



## ARRT Annual Report 2012

### ANNUAL REPORT ALASKA REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM (ARRT) CY 2012

#### Executive Summary

**Period of Report: 01 Jan 2012 to 31 Dec 2012.**

- I. **Introduction:** Calendar year 2012 brought several significant events in the pollution preparedness and response arena in Alaska including: the commencement of Royal Dutch Shell's (a.k.a. Shell – Alaska Venture) exploratory drilling operations on the outer continental shelf of the Arctic Ocean (Chukchi and Beaufort Sea sites); a renewed effort to update/revise Alaska's dispersant use policy (including direct involvement by NRT leadership in encouraging the effort); reprioritizing and updating several key subarea contingency plans; the ARRT Co-Chairs' continuing focus on enhancing statewide area planning with particular emphasis on developing cohesive, productive standing subarea committees (as limited FOSC resources allow); enhancing tribal and public awareness of ARRT plans and programs; and continuation of the effort to bring Alaska's hazardous substance oil spill response plan (the "Unified Plan") into compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.
- II. **Challenges:** The events described above have caused a rapid increase in ARRT workload without commensurate increase in resources or personnel. In fact, fiscal support to USCG under CERCLA for ARRT activities disappeared at the start of FY13. This workload vs. resource divergence is problematic given numerous national and regional initiatives still underway related to the 2010 Macondo/Deepwater Horizon Spill of National Significance. Some of ARRT's current challenges include:
  - a. Revitalization of Alaska's ten subarea committees. FOSCs overseeing certain subareas have had some success in forming and sustaining their subarea committees due mainly to the availability of willing participants and relatively good infrastructure which encourages subarea committee activities. Other subareas not as well populated and/or more remote do not enjoy the same accessibility nor strong participation rates. However, the ARRT Co-Chairs have been successful in promoting joint two-day subarea committee/ARRT meetings three times/year in various locales around the State which has eased the 'total meeting burden,' encouraged subarea committee forming and activity, and fostered interplay between the subarea committees and the ARRT.
  - b. ESA Section 7 Compliance. The project to bring the Unified Plan into compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act is very near completion. However, the final draft version of the Biological Assessment (BA) received several hundred reviewer comments from the Action Agencies and Services. Prioritizing those comments and defining a path forward to completion given the limited funding available is a big challenge being worked on in earnest by the EPA and USCG.
  - c. Ensuring consistent, meaningful tribal outreach. With 229 federally recognized tribes and hundreds of villages, corporations and other tribal entities, development of a patent yet



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flexible policy that allows the ARRT to meet the intent of EO 13175 is as necessary as it is daunting. ARRT Co-Chairs have convened a task force to develop and propose such a policy.

- d. Adequacy of administrative support. Fiscal cutbacks have resulted in direct and indirect reductions to the administrative support and staffing available to support the ARRT resulting in inefficiency and lost productivity.

III. **Lessons Learned** – The ARRT’s participation in Shell Alaska Venture’s in-house BSEE-mandated spill exercise in May 2012 yielded a variety of lessons learned regarding dispersant use application, incident-specific collaboration, dispersant monitoring, and the DOD role in requesting response assistance. More detailed information on these lessons learned is available on the ARRT website.

IV. **Best Practices** – We are in the process of developing a Five Year Plan which links to a near term Biennial Work Plan. The use of these Plans, along with tracking of shorter term issues during biweekly meetings, helps keep things straight and moving forward in this dynamic, task saturated environment.



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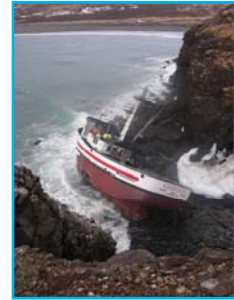
### I. MAJOR ACTIVITIES

#### A. Major/Noteworthy Response Activities:

M/V Kimberly Grounding: The F/V Kimberly was forced aground while anchored in Jute Bay on the west side of Shelikof Strait during a severe storm with wind gusts in excess of 100 knots. Before response and salvage personnel could respond, the vessel's hull and fuel tanks were breached, discharging more than 3600 gallons of fuel oil products. Shelikof Strait is within the Becharof National Wildlife Refuge. The USCG FOSC worked with the Regional Environmental Officer of DOI and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to mitigate any potential wildlife impacts.

Additional information can be found at:

[http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/perp/response/sum\\_fy12/120124201/120124201\\_index.htm](http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/perp/response/sum_fy12/120124201/120124201_index.htm)



Repsol Q2 Pad Gas and Mud Release: On February 15, 2012, Repsol contractor Nabors Drilling was drilling an exploratory well when the drill penetrated a shallow gas pocket at a depth of 2,523 feet, resulting in a gas kick. The gas kick drove drilling mud out of the well and through the gas diverter onto the ice pad and adjacent snow-covered tundra. Additional mud was pumped into the well in an attempt to control it, but that mud was also forced out by the gas causing a well control incident. While no crude oil was discharged, more than 42,000 gallons of drilling mud was discharged onto the tundra. Due to the extreme cold and large logistical challenges getting response personnel and equipment on scene, cleanup operations did not fully commence until February 22, 2012 and the last cleanup operations were completed on April 6, 2012. Additional information can be found at:

