



Guidelines for Equipment Condition Tests and Exercises

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	2
2. Definitions.....	2
3. Conducting Equipment Condition Tests	2
3.1 Schedule of tests.....	3
3.2 ECT Requirements.....	3
3.3 Elements to be checked and tested during the ECT	3
3.4 Completion of the test	4
3.5 Test reporting	4
4. Operational exercises	4
5. Notification exercises	6
6. Equipment repairs	7
Appendix A List of Annexes	8

1. Introduction

The Agency is tasked to provide additional response capacity to the Member States of the European Union, EFTA States. In addition, the Agency may also provide assistance in case of pollution to third countries sharing a regional sea basin with the European Union, in line with the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. This is in accordance with the Agency's founding Regulation (EC) N°1406/2002 as amended.

The overall objective of EMSA's Equipment Assistance Service (EAS) is the provision, upon demand and at short notice, of oil pollution response services, more particularly the availability on-site of specialised Oil Spill Response (OSR) equipment in order to respond to oil spills in the European regional sea basins.

To make the EAS efficient and effective the equipment must be maintained in constant operational readiness. The Contractor must have in place adequate procedures and trained personnel to mobilise the service in emergency. Moreover, the potential Requesting Parties must be aware about the mobilisation procedures as well as have in place mechanisms and experience to request and use the service.

With this in mind the Contractor will have to conduct periodical Equipment Condition Tests, provide equipment for the Exercises and participate in Notification Exercises.

Please note that the equipment commissioning following delivery does not fall within the scope of this document as commissioning will be carried out by the equipment manufacturer at the location where equipment is normally stored and maintained and no deployment on water will be required.

2. Definitions

For the purpose of these Guidelines the following definitions apply:

Equipment Condition Test (ECT)

Periodical test of the condition, functionality and operational readiness of the equipment set in normal operational conditions (in water).

Operational Exercise

An exercise at sea arranged within the framework of national, multinational and Regional Agreement pollution response plans. The aim of this type of exercise is to test the alarm procedure, the response capability, the response time of the participating parties, and the cooperation between the oil spill response units (including the oil spill response equipment). This type of exercise will test the ability of the Requesting Party to request and use the EAS as well as the EAS mobilisation efficiency and effectiveness.

Notification Exercise

Desktop exercise with the aim to test the agreed procedures and lines of communication for reporting, requesting and providing assistance, and to assess the readiness of the EAS when asked to provide pollution response assistance.

3. Conducting Equipment Condition Tests

Long term storage may cause deterioration of the oil pollution response equipment condition and hamper its operational readiness. Furthermore, use of the equipment during the exercises may cause some equipment damage. Therefore, EMSA requires periodical testing of the equipment. The purpose of the test is to assess the functionality, condition and the operational readiness of the equipment.

3.1 Schedule of tests

An ECT will be compulsory at least once every two years per equipment set. The number of tests per year (12 months) will not exceed six, and the cost of the tests will be borne by the contractor.

Following delivery of new equipment, EMSA may assist the Contractor with training on equipment operation and maintenance for the technical support personnel. The training shall be performed by the equipment manufacturer as ordered directly by EMSA.

For training, the equipment will be deployed in water within the framework of an ECT. The EAS Contractor shall provide all relevant logistical arrangements (e.g. transport, deployment, manoeuvring of equipment). Should actual deployment in water be hampered due to external circumstance beyond the control of any of the parties involved (EMSA, the Contractor or the trainer) such as weather conditions or harbour program the training session will not be considered and counted as an ECT.

3.2 ECT Requirements

The test must fulfil the following requirements:

- The Contractor must submit to EMSA an annual ECT Plan within the first 10 days of a new calendar year;
- The Contractor must inform EMSA about the date and place of each test at least 2 weeks in advance;
- The test should be conducted by adequately skilled personnel. For each test, one person from the project team should be appointed to coordinate and lead the equipment deployment activities.
- Equipment should be tested under normal operational conditions, which means it should be deployed on water. For that purpose the Contractor must ensure appropriate testing facilities e.g. crane, towing vessel(s), barge or floating platform. Equipment can also be deployed in port waters from the pier. Suitable testing facility ashore for equipment deployment may also be acceptable for this purpose;
- Time of the equipment operation during the operational activities in water should be at least one hour (excluding deployment and retrieval of the equipment) and 30 minutes for the dispersant spraying systems;
- Deployment must be performed in line with the equipment manual and instructions provided by the equipment manufacturer;
- Equipment should be deployed by the technical support personnel assigned by the Contractor;
- During equipment deployment all health and safety rules and standards must be observed. Appropriate Personal Protection Equipment is obligatory.

