

Good morning,

Sundog Charters operates four landing craft that carry non crude oil in quantities of 215 bbls or less under an approved ODPCP. I first commented on proposed changes in regulations for non crude tank vessels with limited storage capacity when public comments were sought in 2017. At the time, we only transported packaged fuels or utilized a fuel truck to roll on/off our landing craft with fuel. Because we were not pumping to/from the boat, no approved plan was needed. However, we felt that our inability to pump from the boat limited our ability to mitigate our risk of spilling oil. Moving small temporary storage tanks, drums or trucks through the intertidal zone is risky. Some beaches do not allow forklifts to travel easily. My greatest fear was getting our fuel truck stuck on the beach with a rising tide! Also, it is much more efficient to load onboard tanks at a marine facility rather than forklifting them on. Without an approved plan, we were not permitted to pump to onboard tanks from a fuel dock.

But many operator and cabin/lodge owners who transport fuel do what they have to to move critical resources to remote locations. And they do so without an approved plan and preventative procedures/equipment required by these plans. In 2018, Sundog Charters contracted with a plan writer to develop a plan and see it through the approval process. Although this was money well spent, it is an expensive process. Keeping response gear onboard, training personnel and testing equipment is also expensive but worth it.

I applaud efforts to make the plan approval process more accessible and less expensive to small operators. If done right, this could allow other small operators to step out into the sunlight with their operations and adopt procedures that prevent spills. However, I have noted some parts of the proposed changes that may not be practical or raise questions.

Proposed changes include onboard containment boom, three times the length of the vessel. I don't know where we would put 200' of boom (they come in 100' sections usually) on our 42' boats. 300' would be required on our larger boats- this would take up valuable cargo space. What size is this boom? Would 8" boom be acceptable? 20" boom is bulky and weighs three pounds per foot. This is a lot for a smaller boat to carry. The required absorbent boom and sweep, although it would take up much storage space, should be effective in containing most spills during the initial phase. Please consider omitting hard containment boom. Maybe damage control equipment effective in plugging leaking tanks would be wise and a better use of space?

Proposed changes detail approved Streamlined Cleanup Contractors. Would already approved Cleanup Contractors like Chadux automatically qualify or would they have to apply and pay the \$500 application fee mentioned? What about the required 12 man Streamlined IMT? Under our approved plan, I do not need an IMT like Witt O'Briens. In the future, this would be an added expense. I have responded to major incidents that did not have 12 people assigned to IMT positions. This seems extreme.

I applaud efforts to make plans realistic for small operators. If they are too burdensome, small operators will continue to use more risky but acceptable practices (moving small tanks, drums and trucks through intertidal zone). Or they will continue to pay no attention to prevention procedures and ignore regulations when no one is looking. If streamlined plans are allowed, I hope that there will be more enforcement. Those playing by the rules find it hard to compete with those who are not.

Lastly, has the USCG been part of this conversation? Not only do small operators need to meet State compliance, we have to satisfy USCG as well. Although we carry less than 249 bbls. and are uninspected, we need USCG approval to pump to/from our onboard tanks. USCG in Alaska issues a 3302 permit for small vessels carrying oil as cargo. Showing them our approved plan, distribution list for comments and COFR satisfied them in 2019. Our 2020 3302 permit is pending review.

Best regards,
Colin

Colin Daugherty
General Manager



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