

**GUIDELINES CONCERNING THE EXCHANGE OF LIAISON OFFICERS
BETWEEN THE CONTRACTING PARTIES IN CASE OF RESPONSE OPERATIONS
INVOLVING SEVERAL STATES**

*Adopted by the Ninth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention,
Barcelona, 5-8 June 1995 (UNEP(OCA)/MED IG.5/16, Annex XII, Appendix IV)*

1. In order to achieve prompt and efficient exchange of information and effective operational command over pollution response operations, the Contracting Parties to the Emergency Protocol to the Barcelona Convention shall endeavour to establish and maintain permanent liaison between the competent national authority of the Party whose territorial sea, coasts and related interests are directly affected by pollution and who has the overall operational command over the response operations, and the competent national authorities of the assisting Parties or Parties taking part in the response operations. Two main cases arise:
 - either pollution occurs in the waters of one Contracting Party and threatens the waters of another; or,
 - the scale of the assistance provided by one Contracting Party to another justifies the presence of a liaison officer from the assisting Contracting Party at the response headquarters of the assisted Contracting Party.
2. With a view to establishing and maintaining such liaison, the Parties may decide to exchange Liaison Officers in all cases when, in the opinion of their respective competent national authorities in charge of response to a pollution incident, the circumstances of the incident and/or the scale of the response measures call for it.
3. The role of such Liaison Officers shall be limited:
 - a) in the first case referred to in paragraph 1, to facilitating mutual information exchange between threatened Contracting Parties with a view to enabling a Contracting Party which might be subsequently affected to prepare its response actions and, when appropriate, to start response operations without waiting for the pollution to reach its waters.
 - b) in the second case referred to in paragraph 1, to transmitting the orders of the authority having overall command over response operations (Supreme On-Scene Commander) to the officers in charge of the resources of the assisting Party.
4. Each Contracting Party shall endeavour to include the liaison officers among the staff of its response command and to facilitate the performance of their duties, in particular by arranging access to communication means.
5. In designating their Liaison Officers, the Parties shall take into consideration that the selected persons should have relevant specialist knowledge, a good command of the working language of the other Party and confirmed communication skills, in addition to being able to work efficiently under stress.
6. The Party receiving a Liaison Officer from another Party, shall make the necessary arrangements concerning immigration and custom formalities for his/her entry into the country.