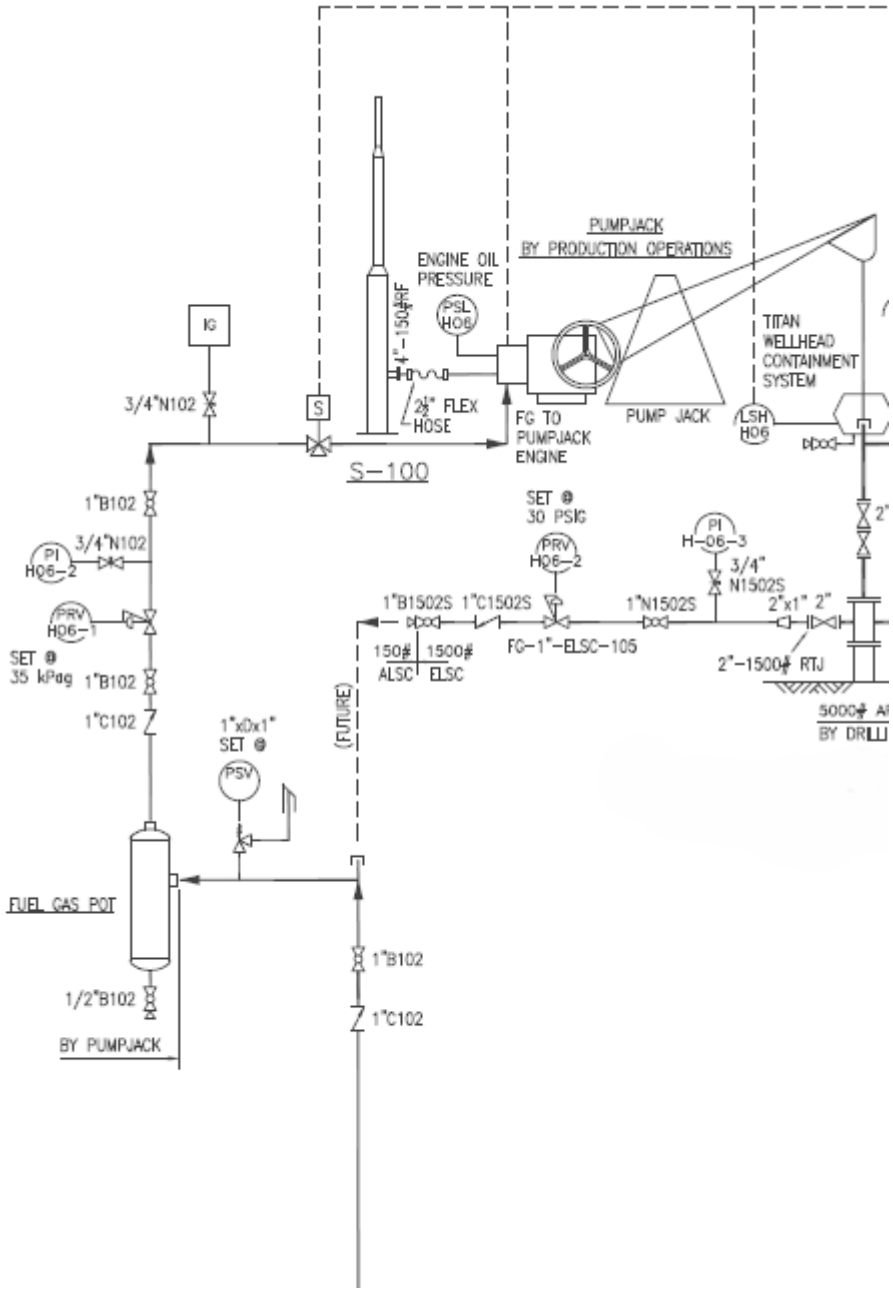
Contingency Plan

Guidelines and Interpretation Notes

November 6, 2026

Public Engagement Draft

Une version française de ce document est disponible



NWT OFFICE OF THE REGULATOR OF OIL AND GAS OPERATIONS

K’áhshó got’ı̨ne xədə k’é hederı ɔedı̨htl’é yerınıwę nı dé dúle.
Dene Kədá

ʔerıhtl’ís Dëne Sųłıné yatı t’a huts’elkër xa beyáyatı theɔą ɔat’e, nuwe ts’ën yółtı.
Dëne Sųłıné

