**INTERNATIONAL
OIL POLLUTION
COMPENSATION
FUNDS**

# WEB-BASED CLAIMS HANDLING SYSTEM

## Note by the Director

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| ***Summary:*** | The Director informed Member States in his report to the October 2015 sessions of the governing bodies that the Secretariat was undertaking a major piece of work on a revised web-based claims handling system and that this piece of work would be presented to the governing bodies at their spring 2016 sessions. |
| | The introduction of the Web-based Claims Management System (WCMS) in 2007 for the *Hebei Spirit* incident allowed a significant improvement in the overall management of claims. The system has been subsequently deployed for later incidents and is now an integral part of the claims handling process. The WCMS has been a very effective tool in handling both small and large incidents and has been periodically reviewed to ensure it is kept up to date so as to enable the handling of incidents involving unprecedented high volumes of claims. |
| | In 2014, based upon the findings of a wide-ranging review involving input from the staff of the IOPC Funds' Secretariat, local claims handling office personnel, external consultants and other parties who had actively used the WCMS in their work, the Secretariat commenced a radical upgrade of the claims handling system and has developed a new web-based Claims Handling System (CHS). A vital piece of the comprehensive development of the system is the introduction of an online claim form which should be ready by the end of the year and this is expected to greatly improve the efficiency of the claims submission process. |
| ***Action to be taken:*** | <u>1992 Fund Assembly and Supplementary Fund Assembly</u> |
| | Information to be noted |

## 1    Introduction

1.1    As in any compensation regime, claims management is a fundamental part of the administration of the IOPC Funds. The introduction of the Web-based Claims Management System (WCMS) in 2007 allowed a significant improvement in the management, control, claims handling efficiency and costs monitoring, particularly evident in supporting data input in the *Hebei Spirit* incident.

1.2    The Audit Body and the External Auditor noted the benefits of an online claims handling system and pointed to the need for periodic reviews of the system.

1.3    In 2013, in order to ensure that the WCMS remained relevant and benefitted from advances in information technology, the Secretariat undertook a comprehensive review of the existing system. The review was conducted with the input of the staff of the Secretariat who manage incidents through

WCMS, as well as personnel from local claims handling offices, external consultants and other parties who had actively used the system in their incident-related work.

1.4    In 2014, based upon the results of the review, the Secretariat commenced a radical upgrade of the system, incorporating the findings of the review and focusing on changes and improvements, particularly in respect of the allocation of time and costs by claims experts in the information flows emerging from the WCMS.

1.5    The incident management aspect of the new Claims Handling System (CHS) has been strengthened by the introduction of a number of tailor-made key performance indicators (KPI) and new instruments for processing large numbers of claims simultaneously.  The system has been further improved by the introduction of a more advanced reporting capability, for both claims handling and information management.  The prototype system has been tested and is ready to be deployed.

1.6    There is now in place a solid emergency response plan that follows the best data management practices. The incident response will be supported by a virtual office that removes the need for fixed IT infrastructure.  The system will be accessible to local claims handling office personnel, experts and other parties appointed to assist in a particular incident.  Data will be managed in accordance with best security practices. The possibility of having office resources accessible remotely will greatly improve the management of the claims and distribution of technical information about the spill.

1.7    In addition to the review of the WCMS and its upgrade to the CHS, the system is being extended to allow claimants to submit claim forms online.  Great emphasis has been placed on designing a user-friendly system in compliance with the spirit of the Conventions.  It is anticipated that this will greatly facilitate the efficiency of the claims submission process and also improve the access to incident-specific information.  The prototype online claim form is expected to be ready by the end of 2016 and will be presented to the governing bodies at a future session.

2    <u>**Action to be taken**</u>

<u>1992 Fund Assembly and Supplementary Fund Assembly</u>

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

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