



International Oil Pollution  
Compensation Funds

<b>Agenda Item 7</b>	IOPC/NOV21/7/3	
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<b>Original</b>	English	
<b>1992 Fund Assembly</b>	92A26	●
<b>1992 Fund Executive Committee</b>	92EC77	
<b>Supplementary Fund Assembly</b>	SA18	●

## INFORMATION SERVICES

### Note by the Secretariat

<b>Summary:</b>	<p>This document sets out details of the remote training, educational and outreach activities delivered by the Secretariat in 2021.</p> <p>New, ongoing and future projects relating to the website are also described, and an update on the latest publications and other projects completed or under development is provided.</p>
<b>Action to be taken:</b>	<p><u>1992 Fund Assembly and Supplementary Fund Assembly</u></p> <p>Information to be noted.</p>

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Following the continued global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 and the resulting restrictions on international travel, the Secretariat adapted a number of its practices to ensure it was able to continue to engage with Member States, non-Member States and other stakeholders to provide support, training and to increase awareness of the international liability and compensation regime in general. This included the delivery of a number of remote national and regional workshops, the participation of the Secretariat in a number of educational webinars and the adaptation of the IOPC Funds' annual short course to a fully remote event. This document sets out details of the activities delivered by the Secretariat in 2021.
- 1.2 Developments in respect of the Funds' website ([www.iopcfunds.org](http://www.iopcfunds.org)) and publications, as well as information on other projects undertaken throughout the year are also described.

### 2 Remote training and educational activities

#### *Workshops and webinars*

- 2.1 The Secretariat has contributed to a number of webinars since the December 2020 sessions of the governing bodies, including events organised by:
- The Global Initiative for West, Central and Southern Africa (GI WACAF project);
  - The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA);
  - The Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC); and
  - the Sea Alarm Foundation (Sea Alarm).

- 2.2 In addition to these events, the Secretariat has delivered or contributed to national workshops for Canada, Estonia, the Gambia, Mexico and New Zealand, a regional workshop organised by Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA) for the benefit of States in the Gulf of Thailand and the International Oil Spill Conference. The Secretariat welcomes requests from any States that may consider it useful to organise similar online activities.
- 2.3 Since it has not been possible to host any of the annual visits from universities and other educational institutions, the Secretariat has opted to maintain its support for interested students by providing online seminars on request, including for students of Ghent University (Belgium), the University of El Salvador (Argentina), International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI) and the World Maritime University (WMU).
- 2.4 As previously reported, the Secretariat is also developing a series of short webinars, which would be open to a wide audience, covering the key areas that form the bases of the IOPC Funds and the work of the organisations, such as claims handling or oil reporting and contributions. During its participation in a number of the webinars mentioned in paragraph 2.1, the Secretariat took the opportunity to trial a number of online tools and facilities for the purpose of including these in the webinar series, which it had hoped to be in a position to organise in September. However, due to the demand for other outreach activities that month, it was not possible to do so, and the Secretariat will now aim to deliver these in the new year.
- 2.5 Looking ahead, as the Secretariat returns to working at the Funds' offices in the International Maritime Organization (IMO) building, members of staff are looking forward to being able to host face-to-face physical events again. At the same time, the lessons learned from organising remote activities over the past 18 months have been invaluable, and the IOPC Funds will continue to offer a number of remote or, where possible, hybrid activities to ensure that it can continue to reach a wider audience and encourage more Member States to take part in the various training activities that it has to offer.

#### *Short Course*

- 2.6 The annual IOPC Funds Short Course was held online for the first time in 2021. Rather than the usual week-long intensive course, the programme was adapted to run three hours per day over the course of two weeks, between 14 and 25 June 2021. This enabled participants from various time zones to actively participate. This year's course was attended by participants from 21 Member States of the 1992 Fund, representing maritime administrations, national coast guards and others, with nine Member States participating in the course for the first time.
- 2.7 Despite the remote learning environment, the course still covered all aspects of the work of the IOPC Funds and the international liability and compensation regime in general. It also included various interactive exercises, which allowed participants to study a theoretical incident and the subsequent claims submission process and familiarise themselves with the practices of submitting oil reports and calculating contributions.
- 2.8 Presentations were delivered by several members of the Secretariat and also by each of the supporters of the course, namely IMO, the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), the International Group of P&I Associations and ITOPF. While the usual visits on location in London were not possible, the International Group did organise for participants to hear directly from the North of England P&I Club and to attend a virtual tour of the Lloyd's of London building.
- 2.9 The positive feedback received from participants confirms that the online format of the course proved to be a successful trial and could be developed to possibly run alongside or as an additional option to the London-based course in the future. Dates for the 2022 course will be confirmed later in the year,

and further general information on the annual Short Course can be found under the What we do section of the website.

*Induction course*

- 2.10 With regard to the Induction Course, which is a half-day course designed specifically to prepare new delegates shortly before the IOPC Funds' meetings, unfortunately, it will not be possible to organise a remote edition of this course prior to the November 2021 meeting. Due to the full agenda and the reduced hours available for remote sessions, the meeting itself is scheduled to take place across the full five days, leaving no opportunity to run the course at the start of the week and, taking into account the IMO meeting schedule, it is likely that many delegations would be unavailable to attend such a course in the weeks prior to the meeting. In addition, it would be very difficult for those members of the Secretariat involved in delivering the course since the administrative work required to organise remote sessions of the governing bodies tends to be at its peak during those last weeks preceding the opening day. However, the Secretariat is committed to delivering the Induction Course once again in 2022.

