

Security and Emergency Response

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15.1 Introduction

The Security and Emergency Response Division (OPP) provides security, emergency services and oil and aquatic vegetation control to the Panama Canal Authority and its customers. It prevent and responds to security incidents, fires, confined space rescue, medical emergencies, oil pollution controls and hazardous materials releases along the waterway (including areas of coordination) with a highly trained force of security officers, physical security specialists, oil pollution, aquatic vegetation, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and chemists. It also oversees, via the Fire Section, adherence to fire codes and regulations in buildings and floating equipment.

It consists of the Security and Surveillance Section, the Fire Section, and the Prevention and Spill Control Section, as well as the Liaison and Risk Analysis Unit and Budget and Administrative Units.

15.2 Resources Availability and Readiness

The Security and Emergency Response Division is responsible for the security of the Panama Canal and emergency responses within Canal operation waters, infrastructure, equipment and medical emergencies. It must consistently provide around the clock high-quality service in both districts. It maintains a zealous and proactive approach to security and emergency preparedness by means of the development of the Agency's Security and Contingency Plans. On a daily basis the operational status of the Security Control and Emergency Dispatch Center, access controls, patrolling, fire engines, ambulances, and communication and ancillary equipment is tested to maintain a state of readiness, should the need arise. Periodic programs ascertain the calibration and proper operation of more sophisticated equipment for CCTV, intruder detection systems, response to Hazmat, Fire, and Medical emergencies. The division maintains a vigilant and preplanning mode for fixed structures, and hazardous cargo vessels transits with Precautionary Designators 1, 3, and the security risk analysis of vessels in transit using the ISPS Code levels 1, 2, and 3.

Resource staging and accessibility are of outmost importance. The division operates integrated CCTV, access control and intruder detection systems, five fire stations at the Locks. In addition, it has positioned support equipment in sheds throughout the Locks as well as trailer pumps, high expansion foam makers, large diameter hose tenders, high expansion foam, dry chemical engines trailers, and high capacity pumps in strategic points.

A coordinated security and fire protection plan with the National Security Council, Public Forces, and Cuerpo de Bomberos de Panamá provides the necessary manpower for extended and/or maritime operations. Furthermore, OPP coordinates tabletop exercises with the Public Forces, International partners, and US National Response Team (NRT), a requirement set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding between the Panama Canal and the Public Forces, and the Memorandum of Agreement with NRT. By drilling on the activation of this MOU and MOA, OPP ascertains the availability of technical assistance and equipment for emergencies that could surpass the ACP's emergency response capabilities.

15.3 Organization

The office of the Security and Emergency Response Division Executive Manager is responsible for the overall operation of the Division, management of its units in the Northern and Southern Districts, and the ACP Security and Contingency

Plan. The executive manager establishes internal and agency-wide policies for areas pertaining to Security, Hazmat, Medical Emergencies, Oil Spills and Fire in consultation with other operating units, and in accordance with prevailing regulations and applicable standards. This office is also in charge of labor-management relations, the formulation of capital investment projects, providing an adequate working environment and maintaining good working relationships with organizations within and outside the Panama Canal Authority.

15.4 Prevention and Spill Control Section

The emergency contingency planning specialists manage the Panama Canal Shipboard Oil Pollution Emergency Plan (PCSOPEP) program, which entails the evaluation of plan compliance, the planning of ACP-wide training, the budgeting and purchasing of oil spill response equipment, the establishment of a contract with a Tier 3 OSRO, and interaction with customers, maritime organizations, and shipping agents. In summary, this program prepares the ACP to successfully respond to spills as the ACP acts as the sole Oil Spill Response Organization (OSRO) in Canal waters.

The Pollution Control Unit is the specialized unit directly responsible for oil spill response, aquatic vegetation control and used oil management. Its mission is to maintain canal waters free of oil spills, aquatic vegetation or floating debris that could affect the safety of navigation or maintenance operations in the Canal. For this purposes, the unit has personnel trained to supervise and operate specialized equipment for oil spills and aquatic vegetation control as well as to organize and perform all operations needed for an effective, efficient and environmentally safe response.