Edı gondı dehgáh got’ı̨e zhatıé k’ę́é edatł’éh enahddhę nıde naxets’é edahłí.
Dene Zhatıé

Jii gwandak izhii ginjìk vat’atr’ijąhch’uu zhit yinohthan jì’, diits’àt ginohkhìi.
Dinjii Zhu’ Ginjik

Uvanittuaq ilitchurisukupku Inuvialuktun, ququaqluta.
Inuvialuktun

ᑲᑦᓂᐊ ᑎᑎᖅᑲᐃᑦ ᐱᓕᒍᐃᖅᑎᑦ ᐃᓄᑦᑎᑐᓕᖅᑭᓗᑦ, ᐅᐸᑦᑎᓵᓄᑦ ᐅᖃᓗᓕᓵᓇᖅᑐᑎᑦ.
Inuktitut

Hapkua titiqqat pijumagupkit Inuinnaqtun, uvaptinnut hivajarlutit.
Inuinnaqtun

kīspin ki nitawihtīn ē nīhīyawihk ōma ācimōwin, tipwāsinān.
nēhiyawēwin

Tłı̨chǫ yatı k’ę̀è. Dı wegodı newǫ dè, gots’o gonede.
Tłı̨chǫ

Indigenous Languages
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1. Introduction

Purpose

The *Contingency Plan Guidelines and Interpretation Notes* (Guidelines) provide guidance to applicants and operators on the development and maintenance of a Contingency Plan.

This introduction provides information on:

- Updates made to the Guidelines.
- Objectives of the Guidelines.
- Legislative requirements for Contingency Plans.
- Application of the Guidelines.
- Use of plain language.

Updates

These Guidelines were originally issued in February 2021. They are updated as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Updates to the Contingency Plan Guidelines

Updates	Affected Sections*	Rationale
Removed references to offshore operations	Purpose and Scope Content of the Contingency Plan – hazard identification and mitigation measures	Reflects the extent of OROGO's jurisdiction.
Removed references to topics addressed in Environmental Protection Plans and Safety Plans	Content of the Contingency Plan – hazard identification and mitigation measures	Focuses the Guidelines on operational aspects of incident response.
Clarified the relationship to management systems and associated requirements	Management System Linkages	Improves the explanation of the relationship between management systems and the Contingency Plan.
Added discussion of coordination with other incident response plans	Not applicable (new section)	Reflects the requirements of section 6(j)(i) of the *Oil and Gas Drilling and Production Regulations* (OGDPR). Encourages consistency between incident response plans for the same operation submitted to different regulators.
Added section on incident reporting	Not applicable (new section)	Clarifies required incident and near-miss reporting to be included in Contingency Plans.

Updates	Affected Sections*	Rationale
Added annual Contingency Plan review requirements for operations lasting more than one year	Not applicable (new section)	Ensures Contingency Plans reflect current operations and context.
Reflected OROGO's current standards for format and language.	All	Ensures consistency across OROGO documentation.

* Section titles are from the 2021 version of the Guidelines.

Objectives

The objectives of these Guidelines are to:

- Ensure operators have appropriate and adaptable plans in place to respond to incidents and near-misses.
- Support compliance with the OGDPR.
- Reflect the context of oil and gas activities in the Regulator's jurisdiction.
- Be consistent with the requirements of other western Canada regulators, where possible.

The Guidelines set out the minimum requirements for the content of Contingency Plans. Applicants may provide additional or different content, where that content is demonstrated to meet or exceed the same requirements for the protection of human safety and the environment.

Legislative requirements

The OGDPR set the legislative requirements for Contingency Plans and incident response:

- Section 6(j) states an application for an Authorization must include a Contingency Plan and describes required content.
- Sections 19(e), (h) and (l) describe operators' obligations related to contingency planning during operations.
- Section 75(1) describes operators' obligations to report all incidents and near-misses.
- Section 75(2) describes operators' obligations to investigate incidents, take corrective action, and, in some cases, submit a 21-Day Incident Report.
- Section 77 describes operators' record-keeping responsibilities, including records related to contingency planning.
- Sections 86 and 87 describe operators' obligation to describe contingency planning exercises in annual reports.

