



MARITIME AUTHORITY OF JAMAICA

ENTRY INTO FORCE OF PROTOCOL ON PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE AND CO- OPERATION TO POLLUTION INCIDENTS BY HAZARDOUS AND NOXIOUS SUBSTANCES (OPRC-HNS PROTOCOL), 2000

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The OPRC-HNS Protocol is aimed at providing a global framework for international co operation in combating major incidents or threats of marine pollution from ships carrying hazardous and noxious substances (HNS), such as chemicals.

The OPRC-HNS Protocol follows the principles of the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co operation (OPRC), 1990, which itself entered into force in 1995.

As in the OPRC Convention, Parties to the OPRC-HNS Protocol will be required to establish measures for dealing with pollution incidents, either nationally or in co operation with other countries. Ships will be required to carry a shipboard pollution emergency plan to deal specifically with incidents involving HNS, which are defined as any substance other than oil which, if introduced into the marine environment is likely to create hazards to human health, to harm living resources and marine life, to damage amenities or to interfere with other legitimate uses of the sea.

The entry into force of the OPRC-HNS Protocol will bring one step closer the completion of an international regime which will ensure that ships carrying hazardous and noxious substances will be covered by measures similar to those already in existence for oil incidents, concerning preparedness and response to spills as well as liability and compensation, which, in the case of HNS, is dealt with under the International Convention on Liability and Compensation for Damage in connection with the Carriage of Hazardous and Noxious Substances by Sea (HNS), adopted in 1996 and providing for a compensation and liability regime for incidents involving specifically defined HNS substances. (It has not yet entered into force).

Liability and compensation regimes for oil pollution incidents are covered by the 1992 Protocols (updated by the 2000 Protocols) to the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage, 1969, the International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage, 1971, as well as the 2003 Protocol on the Establishment of a Supplementary Fund for Oil Pollution Damage.

**Maritime Authority of Jamaica
4th Floor, Dyoll Building
40 Knutsford Boulevard
Kingston 5**

**+ 876 754-7260/65
+876 754-7256**

**E-mail: maj@jamaicaships.com
Website: www.jamaicaships.com**