15.5 Fire Section

The Fire Section divides the Canal area into Northern and Southern Districts. Operations encompasses a realm of activities: Vessel stand by at the locks, structural and marine firefighting, confined and high angle rescue, fire watches, vehicle extrication, emergency medical services, mobilization of specialized vehicles for hazmat incidents, oil spill response, and support to salvage operations.

a. *Fire Stations*

This section operates five fire stations: two each in Gatun and Miraflores, and one in Pedro Miguel and one temporary fire station in Corozal West. Each station has a fire engine manned by four people (a station chief, an operator, and two firefighters). They provide response to fires, medical, Hazmat, high angle rescue and other emergencies within the Canal area. These fire companies also participate in hazardous vessel stand by at the locks. Access to EVTMS by OPP personnel provides schedule of transits and cargo information, which is useful for preplanning. The stand by process minimizes reaction time in the event of an incident, and provides customers and workers confidence while safeguarding the

Locks. Fire companies provide the manpower for hazmat incidents, as well as necessary assistance on hazard inspections, locks foam system and extinguishers inspection schedules, extinguisher repair/recharge, Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) maintenance program and air cylinders recharge/hydro testing.

b. *Medical Emergencies*

This section also provides Emergency Medical Service coverage. It operates three ambulances with nationally certified Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) in accordance with the Panama Ministry of Health. Ambulances are staged at Miraflores East Fire Station, Gamboa Ambulance Station and Gatun East Fire Station. Medical emergency responses have on line medical consultation and evaluation. EMTs maintain communication for advice and transportation authorization. Every station chief is also a certified EMT.

c. *Emergency Mitigation*

OPP involvement in vessel transits is ever so evident during emergencies. This responsibility demands constant preparation by the firefighters and the authority itself. The section provides high-level management support to the Canal Operations Captain and its incident management system (ICS) infrastructure during maritime emergencies and, when necessary, provides an officer to assume command of tug fire fighting operations. Fire officers, station chiefs and above are also authorized to activate and direct the operation of the locks fire protection systems.

15.6 Security and Surveillance Section

This section divides the Canal Area into Northern and Southern Districts. Operations encompass a realm of activities: to protect people, information and property of the Panama Canal. To do so, a proper balance of technology and personnel is necessary to perform surveillance of installations, equipment, main channel, anchorages, mooring stations, vessels in transit, access controls, emergency dispatch, intruder detection systems response, executive protection, incident management center operations, inspection and escort of vessels, support to emergencies, etc.

a. *Security Control and Emergency Dispatch Center.*

This section is responsible of the monitoring of the Security Control and Emergency Dispatch Center (SCEDC). The SCEDC monitors the CCTV system across the isthmus, and monitors the over 7000 points of intruder detection. The state-of-the-art integrated system allows that the operators monitor the CCTV, Intruder Detection, Fire Alarm, Access Control, Small Target Detection System, etc.

b. *Security Sectors.*

This section has divided the Canal operation area in geographical sectors in the Southern and Northern Districts. Each sector has the capability of perform as a

back-up system of the SCEDC for their specific sector. Each sector has a lead security guard, and security guards to provide the access controls, surveillance, and respond to incidents, to protect vital, critical and important installations of the Panama Canal, to include the vessels in transit.

c. *Executive Protection.*

This section is responsible of the executive protection. This includes the coordination with external forces. The executive protection duties may include the dignitary protection, CEOs of important companies and organizations.

d. *Coordination and Judicial Liaison.*

This section is responsible of coordinate the relations with public forces and private business, to promote a secure buffer zone. Also, coordinate with the proper authorities the judicial requirements of the employs, to avoid the impact to the operations.