The OGDPR also sets the legislative requirements for management systems, which affect the contents of Contingency Plans:

- Section 5 describes the required components of a management system.
- Section 18 requires operators to comply with their management systems.

Section 12 of the *Oil and Gas Operations Act* (OGOA) requires the Regulator to consult with the Chief Safety Officer on the safety of the proposed operations before issuing an Authorization. The Contingency Plan submitted by the applicant is a key factor in this discussion.

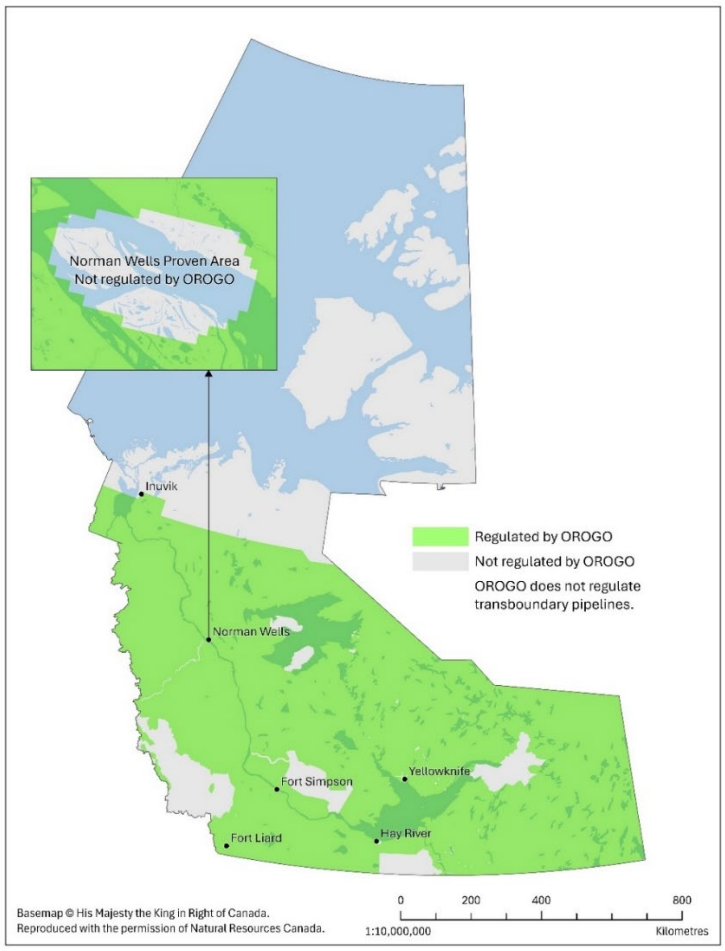
Important: Where a conflict exists between these Guidelines and the OGDPR, the OGDPR are paramount.

Application

Application of these Guidelines is subject to the Regulator's discretion under OGOA.

These Guidelines apply in the Regulator's jurisdiction, shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Map of the Regulator's Jurisdiction



Plain language

These Guidelines have been written for use by applicants and operators. Plain language is used as much as possible for clarity and accessibility.

2. Purpose and Scope of a Contingency Plan

Contents

This section provides information on:

- The purpose of a Contingency Plan.
- Definitions of incident and pollution.
- Ownership of a Contingency Plan.
- The scope of a Contingency Plan:
  - Operational complexity.
  - Type of operation.
  - Operational boundaries.
- Application of a Contingency Plan to all personnel.

Purpose of a Contingency Plan

A Contingency Plan is a reference document for operators, contractors, service personnel, and others involved in the operation. It:

- Documents the responsibilities and expectations for response in the case of an incident.
- Describes how the effect of incidents on safety and the environment will be mitigated.