For safe performance of the ECT, the Contractor shall ensure that, as a minimum, the following conditions are met:

- The suitable logistical arrangements are in place for safe loading, un-loading, deployment and manoeuvring of equipment. It should be noted that for some equipment sets such as booms, two vessels may be required to ensure safe and efficient deployment and testing on water;
- The towing vessels must be directional stable (e.g. deep v-shaped keel) and/or with ability for sideways movements (i.e. side propeller/thruster);
- Protective matting is available for deployment and retrieval of equipment sets in order to avoid damage to sensitive components (e.g. booms, tow lines, hoses);
- The personnel wears the appropriate protective equipment;
- All relevant parties involved in the equipment deployment are briefed on their roles and possess suitable communication channels;
- The testing facility possesses the minimum space required for safe and efficient deployment and manoeuvring of the different equipment sets (e.g. 120m wide / 300m long).
- The testing facility is provided with suitable fastening / anchorage points for proper fastening of the OSR equipment while deployed / retrieved.

3.3 Elements to be checked and tested during the ECT

For ensuring that the operational readiness of the equipment set is up to standards, the Contractor shall verify the following during an ECT, as well as during associated training and/or commissioning:

- Completeness and integrity of the equipment set (including spare parts);
- Power packs: 30 minutes operation with high rpm. Temperature and oil pressure, hydraulic system, oil and hydraulic hoses connections must be checked;
- Skimmers: floating, mechanical elements, hydraulic system, oil and hydraulic hoses connections, manoeuvrability, remote control, pumping capacity of the skimmer pumps (30 minutes operation);
- Booms: floating, air blowers, compressors, reels, power pack;
- Dispersant spraying systems: nozzles, pumps, spraying arms;
- Oil trawl nets: integrity of the net, condition of towing lines and material of the net.

3.4 Completion of the test

The test is considered to be complete after successful fulfilment of the test scenario including debriefing and equipment demobilisation (cleaning and storage).

3.5 Test reporting

After each ECT the Contractor is obliged to submit to EMSA an ECT Report. The ECT Report covers testing of a particular set of equipment. In case several sets of equipment are tested there should be a separate report for each set of equipment. The ECT Report should contain the following information:

- type of equipment tested;
- tests performed;
- results of the tests;
- list of personnel participating in the test and their tasks and functions;
- list of technical discrepancies;
- necessary equipment repairs/improvements and test conclusions.

The ECT Report should be submitted on the template attached as Annex 1 to these guidelines.

For ECTs performed as part of training provided by equipment manufacturer, the Contractor is obliged to include in the ECT Report detailed information on the operational status of the equipment and whether there are any deficiencies on the equipment, its components and ancillaries during the equipment deployment.

In case EMSA is not present during a training and/or commissioning provided by the equipment manufacturer, then the Contractor will act as EMSA's delegate for assessing and accepting the operational readiness of the equipment set and the information provided by the Contractor in the ECT Report or the commissioning report in this regard, shall be used by EMSA as the basis for issuing the Certificate of Conformity to the equipment manufacturer.

4. Operational exercises

EMSA may request the Contractor to provide the equipment to a coastal State to be used for the purpose of an at-sea exercise.

At-sea operational exercises greatly assist the integration of EMSA's resources with the response mechanisms of EU Member States, improving the necessary coordination and cooperation of the EMSA services with the coastal States.

The usual exercise scenario encompasses a major oil spill of the size which cannot be dealt with using national resources. In such a case the affected coastal State calls for international assistance. Within that framework EMSA offers assistance of different services including EAS.

Within the context of the EAS, the main purpose of exercises is to test ability of the Requesting Parties (normally coastal States) to mobilise and to use equipment offered by EMSA.

The procedure for EAS mobilisation for operational exercises comprises of the following steps:

a. Preparation for the exercise

Exercises at sea are planned events and their dates are known several months in advance. The State arranging the exercise formally invites EMSA to participate at least two months beforehand.