15.7 Offenses involving ACP Employees Onboard Vessels in Canal Waters

a. The ACP is committed to curb illegal activities by ACP employees on board vessels transiting the Canal.

b. In support of this, ship owners and operators should comply with the following procedures aboard transiting ships:

Deckhands should be escorted by vessel personnel to and from their duty stations;

Deckhands should be assigned toilet facilities and potable water source as close as possible to their duty stations;

If the master suspects pilfering, drug trafficking, or any other illegal activity, he or an officer representative should search Canal deckhands when embarking or disembarking the vessel. As a matter of information, deckhands are authorized to carry on board only items that are used in conjunction with the performance of their job. All other items are unauthorized and subject to confiscation. Deckhands have been advised that their belongings are subject to search when boarding or debarking a vessel. The ACP performs random searches at launch landings. A similar practice on shipboard and confiscation of stolen or otherwise unauthorized property should discourage potential offenders.

c. Shipboard searches ought to be ordered by the master or a ship's officer. It should be conducted with appropriate witnesses, which should include the ACP deckhand leader.

d. When a Canal employee is apprehended in an unauthorized area, or has unauthorized items in his possession, the pilot and the deckhand leader should be notified immediately. This will enable ACP authorities to take appropriate disciplinary action against the offender. A positive identification of the offender is

essential. A concise report of the incident, including statements by witnesses, should be submitted by the ship.

e. When an offense of theft or other criminal act aboard a vessel in Canal waters is reported to an ACP employee, that employee will report the incident to the duty Canal Port Captain (CPC). If the CPC cannot be contacted, the watch supervisor at MTC will be notified. The MTC watch supervisor will immediately notify the Canal Operations Captain (COC).

f. Upon notification, the COC must immediately telephone the nearest area coordinator who will promptly proceed to the reporting unit. If required, the assistance of the Security and Emergency Response Division will be requested.

g. Thereafter, the COC will prepare a memorandum for the Executive Assistant to the Administrator (AD) with the following information:

- (1) A description of the incident, to include location, date, and time;
- (2) A full description of stolen or missing property, to include serial numbers and any available documentation pertaining to inventory status;
- (3) Value of missing property; and
- (4) Names and telephone numbers of employees who may be contacted for additional information.

h. It will be the responsibility of the AD to determine the necessary action. When required by the ACP, the police authorities will be notified. Upon contacting the proper police authorities, the area coordinator will report the incident and will carry out the process of filing the complaint. Once the incident is reported to police authorities, an area coordinator will assist the authorities and provide assistance to the manager of the reporting unit, as may be required.

i. Affected ACP officials and employees will cooperate with the police authorities.

j. The Security and Emergency Response Division has authority to board vessels within the Canal operation compatibility area to pursue administrative functions and escort an ACP employee that refuses to disembark after an incident onboard. They have no law enforcement authority.

15.8 Vandalism, Theft and Loss of Equipment

a. Damage and loss of ACP equipment and facilities in the navigational channels by vandalism and theft jeopardizes the safety of transiting ships, ACP floating equipment, and persons on and around the Canal. Repair/replacement efforts and costs are onerous, unbudgeted, and also potentially hazardous.

b. Executive Vice Presidency for Operations personnel operating on and about the Canal should be alert to, and report to the watch supervisor at MTC or the CPC, at the time of observation, any activity not positively identifiable as of ACP origin in the vicinity of navigation aids, bank lights, markers, electronics and

telecommunications facilities, power and telephone cables, etc. This is especially important in the intervals from dawn to 0800 hours and 1500 hours to dusk.

c. Managers and supervisors should stimulate the cooperation of all employees in the area as a means of maintaining a safe and efficient Canal. Reported incidents shall be referred to the proper ACP unit for investigation and action.

15.9 Crew members or Stowaways Jumping from Ships

Crew members or any person jumping from a transiting ship into Canal waters, the Locks, or any other ACP structure or equipment, shall be reported immediately. The person shall be put under the custody of the Security and Emergency Response Division until the ship's agent is contacted and the individual is turned back to the ship or to Panama's Immigration Office.

Pilots, tugboat masters, launch operators and/or lockmasters should be watchful of this kind of activity, which should be reported immediately to MTC and the Transit Operations Division.