



International Oil Pollution  
Compensation Funds

Agenda Item 7	IOPC/OCT19/7/4	
Date	19 August 2019	
Original	English	
1992 Fund Assembly	92A24	●
1992 Fund Executive Committee	92EC73	
Supplementary Fund Assembly	SA16	●

## INFORMATION SERVICES

### Note by the Secretariat

<b>Summary:</b>	New, ongoing and future projects relating to the website are described, and an update on the latest publications and other projects completed or under development is also provided.
<b>Action to be taken:</b>	<u>1992 Fund Assembly and Supplementary Fund Assembly</u>  Information to be noted.

### 1 Information services

The Secretariat makes every effort to ensure that the most relevant and accessible information is provided to Member States, the organisations' key partners, stakeholders and wider audience, whilst maintaining value for money. Two of the main information services provided by the Secretariat are the Funds' website ([www.iopcfunds.org](http://www.iopcfunds.org)) and publications. Developments in respect of those services, as well as information on other projects undertaken since October 2018, are set out below.

### 2 Website

#### *Traffic*

- 2.1 For the period 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2019, the IOPC Funds website attracted some 33 000 unique visitors, representing 58 000 sessions and 160 000 page views. Of these visitors, 68% viewed the English site, 18% the Spanish site and 14% the French site.

#### *Social media presence*

- 2.2 The IOPC Funds has continued to actively use its Twitter account 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. This account greatly assists with the Secretariat's efforts to improve communication and increase awareness of the work of the organisation and the number of followers has increased by some 60% in the past 12 months. Delegates to the Funds' meetings are particularly encouraged to follow the [@IOPCFunds](https://twitter.com/IOPCFunds) account for useful updates in the months and weeks prior to and during meetings of the governing bodies.

#### *Document services accounts*

- 2.3 Users are not required to register to access the document services section of the IOPC Funds' website, however additional features are available to registered users. Notably, delegates who register their email address through the website will receive notification of the publication of new documents and will be able

to create, save and manage folders of selected documents. This is a particularly useful facility given that the IOPC Funds' Secretariat no longer prints copies of meeting documents and delegates can only access them online.

- 2.4 In addition, document services account holders are more easily able to register to attend a meeting and are also able, if necessary, to directly register other members of their delegation. Account holders may also submit their credentials online via the meeting registration system and will receive email notification of key news and events relating to the IOPC Funds, including the confirmation of meeting dates and circulation of the invitation and agenda to those meetings.
- 2.5 Despite these benefits, there remain around 200 delegates to recent meetings who have yet to register for an account and the Secretariat would strongly encourage them to do so. In addition, only a small number of delegations have begun to make use of the online credentials submission facility when registering, and some fail to register at all for the meetings until their arrival on the opening morning. Delegates are encouraged to upload a copy of their credentials if available at the time of registration and are urged to complete registration in advance of the meetings to ensure sufficient space is allocated to their delegation in the meeting hall.

#### *Upgrading of content management system*

- 2.6 The content management system which sits behind the IOPC Funds' website has undergone an essential upgrade and, in the process, the existing website has been migrated to an alternative, more suitable and widely used platform. Due to the complexity of certain areas of the Funds' site, it took longer than initially anticipated to complete the migration and to carry out the necessary robust testing of the new site. The project was, however, completed in August 2019 and the website is now functioning as intended on the new platform. The impact of the changes brought about by this migration is limited to the Secretariat in its management and maintenance of the website and should not affect the general user experience. However, all registered users will need to reset their passwords to access their account within the new platform.

#### *Ongoing projects*

- 2.7 While the Funds' website was being rebuilt within the new platform, as described in paragraph 2.6, the Secretariat took the opportunity to identify areas for improvement on the front end of the website. Now that the migration is complete, it intends to begin developing those areas and to also act, where appropriate, on feedback, suggestions and ideas received from delegations in recent times. Delegations are encouraged to inform the Secretariat of any further suggestions for improvement, or new additions that they consider would be useful for either themselves, for their contributors or for other general users of the site.
- 2.8 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.
- 2.9 As at 31 July 2019, the following States had submitted copies of their national legislation to the Secretariat.