Following the invitation, EMSA informs the EAS Contractor about date, place of the exercise and requested services (type and number of equipment to be delivered. Accordingly, the Contractor starts preparations for the shipment of equipment and, if required, technical support personnel.

b. Mobilisation

The Contractor mobilises equipment and the technical support personnel in line with the Equipment Mobilisation Plan (see Appendix 1 to the Tender specifications). The technical support personnel must accompany the equipment sent to the exercise in order to provide support to the Requesting Party during the equipment handover and use, and must submit to EMSA a report regarding the equipment mobilisation, handover, use, redelivery and de-mobilisation.

c. Role of Staff in Exercises

It is important to note that an exercise represents a good opportunity to test two critical points:

1. Equipment handling, transport requirements and documentation e.g. manifests, packing lists, material safety data sheets (MSDS), customs clearance (if applicable), handover statements etc.
2. Quality of assistance provided by the technical support personnel (if requested).

Coordination of the technical support personnel and of the equipment is critical for an orderly mobilisation of the requested assistance. In this regard a Mobilisation Coordinator shall be appointed by the Contractor as point of contact and coordination between the responsible for logistics and the Technical Support Personnel team.

The role of the technical support personnel during exercises is to provide assistance to the Requesting Party during the equipment handover, use and/or redelivery. This assistance of the technical support personnel is subject to the request by the Requesting Party to EMSA. The technical support personnel may provide information regarding the main equipment components, functionalities, method of installation on board the vessel of opportunity and equipment deployment during the equipment handover, and may also take part and coordinate the use of the equipment by the designated crew during the actual exercise. Accordingly, Requesting State will have the responsibility to provide equipment operators for the requested EMSA equipment.

d. Equipment transport and handover

The Contractor transports equipment to the place of handover indicated by EMSA agreed with the Requesting Party and delivers it at the requested time.

At the place of hand over the representative of the Contractor hands over the equipment to the representative of the Requesting Party. Unloading of equipment normally will be responsibility of the Requesting Party unless agreed otherwise with the Contractor. The handover must be done formally with the use of the Handover/Redelivery Statement (the template for the Handover/Redelivery Statement is attached to Annex III to the IRC-E).

The Handover/Redelivery Statement contains:

- The purpose of handover;
- Detailed list of equipment/personnel;
- Comments regarding the equipment condition at handover and redelivery;
- Place, date and time of handover/redelivery of the equipment and signatures of both parties – the Contractor and the Requesting Party.

e. Exercise

From the moment of signature of the handover receipt, the sole responsibility for the equipment lies with the Requesting Party. The Requesting Party uses the equipment for the purpose of the exercise accordingly to the exercise scenario.

For information purposes only, the respective obligations and sharing of responsibilities, more particularly those of the State hosting the exercise, are described in Enclosure 4 to the Invitation to Tender (Equipment Assistance Service Exercise Participation Agreement).

f. Redelivery

After the completion of the exercise announced by the Requesting Party, the technical support personnel (if requested) will assist the Requesting Party with packing/preparing the equipment for transportation. The Requesting Party returns equipment to the place and at the date and time agreed with EMSA and specified in the handover document.

Usually the equipment should be returned at the place of handover. Loading of equipment (loading cargo on the means of transport) normally will be responsibility of the Requesting Party. Redelivery of equipment must be done formally with the use of the Handover/Redelivery Statement.

The Handover/Redelivery Statement is a condition for invoicing and payment of the Contractor's expenses related to the exercise.

The Handover/Redelivery Statement should be submitted to EMSA within 10 days following the exercise.

g. Reporting

Technical support personnel accompanying the equipment provided for the exercise will submit a report focusing on the performance of mobilisation, transport and equipment handover, use and redelivery within 10 days following the exercise. The Exercise Report template is attached as Annex 2 to these guidelines.

5. Notification exercises

The Contractor will be requested to participate periodically in Notification Exercises arranged by EMSA and/or the coastal States. The Notification Exercise is a "desktop" exercise and its purpose is to test the EAS mobilisation procedures without actual mobilisation of the equipment. Such exercise includes notification and signature of the Incident Response Contract – Equipment (IRC-E).

The Notification Exercise can be launched with a prior warning at least two weeks before or at short notice. During Notification Exercise the Contractor will execute the notification and IRC-E signing procedure.

The main steps of the Notification Exercise for the Contractor normally are as follows:

1. EMSA warns the Contractor by phone and email about launching of the Notification Exercise;
2. After receiving request for assistance from the affected Requesting Party EMSA sends to the Contractor a Notice of Mobilisation. The Notice contains details of the competent Authority/ Institution in the affected country and request to enter into the IRC-E with that Authority/Institution;
3. The competent Authority/Institution fills in and signs the IRC-E and sends it back to the Contractor;
4. The Contractor fills in the IRC-E form, signs and sends it (by e-mail) to the competent Authority/Institution of the requesting Party, copy to EMSA. Time for preparing and sending the signed IRC-E form shall not be longer than one hour;
5. EMSA informs the Contractor about the end of the Notification Exercise.

