

SOPEP Procedure Manual



Germanischer Lloyd

Purpose of the Plan

The Shipboard Oil Pollution Emergency Plan ("SOPEP") is to be seen as an information from the owners to the Master of a particular ship.

It shall advise the Master how to react in case of an oilspill to prevent or at least mitigate negative effects on the environment.

The Plan contains operational aspects for various oilspill scenarios and lists communication information to be used in case of such incidents.

Legal Background

It is compulsory for all ships of more than 400 Gross Tons (Oiltankers of more than 150 GT) to carry a SOPEP onboard.

The required contents is described in MARPOL Convention Annex I Reg. 26.

"Guidelines for the Development of a Shipboard Oil Pollution Emergency Plan" are published by IMO under MEPC.54(32) 1992 as amended by MEPC.86(44) 2000.

The SOPEP forms an integral part of the IOPP certificate. It's existence is verified in the Supplement to the IOPP Certificate.

In any case the SOPEP has to be approved by the flagstate administration of the flag the ship is presently flying or by a classification society on behalf of this flag.

Scope

The Plan consists generally of 4 Sections with the mandatory contents and it's Appendices with additional information as contact addresses and data plus a set of certain drawings for easy reference for the Master.

The provided SOPEP sample plan has been prepared as a **general guidance** how to write such a plan in accordance with the new IMO Guidelines as amended in March 2000. It has to be seen as an example how the contents basically could be written in order to fulfil the requirements

All pretexted steps and preventive measures have to be seen as an example only.

The individual SOPEP should be prepared in line with the "Table of Content/ Index of Sections" as per sample.

It has to be **tailored carefully** to the particular ship and company procedures and policies. Specific instructions should be incorporated according to ship type, purpose, and company requirements.

Especially for tankers actions in regard to the cargo tanks and cargo handling have to be included in the instructions.

The contents of the plan have to be fully in line with the instructions given by the company within the ISM Safety Management Manual.

"Remarks to plan writers" can be found on various pages for guiding users where the sample text has to be tailored as a minimum. These remarks have to be eliminated prior printing.

Table of Contents

The SOPEP shall consist of the following Chapters:

1. Ship identification data
2. Table of Contents
3. Record of Changes
4. Section 1: Preamble
5. Section 2: Reporting Requirements
6. Section 3: Steps to control Discharges
7. Section 4: National and Local Coordination
8. Minimum Appendices: List of Coastal State Contacts
List of Port Contacts
List of Ship Interest Contacts
9. Ship's drawings: General Arrangement Plan
Tank Plan
Fuel Oil Piping Diagramm
10. Further appendices on owners' decision

Special parts to observe

The ship's identification data page may contain the owner's/manager's address. However it is advisable to list all communication data in the Appendix "Ship Interest Contacts", as changes in telephone numbers. etc. can be altered by the owners and the amendments need not to be approved.

The statement about the person being responsible for reporting (page 11 of the sample) has to be filled in respectively.

Special remarks about availability of additional information sources (pages 21/22 of the sample) have to be entered in the plan only if they are available.

It has to be pointed out that assistance in any stability calculations especially in case of any hull damage can be rendered by this society *only* if a agreement is existing for the particular vessel within GL's Emergency Response Service.

The responsibility schemes for the (pages 23/24 of the sample) have to be tailored exactly to the present crew rankings onboard.

Additional entries

According MARPOL following appendices should be added to the SOPEP :

- **Coastal State Contacts** (as annually published but quarterly updated in the Internet by

IMO)

- Blank form for listing of **Port Contact Addresses** to be kept up-to-date by the Master
- **Ship Interest Contact List** (communication data incl. 24hours contact phone no.to owners/managers , data abt. charterer, insurance, P&I Club, etc.)

The Coastal State Contact List can be obtained in the Internet pages of IMO under the address www.imo.org/home.html under navigator "National Contacts" >> for downloading and printing.

Following **drawings** should be added to the SOPEP for easy reference for the ship's command in case of an oilspill:

- General Arrangement Plan
- Tank Plan
- Fuel Oil Piping Diagram

Those drawings form the minimum requirement by MARPOL. Further plans may be added if found appropriate.

Additional voluntary Entries

Additional Appendices can be entered as found necessary by the owners, i.e.:

- Training and drill procedures
- Plan review procedures
- Record keeping procedures
- Public affairs policy

All appendices do not belong to the mandatory part of the plan's contents but have to be kept **updated by the owners** as found necessary

Approval responsibilities

The approval is a flag state obligation as a part of issuing the IOPP Certificate. If they have authorized the classification societies to issue this certificate, this authorization generally includes the approval of the SOPEP.

Certain Flag administrations offer direct approval services too.

In some cases GL might be authorized on a case-by-case authorization.