Definition: incident

An **incident** is:

- an event that causes:
  - a lost or restricted workday injury,
  - death,
  - fire or explosion,
  - a loss of containment of any fluid from a well,
  - an imminent threat to the safety of a person, installation or support craft or
  - pollution
- an event that results in missing person, or
- an event that causes:
  - the impairment of any structure, facility, equipment or system critical to the safety of persons, an installation or support craft, or
  - the impairment of any structure, facility, equipment or system critical to environmental protection.

Definition: pollution

Pollution is the introduction into the natural environment of a substance or form of energy outside the authorized limits, including spills.

Ownership of a Contingency Plan

The applicant is responsible for:

- Developing and maintaining a Contingency Plan.
- Ensuring the comprehensive implementation of a Contingency Plan during the proposed operations.

Reflecting operational complexity

A Contingency Plan must reflect the complexity of the proposed operation. Less complex operations may require shorter and less involved Contingency Plans than more complex operations.

Reflecting the type of operation

A Contingency Plan must reflect the type of proposed operations:

- The works or activities before, during, and after the operations.
- The equipment used.
- The duration.

Reflecting operational boundaries

A Contingency Plan must reflect the planned operational boundaries:

- The location.
- Site access.
- The time of year.
- The proposed working hours (for example, 24-hour operations).

Application to all personnel

A Contingency Plan applies to all personnel active as part of the operation, including:

- The operator and its direct employees.
- Contractors.
- Service providers.

3. Coordination with other plans

Contents

This section provides information on the relationship between a Contingency Plan and other similar documents:

- Required coordination.
- Spill Contingency Plans.
- Consistency with submissions to other regulators.

Required coordination

A Contingency Plan must provide for coordination with any relevant municipal, territorial, or federal incident response plan.

Spill Contingency Plans

A Spill Contingency Plan is a required component of applications to the Land and Water Boards of the Mackenzie Valley (LWBs) for Land Use Permits and Water Licences.

Spill Contingency Plans address environmental incidents. They do not address safety incidents.

To reduce potential miscommunication, if the applicant submits a Spill Contingency Plan to an LWB, it must be the same as the portion of the Contingency Plan submitted to OROGO addressing environmental incidents.

Consistency with submissions to other regulators

In addition to OROGO and the LWBs, other regulators with authority over the proposed operations may require some form of contingency plan.

To reduce potential miscommunication, the parts of these contingency plans which address the same potential incidents as the Contingency Plan submitted to OROGO must be the same.

4. Required Contents of a Contingency Plan

Contents

This section provides information on the required contents of a Contingency Plan:

3.1 Overall contents.

3.2 Management system references.

3.3 Organizational structure and contacts.

3.4 Reporting requirements.

3.5 Compliance monitoring and performance measurement.

3.6 Training and awareness.

3.7 Contingency Plan records.

4.1. Overall contents

Contents

This section provides information on the overall contents of a Contingency Plan:

- Adopted codes and standards.
- Commitments by the applicant.
- Worker participation.
- Consistency with other requirements.
- Referring to other documents.

Adopted codes and standards

A Contingency Plan should list industry guidance and other codes and standards the applicant has adopted related to the proposed operations (for example, Energy Safety Canada industry recommended practices).

Where an applicant adopts a code or standard as part of the Contingency Plan, OROGO will enforce compliance with that code or standard.

Commitments by the applicant

A Contingency Plan should reference and respond to commitments the applicant made in other documents associated with the proposed operations. This may include, but is not limited to, commitments made in:

- A Development Plan submitted under section 14 of the *Oil and Gas Operations Act*.
- The Safety Plan and Environmental Protection Plan submitted with the application for an Authorization.

Worker participation

A Contingency Plan should describe how workers:

- Participate in the development, implementation, and continuous improvement of the Contingency Plan.
- Engage in safety management activities, such as the worker's right to know, right to participate, and right to refuse.

Consistency with other requirements

A Contingency Plan is one of three plans required by the *Oil and Gas Drilling and Production Regulations*. The incident response procedures identified in the Contingency Plan should be consistent with the hazards and mitigation measures identified in the Safety Plan and Environmental Protection Plan.