**3 Website**

*Traffic*

- 3.1 For the period 31 July 2020 to 1 August 2021, the IOPC Funds' website attracted some 36 000 unique visitors, representing 77 000 sessions and 185 000 page views. This represents a 64%, 83% and 71% increase in each category, respectively, compared to the previous year. Of these visitors, 69% viewed the English site, 18% the Spanish site and 13% the French site.

*Social media presence*

- 3.2 The IOPC Funds have continued to actively use Twitter and LinkedIn to post relevant news and information, provide key facts and figures relating to the liability and compensation regime and share interesting posts from fellow organisations and industry colleagues. These accounts greatly assist with the Secretariat's efforts to improve communication and increase awareness of the work of the organisation. Delegates to the Funds' meetings are therefore encouraged to follow the [@IOPCFunds](#) account on Twitter and the [IOPC Funds page](#) on LinkedIn.

*Short introductory video*

- 3.3 In May 2018, the Secretariat released an introductory video covering the role, structure, and activities of the IOPC Funds, as well as an overview of the legal framework behind the international liability and compensation regime. The video, which is available in English, French and Spanish, each with subtitles, under the About Us section of the website, is intended to provide a general introduction for those not familiar with the organisation and its work. It was updated in April 2021 to include the latest figures.

*Document services accounts*

- 3.4 Despite the various benefits to account holders, particularly in terms of meeting document notifications and registration, there remain a significant number of delegates who have yet to register for an IOPC Funds' document services account.
- 3.5 The Secretariat is pleased to note that, since the meetings have been held remotely for the past year, of those delegations that do have accounts, several have now begun to make use of the online credentials submission facility when registering for a meeting and the majority endeavour to register all members of their delegation in advance of the recommended deadline. This greatly facilitates the work of the Secretariat, particularly when organising a remote meeting.

- 3.6 The November meeting will also be held remotely and, since a vote will take place during the sessions, there may be more communications than usual with regards to practical arrangements. The Secretariat would therefore urge all delegates to register for an account to avoid missing key updates and are encouraged to use the online system to upload their credentials. To register, please visit <https://documentservices.iopcfunds.org/meeting-registration/>.

*Ongoing projects*

- 3.7 Detailed country profiles are published under the Membership section of the website. In January 2016, Circular IOPC/2016/Circ.2 was issued formally inviting Member States to submit copies of relevant national legislation to the Secretariat at their earliest convenience for inclusion in the country profiles in the form of a link to the relevant pages of a government website or in the form of a PDF. Such documents are made available in their original language unless the State is in a position to provide them in English, French and/or Spanish.
- 3.8 As at 28 September 2021, the following States had submitted copies of their national legislation to the Secretariat.

Australia	France	Nicaragua
Bahamas	Ireland	Philippines
Bulgaria	Italy	Poland
Canada	Japan	Republic of Korea
China (HKSAR)	Mexico	Turkey
Denmark	Netherlands	United Kingdom

- 3.9 The submitted information for these States has been made available via their country profiles.

#### **4 Publications**

*Recent publications*

- 4.1 The 2019 Financial Statements of the 1992 Fund and Supplementary Fund were published as online publications in December 2020, and the Annual Report 2020 was made available in March 2021.

*Publications in other languages*

- 4.2 In August 2021, OSPRI (Oil Spill Preparedness Regional Initiative in the Caspian Sea, Black Sea and Central Eurasia) contacted the Director, through IPIECA (the global oil and gas industry association), in collaboration with the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), expressing an interest in producing the 1992 Fund Claims Manual, Guidelines for presenting claims for clean-up and preventive measures and the Guidelines for presenting claims for environmental damage, in Russian. The Members of OSPRI have confirmed that they are willing to support the project financially, and UNEP has agreed to provide a suitably qualified and experienced translator to undertake the project.
- 4.3 As previously stated, making such publications available in languages other than the three official languages of the organisation can assist the IOPC Funds in its endeavours to engage with more States, particularly in relation to the implementation of the Conventions and also in relation to raising States' and potential claimants' awareness of the liability and compensation regime and claims processes. As such, the Secretariat has already worked in the past with the Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea & Gulf of Aden (PERSGA) to produce a number of IOPC Funds' publications in Arabic. It has also collaborated with the Chinese Ship-source Oil Pollution Compensation Fund (COPC Fund) to produce a number of publications in Chinese. Both the Arabic and Chinese publications were verified by the IOPC Funds and are available on the organisation's website.

4.4 The Director has previously confirmed to the governing bodies that he would positively consider offers from other Member States to undertake the translation of the Funds publications in their own language, should the need arise. In respect of the request to cooperate with OSPRI on producing the Claims publications in Russian, the Director welcomes the proposal, particularly given that several Member States and non-Member States would potentially benefit from the availability of this important guidance in the Russian language. Since these would be unofficial translations, a disclaimer would be included in each publication.

## **5 Contact information**

5.1 The Secretariat has recently implemented a new customer relationship management (CRM) system, which has significantly improved the way in which communications are delivered to Member States and other key stakeholders. The implementation of this system was timely as it coincided with the enforced uptake in remote working due to the pandemic and the resulting need to use electronic means for all official communication, including documents such as meeting invitations and circulars.

5.2 While the system has simplified internal practices for large electronic mailings, its value remains dependent on the contact information stored within it. As such, and to ensure important information and documents are sent to the appropriate contacts, delegations are urged to keep the Secretariat informed of any changes in staff, in particular Heads of delegations, or in specific contact details, in particular email addresses. Any updates should be sent to [externalrelations@iopcfunds.org](mailto:externalrelations@iopcfunds.org).

## **6 Action to be taken**

### 1992 Fund Assembly and Supplementary Fund Assembly

The 1992 Fund Assembly and the Supplementary Fund Assembly are invited to take note of the information contained in this document.

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