All correspondence and documents exchanged during the Notification Exercise will start with the words: Exercise, Exercise, Exercise.

6. Equipment repairs

In case of minor technical failures of the equipment identified during the ECT the Contractor will ensure the necessary repairs under the maintenance service. The cost of such repairs will be covered by the Availability Fee.

In case of equipment loss or damage during an ECT the Contractor should arrange repairs by the specialised service (the best option – by the manufacturer). The cost of such repairs or replacements will be covered by the Contractor. For that purpose a Contractor's insurance is obligatory under the contract.

In case of exercises, from handover until redelivery and during the actual execution of the exercise, the Requesting Party remains responsible for the reasonable and safe use of the EMSA Equipment and its deployment. All losses or damages sustained by the Equipment from the time of handover until redelivery will be for the sole account of the Requesting Party. If the Equipment is not redelivered by the Requesting Party in good condition, normal wear and tear being for the account of EMSA, the Requesting Party shall indemnify EMSA for all costs reasonably incurred by it in restoring the Equipment or any part of it or in replacing the Equipment or any part of it if it cannot be so restored at a cost below the cost of replacement. If so agreed between the Requesting Party and EMSA, the Requesting Party should pay the entity contracted by EMSA for performing the repairs or replacing the Equipment, the Requesting Party will then actually honour EMSA's contractual obligations.

Appendix A List of Annexes

Annex 1	ECT Report template
Annex 2	Exercise Report template

Annex 1 – ECT Report Template

EAS CONDITION TEST REPORT				
Contractor	EAS Contract No	Area	No. of drill/year	Date of drill
1. Equipment set				
2. Test scenario				
<i>Description of the deployment method</i>				
3. Drill Facilities				
<i>Description of the facilities (vessel, floating platform, ashore) where the test was performed, position and/or ashore facility, other related particulars. A map and pictures could be presented as an attachment.</i>				
4. Participants				
4.1 Personnel			4.2. Observers	
4.1.1 From Contractor's side – key figures <i>a) Equipment Test Co-ordinator</i> <i>d) Technical Support Team operating OSR equipment (name, position, key tasks)</i>			4.2.1 From EMSA (names) 4.2.2 Others (names, organization)	
4.1.2 Others (names, organization, position, key tasks)				
5. Detailed Timetable				
<i>The timetable should reflect all the key elements of the test with the exact timing. The timetable should be attached to the Equipment Condition Test Report as an annex.</i>				
Remarks (if any):				
6. Evaluation				
<i>Assessment of the performance of equipment and personnel (including facilities, Technical Support Team and equipment), analysis, comparison with previous tests results, based on the criteria described in the guidelines</i>				
7. Conclusions				
<i>Equipment status after the test.</i>				
7.1 Failures of equipment			7.2 Safety issues	
8. Proposals for improvement/Follow-up actions				
<i>Summary of the follow-up actions emerging from the test performance.</i>				
Name of THE person preparing the report		Signature		Date [dd/mm/yyyy]

Annex 2 – EAS Exercise Report Template

EAS POLLUTION RESPONSE EXERCISE REPORT		
Contractor	Contract Number	Date(s) of the Exercise [dd/mm/yyyy]
		From / / To / /
Name of the Exercise	Place of the Exercise	Host country
1. EAS Equipment set/s handed over for the exercise		
<i>Description of the EAS equipment set</i>		
2. EAS Technical support personnel assisting the Requesting Party during the equipment handover		
4.3.1 From Contractor's side – key persons		
a)		
b)		
3. Mobilisation log		
<i>Description of the mobilization, transportation, handover, Redelivery and de-mobilisation process. Detailed events log.</i>		
4. Assessment of the EAS performance		
5. Shortcomings		
<i>Summary of the difficulties met during the EAS mobilisation, including those from technical, organisational, logistical, human or other nature.</i>		
6. Status of the equipment condition after the exercise		
Description of the equipment condition (e.g. operational, damaged, minor repairs required)		
7. Proposals for improvement/Follow-up actions		
8. Other remarks/considerations		
<i>Any other considerations.</i>		
Name of the person preparing the report	Signature	Date [dd/mm/yyyy]
		/ /

NOTE: Completed table must be sent by email to EMSA project officer for coordination.

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