A Contingency Plan must reflect and be consistent with the laws of the Northwest Territories, including the *Safety Act*, the *Oil and Gas Safety Regulations,* and the *Environmental Protection Act.*

4.2. Management system references

Contents

This section provides information on references to the applicant's management systems in a Contingency Plan:

- Consistency with management systems.
- Management system requirements.
- Management system compliance.
- Management system verification.

Consistency with management systems

A Contingency Plan must be consistent with the applicant's management systems.

Management system requirements

Section 5 of the *Oil and Gas Drilling and Production Regulations* (OGDPR) requires applicants and operators to have a management system. A management system must integrate operations, technical systems, financial management, and human resources management to ensure the operation complies with the *Oil and Gas Operations Act* and the OGDPR.

A management system must include several components directly related to incident response and the Contingency Plan:

- Ensuring personnel are trained and competent.
- Ensuring the integrity of safety-critical facilities and equipment.
- Continuous improvement, including:
  - Internal reporting and review of hazards, incidents, and near-misses.
  - Periodic auditing and reviewing of the system.
  - Incorporating corrective actions based on experience.
- System documentation and document control.

Management system compliance

The operator must ensure compliance with the management system, including with those aspects reflected in the Contingency Plan.

Management system verification

The OGDPR does not require the applicant to submit its management system when applying for an Authorization. However, OROGO may:

- Issue Information Requests to clarify the application of the management system to incident response during the proposed operations.
- Audit the management system to ensure it meets the requirements of the OGDPR.
- Require the operator to conduct periodic third-party audits of its management system.

4.3. Organizational structure and contacts

Contingency Plan requirements

The Contingency Plan must identify the on-site personnel involved in incident response and their roles, including the roles of any contractors or other service providers.

The Contingency Plan must include the name, position title, and contact information for all on-site personnel involved in incident response.

4.4. Reporting requirements

Contents

This section describes the incident reporting requirements for a contingency plan:

- Contingency Plan requirements.
- OGDPR reporting requirements.
- 21-Day Incident Reports.
- Consistency with submissions to other regulators.
- Definitions of incident, pollution, significant pollution, and near-miss.

Contingency Plan requirements

The Contingency Plan must:

- Identify all reportable situations that apply to the proposed operation.
- Contain correct contact information for the entities receiving these reports, including:
  - Territorial and federal regulators.
  - Territorial and municipal governments.
  - Local Indigenous governments and communities.
  - Internal company notification requirements.

OGDPR reporting requirements

Important: Operators must notify OROGO of **any** incident or near-miss as soon as the circumstances permit (usually within 24 hours).

Operators must submit a 21-Day Incident Report if the incident or near-miss was a:

- Lost or restricted workday injury.
- Death.
- Fire or explosion.
- Loss of containment of any fluid from a well.
- Imminent threat to the safety of a person, installation, or support craft.
- Significant pollution event.

21-Day Incident Reports

The 21-Day Incident Report must be received within 21 days of the incident or near-miss and must:

- Identify the root cause.
- Describe the causal factors.
- Document corrective action taken by the operator.

Consistency with submissions to other regulators

If the 21-Day Incident Report is for an incident which must also be reported under the conditions of a Land Use Permit or Water Licence issued by the Land and Water Boards (LWBs) of the Mackenzie Valley, operators should submit the same report to OROGO and to the LWB.

Definition: incident

An **incident** is:

- an event that causes:
  - a lost or restricted workday injury,
  - death,
  - fire or explosion,
  - a loss of containment of any fluid from a well,
  - an imminent threat to the safety of a person, installation or support craft or
  - pollution
- an event that results in missing person, or
- an event that causes:
  - the impairment of any structure, facility, equipment or system critical to the safety of persons, an installation or support craft, or
  - the impairment of any structure, facility, equipment or system critical to environmental protection.

Definition: pollution

Pollution is the introduction into the natural environment of a substance or form of energy outside the authorized limits, including spills.

Definition: significant pollution

Significant pollution is any pollution that meets or exceeds the thresholds identified in Schedule B of the *Spill Contingency Planning and Reporting Regulations*.