[http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/perp/response/sum\\_fy12/120215301/120215301\\_index.htm](http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/perp/response/sum_fy12/120215301/120215301_index.htm)



M/V Monterrey Grounding: Shortly after departing Kodiak on June 8, 2012, the 174 foot landing craft, M/V Monterrey, owned and operated by the U.S. Army, struck Discovery Rocks in Chiniak Bay near Kodiak, AK, damaging the forward section of the vessel. As directed by the Coast Guard FOSC, the crew beached the vessel on Puffin Island, approximately 2.5 miles south of the city of Kodiak to keep it from sinking. Fuel escaped from the vessel's #3 and #4 starboard fuel tanks, which were ruptured by the initial



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collision. Of the more than 42,000 gallons of fuel on board when they departed Kodiak. An estimation of between 8,000 to 12,000 gallons was discharged. Additional information can be found at: [http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/perp/response/sum\\_fy12/120608201/120608201\\_index.htm](http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/perp/response/sum_fy12/120608201/120608201_index.htm)



Other Response Activities: Overall, 19 response summaries were completed and posted on the State of Alaska website for other significant spills. A complete list of all response activities is online at ADECs website: [http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/perp/response/sr\\_fy11.htm](http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/perp/response/sr_fy11.htm) (under Active Response and FY12/13).

### **B. Alaska RRT Meetings/Incident Specific Activation:**

Meeting: Administrative Session – February 22, 2012 in Juneau: USCG-coordinated. 27 participants signed in. 7 of 14 ARRT member agencies attended. Mr. Stanton from the NRT attended as a special guest. The morning activities included: discussions on the review and update of the 2013 -2015 Biennial Work Plan (BWP); a discussion of EPA's stance on the ARRT pre-approval for the use of dispersants; a review of the ARRT comments to the NRT Subsea Dispersant Monitoring Guidelines; and a demonstration of the new ARRT website hosted by the EPA response contractor. Meeting summaries can be viewed on line at the ARRT website: <http://alaskarrt.org/Documents.aspx?f=11368> (February 22, 2012 Day 1 Summary).

Meeting: Semi-Annual Public Session – February 23, 2012 in Juneau: USCG-coordinated. 45 participants signed in. 8 of 14 Alaska RRT member agencies attended. Mr. Stanton from the NRT attended as a special guest. Special presentations were given on the following topics: Area Committees support and approach; Cruise ship accident and spill prevention measures in Southeast Alaska (included due to concerns from M/V *Costa Concordia* grounding in Italy); Alaska Arctic NRDA process; and an update to the Arctic ERMA project. Meeting summaries can be viewed on line at the ARRT website: <http://alaskarrt.org/Documents.aspx?f=11368> (February 23, 2012 Day 2 Summary).

Meeting: EPA Inland Zone Subarea Committee meeting for the Interior Subarea Plan – October 16, 2012 in Fairbanks: EPA coordinated. The EPA led a facilitated discussion on the way ahead to update the Interior Subarea Plan. Special presentations were given on the following topics: Alyeska Pipeline Services (TAPS); Alaska Clean Seas on the North Slope; and Alaska Railroad HazMat response. Once the Meeting summaries are finalized, they can be viewed on line at the ARRT website: <http://alaskarrt.org/Documents.aspx?f=11368> (October 16, 2012 Day one).



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Meeting: Semi-Annual ARRT Public Session – October 17, 2012 in Fairbanks: USCG coordinated. 27 persons signed in. 9 of 14 Alaska RRT member agencies attended. A special presentation was given on the EPA Federal Initiatives to Enhance Area Planning. Once the Meeting summaries are finalized, they can be viewed on line at the EPA website: <http://alaskarrt.org/Documents.aspx?f=11368> (October 17, 2012 Day two).

Activation: The Alaska RRT was activated two times in CY 2012 for informational purposes for real-world cases and once as a parallel exercise event in conjunction with the 24May12 Shell in-house exercise.

### C. Committee and Working Group Updates:

Science and Technology Committee (STC): The Science and Technology Committee (STC) met several times telephonically and with the Dispersants Work Group to update the ARRT ANNEX F APPENDIX I – ARRT OIL DISPERSANT GUIDELINES/PREAUTHORIZATION PLAN FOR ALASKA. Additional information is online at the ARRT website: [http://alaskarrt.org/files/ARRT%20Dispersant%20Guidelines-Preauthorization%20Plan\\_Draft%20Revision%207-30-12.pdf](http://alaskarrt.org/files/ARRT%20Dispersant%20Guidelines-Preauthorization%20Plan_Draft%20Revision%207-30-12.pdf)

Wildlife Protection Committee: The Wildlife Protection Committee met several times to update the Wildlife Protection Guidelines (Revision 5). The Wildlife Protection Committee was also converted from a workgroup to a chartered standing committee.

Cultural and Historic Properties Committee: The Cultural and Historical Properties Committee was converted from a workgroup to a chartered standing committee and met several times to develop and propose a new charter.

Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 Compliance Workgroup (ESA Workgroup): The ESA Workgroup met several times to review progress on the Biological Assessment (BA). The ESA Workgroup plans to complete the entire project within the next 12 months.

The Tribal Engagement Policy Task Force: The Tribal Engagement Policy Task Force met for their inaugural session in mid-December. This task force is expected to complete their tasking to develop a new ARRT tribal engagement policy within six months.

Statewide (HazMat) Response Workgroup: ADEC-coordinated. The workgroup continued to meet on a quarterly basis during the calendar year. Additional information is online at the DEC/SPAR website: <http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/perp/hazmat.htm>.



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### II. GENERAL PREPAREDNESS AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING

**A. Training:** USCG District Response Advisory Team (DRAT) conducted First Responder Operations Level HAZWOPR training for over 300 USCG personnel.

**B. Exercises/Workshops:**

North Slope Mutual Aid Drill 22-24 August: This year's drill was hosted by British Petroleum (BP) and exercised their Milne Points response plan located in the Colville drainage. Alaska Clean Seas (ACS), the Oil Spill Removal Organization (OSRO) participated in the exercise. The drill exercised one of the response scenarios found in BP's response plan, was primarily intended to exercise BP's Incident Management Team (IMT), and responder's interaction and coordination with ACS IMT and responders.

24 May 12 Shell Tabletop Exercise: The ARRT participated in the Shell-sponsored, BSEE-mandated tabletop exercise. The primary objective of the ARRT co-chairs was to test the ARRT incident-specific dispersant protocol. Lessons Learned can be found at: <http://alaskarrt.org/Default.aspx> (What's new: ARRT lessons learned....)

National Preparedness for Response Exercise Program (PREP) Exercises:

- One Government-led PREP full scale exercise occurred in Southeast Alaska FOSC zone.
- PREP Government Initiated Unannounced Drills (GIUs). USCG COTPs initiated: nine (9) of ten (10) required annual unannounced drills. BSEE initiated one (1) unannounced drill. EPA did not initiate any unannounced drills in the Alaska Region.
- PREP Equipment Deployments Exercise: Equipment deployments occurred throughout Alaska. Type listed below:
  - The USCG did not participate in Alaska Aerial Dispersant Delivery System (ADDS) deployments this year.
  - Spilled Oil Recovery System (SORS) training exercises. Three (3) SORS training exercises occurred in Sitka, Homer, and Kodiak AK.
  - Vessel of Opportunity Skimming System (VOSS) training exercise: One (1) VOSS training exercise occurred in Ketchikan, AK.
  - Pre-Stage Oil Spill Response Equipment. One (1) deployment exercise occurred in Sitka, AK of the seventeen (17) pre-staged sites throughout Alaska.



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- 200 ft of harbor boom was deployed in conjunction with the Government led PREP exercise.

### C. Federal, State, and Local Planning and Coordination Efforts:

Alaska Subarea Contingency Plans (SCPs). ADEC, Coast Guard and EPA coordinated. Stated goal: complete two (2) of ten (10) Subarea Contingency Plan (SCP) updates every year. The Sector Anchorage Working Group (WG) completed updates to the North Slope and Northwest Arctic SCPs. Both SCPs have been published. In addition, updates to the Bristol Bay, Western Alaska, and Southeast Alaska SCPs were completed pending public review. All three of these SCPs should be completed and published in early 2013.

#### Potential Place of Refuge (PPOR) Guidelines:

- Bristol Bay subarea: ADEC coordinated. Final draft completed. Detailed information on the SCP updates and PPOR/GRS guidelines can be accessed at: <http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/perp/bbplan/index.htm>
- Western Alaska subarea: ADEC coordinated. Final draft completed. Detailed information on the SCP updates and PPOR/GRS guidelines can be accessed at: <http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/perp/weplan/index.htm>

Geographic Response Strategies (GRS): ADEC coordinated. ADEC contractor completed development of GRS for Bristol Bay and Western Alaska subarea plans. Funding for this project is through the federal Coastal Impact Assistance Program. See PPOR guidelines above for links to PPORs and GRS.

Emergency Towing Systems (ETS): ADEC coordinated with the Coast Guard on a demonstration exercise of the Unalaska ETS package during October of 2012. State of Alaska has expanded availability of the ETS to several new locations in 2012.

### III. PERSONNEL CHANGES/ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

New Rep	Organization	Date	Departed Rep
Bill Zagrocki	DOD	8-1-2012	Michelle Gillespie
Todd Stull	DOD	8-1-2012	Richard Meredith



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### IV. ISSUES OR OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS REQUIRING NRT ATTENTION

**Issue:** ARRT letter to NRT dated September 10, 2009 requesting the NRT re-evaluate the 1995 guidance containing recommended limits for short term exposure to particulate matter (PM) and potential impacts to safe distances in guidance for In Situ Burning as an alternative countermeasure. Still pends.

**Issue:** EPA rewrite of NCP Subpart J still underway. Expect any change to Subpart J could have profound implications for dispersant approval or pre-authorization in Alaska.

**Issue:** ARRT awaiting new NRT guidance on subsea dispersant application, use, and monitoring.