

SUMMARY

Section 1 summarises the present situation pertaining to the use of dispersants in each country, the national regulations for the acceptance of products and specific national criteria. It is clear from this section that although Contracting Parties have different approaches towards dispersants, most of them do allow them to be used in specific circumstances and after a permit has been granted by the authorities.

Sections 2 and 3 summarise the main advantages, disadvantages, constraints and reservations for the use of dispersants. They emphasise the importance of a fast reaction to an incident and the limitations in efficiency due to, inter alia, the viscosity of the oil and the weather conditions; the last point being the main restriction to the usefulness of dispersants.

Section 4 offers a consensus of the various points of view on application strategy and lists criteria to be considered when establishing a contingency preparedness relying on dispersants, and before their actual use. This section also contains a discussion of the equipment used in treatment with dispersants.

In Section 5, ongoing research programmes are listed and future needs for research identified. It is hoped that concerted action can be taken to achieve rapid and further progress on the question of whether to use dispersants in given circumstances, and how to use them.

The report underlines the necessity for different policies and practices in the various countries, due to different natural conditions. With these conditions as a starting point, the further development of strategies should take place.