In case of a transfer of class the approval by the previous classification society or another flag state authority will generally be accepted. The final decision lies with GL head office.

If a ship changes to a flag by which GL is not authorized to issue the IOPP Certificate, the approval of the SOPEP for this flag has to be made by the flag state authority directly, unless a case-by-case authorization for GL is on hand.

Procedure

The SOPEP has to be furnished according to the requirements of the MARPOL Convention by the owners (possibly by assistance of a consultant/shipyard etc.).

For approval by GL the plan has to be forwarded to GL Head Office Hamburg in at least 2-fold.

For ships flying the German flag GL will just precheck the plan and forward it to the flagstate Authority SBG for final approval, in which case at least 3 copies have to be sent to GL HO.

If a plan is reprinted/copied for approval by GL, which had been formerly approved by another authority /class, all entries and stamps from the previous authority have to be eliminated.

The plan will be checked for being in line with the requirements and finally stamped on the coveragepage.

One copy will be retained for filing with GL, the remaining copies will be sent back to the owners or the forwarding party respectively.

Procedure for changes in the plan

Any changes within the text of the mandatory part will be subject to new approval by GL Head office.

In case of any changes of the ships particulars - new flag, new owners, new ship' name - an approval by head office generally is not necessary. A GL surveyor can change the details as necessary by hand in the original SOPEP onboard with stamping and signing the entries.

For any special cases of a change please see Special Procedures.

All necessary changes in the Appendices have to be made by the owners without approval.

During MARPOL surveys the surveyor will check the presence of an updated SOPEP.

Special Procedures

In case of a **change-of-flag** and a previous approval by another flag administration the surveyor can preliminarily accept the plan for the new flag (in case he is issuing an IOPP Certificate) by a respective entry. It is necessary that in such a cases the owners forward a copy of the SOPEP with a new coveragepage with ship's particulars to GL head office for final acceptance/stamping prior to the issuance of the fullterm IOPP Certificate.

In case of change-of-flag from German to another flag the surveyor can approve the plan for the new flag by a hand entry. It is advisable that a new coveragepage is furnished with new ship's data and to be forwarded to GL HO for stamping and later exchange in the plan. The German approval document becomes null and void.

In case of a **admission to class** by GL the approval of the SOPEP by the previous classification society will be generally accepted. The GL surveyor issuing the IOPP Certificate will enter a remark in the SOPEP about GL's preliminary acceptance of the previous approval. Owners have to forward a copy of the SOPEP to GL head office for final acceptance/stamping prior to the issuance of the fullterm IOPP Certificate.

If there is a change-of-flag too, the case will be handled as described above.

For further possible cases please see also under „Frequently asked questions“ (FAQ).

Sample Plan

The **sample plan** is only available in English.

It is an example for the recommended combined "Shipboard Marine Pollution Emergency Plan"(SMPEP) which will replace the current SOPEP when carried onboard.

The plan is written in WORD and can be viewed/downloaded for easy preparing and tailoring to your ship.

(If you just see the document displayed in your browser, you can save it by doing a rightclick on the link and choosing "Save Link As...")

FAQ

My ship is changing her name. Do I have to furnish a new coverpage for the ship's identification data?

No! the surveyor altering the certificates for the new name can alter the name also in the original SOPEP with stamping and signing.

My ship is changing to another flag. Do I have to send a new SOPEP for approval?

No! the surveyor issuing the certificates for the new flag can alter the details in the original SOPEP with stamping and signing.

My ship is changing from a flag where the flagstate approved the SOPEP to a flag where GL is authorized to approve it. Do I have to furnish a new plan for approval?

No! At change-of-flag the surveyor can make a preliminary remark in the SOPEP about acceptance for the new flag. It is necessary to send a copy of the SOPEP with an updated coverpage with the ship's particulars to GL HO for final acceptance/ stamping prior to issuance of the fullterm IOPP Certificate.

My ship is changing to a flag where GL is not authorized to issue the IOPP Certificate. How can the SOPEP be further approved?

In such case the new flagstate has to approve the SOPEP, unless a case-by-case authorization is given in writing to GL for approval for the new flag.

The ship today changed owners and the previous SOPEP was taken off by the old owners. What can I do to continue trading?

A new SOPEP has to be furnished and sent to GL HO for approval as soon as possible. The surveyor has to attend and to issue a Conditional Interim IOPP Cert. with short validity only to bridge the time until approval and delivery onboard.

The telephone number of the company's office has changed. Do I have to send new pages for approval to exchange in the SOPEP?

No! If the numbers are to be changed in one of the pages of the mandatory part, a surveyor at next possible occasion can alter the entry in the SOPEP with stamping and signing.

If the numbers are only stated in the Appendix "Ship Interest Contacts", they have to be altered by the owners under own responsibility.