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

- 2.10 The submitted information for these States has been made available via their country profiles.
- 2.11 In response to a suggestion by one Member State, the Secretariat is reviewing the information it provides in respect of the submission of documents by Member States and observer delegations for meetings of the governing bodies. Taking into account the information provided by other organisations in this regard, such as the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the Secretariat intends to extend its existing guidance to offer more practical information on the submission process.

### **3 Publications**

#### *Recent publications*

- 3.1 The Annual Report 2018 was made available in March 2019, and a shortened version of the Guidelines for presenting claims for environmental damage was also published that month. The six-page brochure, entitled 'Claims for Environmental Damage: An Overview' summarises the key points of the Funds' policy on claims for environmental damage, and presents them in a more simplified, visual format.
- 3.2 A new edition of the 1992 Fund Claims Manual was also published in April 2019. The latest edition incorporates the text approved by the governing bodies in April 2018 setting out revised assessment criteria for claims for compensation made by employees who have suffered a reduction in wages, been placed on part-time work or been made redundant as a consequence of an incident.
- 3.3 The Guidelines for presenting claims in the fisheries, mariculture and fish processing sector (Fisheries Guidelines) and the Guidelines for presenting claims in the tourism sector (Tourism Guidelines) were also amended to reflect the change in the criteria.
- 3.4 The revised publications are all available to download via the Publications section but are not currently available in hard copy since the Claims Information Pack, which contains the previous versions of those publications among others, was only reissued in March 2018. However, an explanatory note providing the wording of all the new and amended text is available to download and in hard copy upon request.

#### *Future publications*

- 3.5 As reported at the October 2018 sessions of the governing bodies, the cover of the Text of the Conventions has been replaced online to include the updated logo and address. Since there remains sufficient printed stock of the 2011 publication at present and the contents remain unchanged, the Secretariat will continue to distribute the remaining hard copies this year and will consider printing the new version in 2020.
- 3.6 As reported and described in document IOPC/OCT19/5/6, the financial statements of the 1992 and Supplementary Funds have been produced in a more reader-friendly format this year. This follows suggestions made by the Audit Body. In addition, for the benefit of Funds' stakeholders with a particular interest in the Funds' audited accounts, the Director has decided to publish the financial statements, once they have been approved by the governing bodies each year, as an online publication.

### **4 Short introductory video**

- 4.1 In May 2018, the Secretariat released an introductory video, which was shown to delegations at the April 2018 sessions of the governing bodies, 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 is intended to provide a general introduction for those not familiar with the organisation and its work and brings all the basic information from reporting of contributing oil to the claims admissibility criteria together in one place.
- 4.2 In June 2019, the Secretariat published an updated version of the video, which includes the latest figures and a number of minor improvements. In order to assist those viewers whose first language is not English,

French or Spanish and to enable the video to be more easily understood and displayed in public areas, the Secretariat has also added subtitles to each version. The video can be found under the About Us section of the website.

**5 Review of language employed in documents in 2019**

- 5.1 At the October 2017 sessions of the governing bodies, the Secretariat reported its intention to undertake a review of the language used in a number of its publications to ensure the terms employed remained in common use. It was noted that the review would include a check for gender neutral language. It was also noted that a similar review would be undertaken to ensure consistency in the rules and regulations of the Funds which were adopted by the governing bodies many years ago and had been amended and added to at various points over the years without undergoing any overall review (see document IOPC/OCT17/11/1, paragraph 7.3.7).
- 5.2 The sets of Guidelines contained within the Claims Information pack underwent this review prior to publication in March 2018. The Secretariat subsequently began its review of the rules and regulations in the latter part of 2018 and is in the process of revising the relevant documents accordingly. The amendments, which do not always affect the three official languages in the same manner, are of a purely linguistic nature and will not affect the substance of any of the texts. The amended rules and regulations will therefore be implemented with immediate effect from the date of publication. A number of terms being replaced appear in rules which are often quoted in meeting documents, e.g. the English term 'Chairman' has been replaced by the gender-neutral term 'Chair', which will now be used throughout any relevant documents and will consistently appear during the sessions of the governing bodies. This particular term has not changed in French or Spanish.

**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.

---