6 March 2012	Draft - for approval	Emergency Management Officer

### Review date

May 2013

### Contact

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**Figure 1: Wildlife Unit Structure within OSRICS**

