

FOREWORD

In 1973 the Australian National Plan to Combat Pollution of **the Sea** by Oil came into effect. This Plan was established to draw together the resources held by states and the oil industry to respond to ship **sourced** oil spills. In setting up the national organisation, oil pollution committees were established in each state and the Northern Territory to provide planning and support to operations.

Membership of these committees consisted of a senior member of the state marine authority who carried the position of chairman and core membership from those organisations who were best placed to provide the expertise to support state plans. The one exception to this arrangement is in the case of Tasmania, where the state responsible authority is the Department of Environment

It was only after a number of years of the Plan's operation that representatives of state environmental authorities took up core membership of all state committees.

As development of State plans took place, so did the need become apparent for 'greater involvement of scientific support within the on scene co-ordinator's (OSC) organisation. Of necessity, the principal decisions to be made in respect of the response to an incident are made by the OSC. Clearly, the greater the awareness by the scientific support co-ordinator (SSC), of the needs of the OSC, the more effective will be the response and the impact of the damage on the environment will be kept to the minimum.

To achieve an optimum level of cohesion and greater **understanding** of the SSC role, it was decided to convene a workshop specifically to bring together people having these scientific support responsibilities.

This report is a summary and proceedings of the first of these workshops to be conducted in Australia. It is hoped that it will be the forerunner of a continuing program of the National Plan to Combat Pollution of the Sea by Oil.

Principal organisers of the workshop **were** Donald Brodie of the Department of Transport and Communications and Wendy Craik of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

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