Definition: near miss

A **near miss** is an event that would likely cause

- a lost or restricted workday injury,
- death,
- fire or explosion,
- a loss of containment of any fluid from a well,
- an imminent threat to the safety of a person, installation or support craft or
- pollution,

but does not, due to particular circumstances.

4.5. Compliance monitoring and performance measurement

Contingency Plan Requirements

A Contingency Plan must:

- Describe how compliance with the plan will be monitored.
- Describe how the plan's performance will be measured in relation to its objectives.
- Identify and describe the sources of information that will be used to assess compliance and performance (for example, audits or near-miss reporting).
- Describe how non-conformities will be managed.

4.6. Training and awareness

Contents

This section provides information on describing training and awareness activities in a Contingency Plan:

- Contingency Plan requirements.
- Notifying OROGO.
- Including other organizations.

Contingency Plan requirements

A Contingency Plan must include information on incident response training, drills, and exercises, including:

- Nature (for example, tabletop or live).
- Frequency.
- Post-exercise reporting.

Notifying OROGO

The operator must notify the Chief Safety Officer and Chief Conservation Officer of planned incident response drills or exercises at least 45 days in advance.

OROGO Inspectors may observe incident response drills or exercises in person or virtually.

Including other organizations

Where possible, incident response training, drills, and exercises should include personnel from local Indigenous governments and communities.

4.7. Contingency Plan records

Content

This section provides information on maintaining records related to the Contingency Plan:

- Contingency Plan requirements.
- Mandatory record keeping.
- Accessibility for inspection.

Contingency Plan requirements

A Contingency Plan must:

- Identify the records the operator will maintain to demonstrate compliance with the Contingency Plan.
- Describe the process for reviewing and updating the Contingency Plan.
- Include processes for communicating updates to the Contingency Plan to employees, contractors, and service providers.

Mandatory record keeping

The *Oil and Gas Drilling and Production Regulations* require the operator to maintain records related to the implementation of the Contingency Plan, including:

- Incident response drills and exercises.
- Incidents and near-misses.
- Onsite safety meetings.

Accessibility for inspection

The operator must ensure all records, including records related to the Contingency Plan, are readily accessible to OROGO Inspectors.

5. Submitting a Contingency Plan

Contents

This section provides information on submitting a Contingency Plan:

- When to submit a Contingency Plan.
- Mandatory concordance table.
- Version control.
- What format to use.

When to submit a Contingency Plan

An applicant must submit a Contingency Plan as part of the application package for an Authorization from the Regulator.

An operator must submit annual updates to its Contingency Plan, as described in section 6 of these Guidelines.

Mandatory concordance table

An applicant must submit a concordance table with its Contingency Plan, identifying where each item required under section 4 of these Guidelines is found in the submitted document.

Version control

The operator must maintain version control of the Contingency Plan. Any Contingency Plan submitted to OROGO must be labeled with a version number and a date of issuance.

Format

A Contingency Plan must be submitted as a PDF document.

6. Maintaining and Updating a Contingency Plan

Contents

This section provides information on the operator's obligation to maintain and update the Contingency Plan:

- Annual reviews.
- Consistency with submissions to other regulators.
- Version control.

Annual reviews

An operator must review its Contingency Plan annually if an operation lasts more than one year.

If the annual review identifies any changes to operations that affect the contents of the Contingency Plan described in section 4 of these Guidelines, or the approved Development Plan (in the case of a production operation), the operator must update the Contingency Plan.

If the annual review results in no changes to the Contingency Plan, the operator must communicate to OROGO, in writing, that the review has been completed and no changes are required.

If the annual review results in changes to the Contingency Plan, the operator must submit a PDF copy of the complete, updated Contingency Plan for OROGO to review and approve, along with a cover letter identifying the sections where changes have been made.

Consistency with submissions to other regulators

To reduce potential miscommunication, if the operator makes changes to a Spill Contingency Plan submitted to a Land and Water Board of the Mackenzie Valley, or to any other contingency plan submitted to another regulator, the changes must be reflected in the Contingency Plan submitted to OROGO and are subject to OROGO's review and approval.

Version control

An operator must maintain version control of its Contingency Plan. Any updates to the Contingency Plan submitted to OROGO must be labeled with a version number and a date of issuance.

