In the claims:

1. A method for limiting the spread of a spill of floating substances spilled into water, comprising:

a) providing a boom comprising gas-filled flotation compartments and water containing compartments including open cell foam elements, wherein mutual pressures exerted between said flotation compartments and said water containing compartments maintain at least some of said flotation compartments and at least some of said water compartments in a fixed geometrical position relative to each other;

b) deploying said boom in water around at least a portion of said spill, allowing said open cell foam elements to absorb water and function as a ballast;

wherein at least some portions of said gas-filled flotation compartments extend away from a vertical centerline of said boom, said portions angled downwards.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising utilizing a chemical reaction to create a gas within at least some of said gas-filled flotation compartments, thereby inflating them.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the speed of a deployment craft deploying said boom is automatically adjusted according to the speed of production of said boom.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising selecting, as a function of environmental conditions, pressures of gas used to fill said flotation compartments.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising forming a continuous barrier around said spill using said boom and allowing said continuous barrier around said spill to float freely, unattached to anything.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said boom is color coded according to at least one of a group of color codes consisting of

a) colors indicating standard lengths of boom, to facilitate judging length of said boom from a distance; and

b) colors indicating positions of openable attachments of said boom, to facilitate locating said openable attachments from a distance.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein a width of said flotation compartment is at least 1.25 a height of said flotation compartment.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein said boom further comprises closed cell foam which contains air, acting as a floatation element.