7. Regulator's Approval

These Contingency Plan Guidelines and Interpretation Notes are issued under section 18 of the *Oil and Gas Operations Act* effective MONTH DAY YEAR.

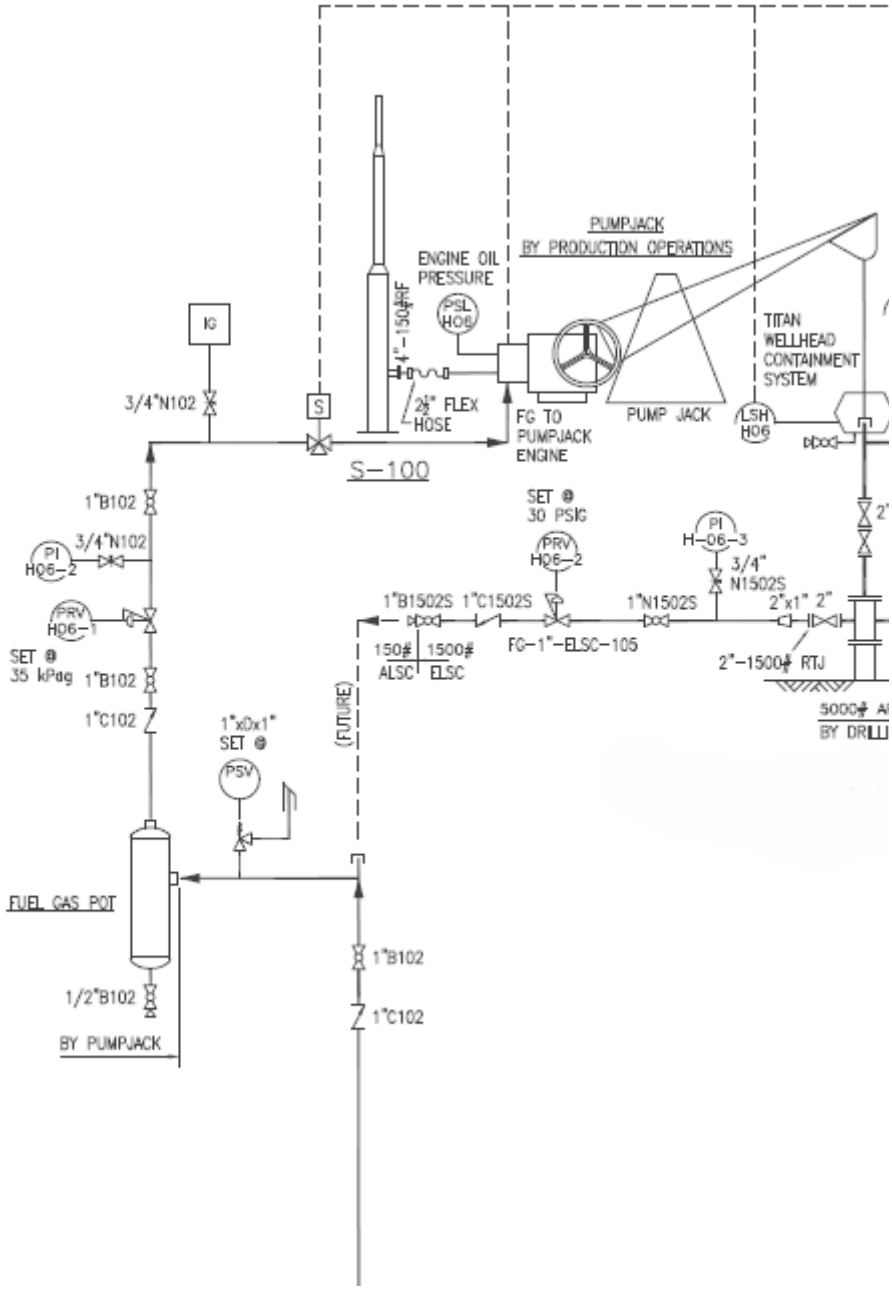
They replace the *Contingency Plan Guidelines and Interpretation Notes* approved by the Regulator on February 15, 2021.

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Regulator

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