

# ALASKA REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM

## Meeting Summary

**0830 – 1530 Wednesday May 25, 2016  
Kodiak Public Library  
Kodiak, AK**

A list of meeting attendees can be viewed [here](#).

Copies of the presentations and handouts are available on the Alaska Regional Response Team website, under ARRT Meetings. <http://alaskarrt.org>

### Safety Briefing, Introductions, Opening Remarks

Mr. Cecil McNutt the Alaska Regional Response Team (ARRT) coordinator with the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) welcomed the meeting attendees and conducted introductions. The ARRT co-chairs—Mr. Mark Everett, U.S. Coast Guard (USCG); Mr. Chris Field, EPA; and Mr. Graham Wood, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)—welcomed all the attendees to the meeting and offered opening remarks.

### Review of Actions since Last Meeting

Mr. Everett provided an overview of the recent actions taken by the ARRT since the January 27, 2016 meeting:

- Notably, the February 9, 2016 Federal Register published the announcement for the signing of the Dispersant Plan and activation of the 24-month period to establish exclusion areas for the preauthorization zone.
- The After Action Report for the Refugio Beach spill was also published. The lessons learned included some with potential impact and applicability in Alaska, such as jurisdiction issues since the spill moved from the Inland zone (EPA) to Coastal zone (USCG).
- National Response Team (NRT) has developed draft guidelines for how NRT, RRTs and the National Incident Commander would coordinate during a Spill of National Significance (SONS) or a large chemical release. The ARRT will be submitting comments and welcomed any additional comments from ARRT members.
- An ARRT representative regularly participates in NRT teleconferences. Recently, NRT has sought out ARRT input on NRT issues.
- The public comment period for the UP Annex B Regional Stakeholder Committee revision has been extended to May 29, 2016.
- The USCG updated its National Preparedness Response Exercise Program (NPREP) guidelines and OSRO Guidelines were updated.

Mr. McNutt added that marine gas oil/marine diesel oil is now being utilized by large vessels to reduce emissions. However, this is a heavy oil (Level 3 oil) with an emulsification factor of 2.0, twice that of the fuel previously used, and a spill response will need to be adjusted accordingly.

### **Biennial Work Plan**

Mr. Everett reviewed the ARRT Biennial Work Plan for 2016-2017. He noted that several of the ARRT committees, task forces and work groups have been active and will be providing updates during this meeting.

Mr. Steve Russell (ADEC) commented that it is very important to the State to figure out how the State will fit into the national incident command structure in the event of a SONS. There is concern that an outside/national organization will *supersede* the State structure and organization. He also added that the State needs to determine who in the State will serve as the State's Incident Commander, how ADEC leadership will fit into this structure, and how the State's Crisis Management Team will be staffed if its current staff are re-assigned to other positions. Mr. McNutt commented that the Arctic Chinook exercise will also work on this issue of incorporating State into the national structure.

### **On-Scene Coordinator Reports**

#### **Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation**

Mr. Russell provided an overview of the recent major responses. He also spoke on the State's effort to regulate smaller tank farm facilities. The State is proposing a registration process to identify tank farms of less than 420,000 gallons and will be proposing that some regulations regarding prevention be instituted over the next few years. The State is also making improvements to the response exercise program including more local participation. They submitted a white paper for public review and will be facilitating stakeholder outreach later this year. 18 Alaska Administrative Code 75, Article 4, "Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plans and Nontank Vessel Plans" changes took effect April 2016 that allow for electronic submittals of plans and comments. His presentation is available online [here](#).

#### **U.S. Coast Guard Southeast COTP Zone**

Captain Shannan Greene reported on the recent activities in Southeast Alaska by the USCG. The M/V Challenger case has finally been resolved. She reviewed the community outreach and stakeholder coordination that occurred as part of this response. The Southeast Subarea Committee met in March 2016. The Sitka Sound GRS Work Group has been established with a primary objective to reduce the response time during the herring fishery season. Her presentation is available online [here](#).

#### **U.S. Coast Guard Prince William Sound COTP Zone**

CDR Joe Lally, MSU Valdez, made a presentation on the spills and responses in Prince William Sound since January 2016. He noted that the low snow load this year contributed to fewer incidents than average. USCG participated in the Cordova Preparedness Response Exercise Program (PREP) exercise in February and the Valdez Marine Terminal Field Deployment Exercise in May. The Subarea Committee will be meeting June 8, 2016 in Valdez. He also provided a list of the upcoming training and exercises. His presentation is available online [here](#).

### **U.S. Coast Guard Western Alaska Captain of the Port (COTP) Zone**

CAPT Paul Albertson, USCG Sector Anchorage, reviewed the recent spill responses and lessons learned in Western Alaska. He highlighted the mystery sheen/diesel spill in Dutch Harbor. This was initially perceived to be a small spill of approximately 25 gallons, but was later estimated to be approximately 600 gallons. Sector Anchorage will be participating in the Nome Arctic Exercise on June 14 to 15, 2016 and the North Slope Mutual Aid Drill on August 3, 2016. His presentation is available online [here](#).

### **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**

Mr. Calvin Terada, EPA Emergency Response and Planning Program Manager, provided an overview of the recent and upcoming activities of the Alaska On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs). No responses have occurred since January 2016. Currently, the EPA is working on a few projects, including a Kenai Peninsula Vulnerability Assessment, a Pipeline Jurisdictional Tool, and continued outreach to the Dalton Highway truck haulers regarding spill prevention and insurance coverage. His presentation is available online [here](#).

## **WORKING GROUP/SUBCOMMITTEE/TASK FORCE REPORTS**

### **ARRT Cultural Resources Committee**

Dr. Phillip Johnson provided an update on the status of the ARRT Cultural Resources Committee. The committee has not met since the January 2016 ARRT meeting. The committee will be identifying additional committee members and identifying and training cultural resource experts.

### **ARRT Wildlife Protection Committee**

Dr. Johnson also provided an update on the status of the ARRT Wildlife Protection Committee. The committee has not met since the January 2016 ARRT meeting. The committee is looking into the need to update the Wildlife Protection Guidelines.

### **Endangered Species Act Compliance Task Force**

Ms. Combes informed the ARRT on the status of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) Consultation on the Unified Plan. The task force is currently tracking efforts to ensure compliance under the Biological Opinion and ESA. An environmental compliance annex to the Unified Plan is being considered and an outline of the annex will be drafted fall 2016. An NRT subcommittee is working on streamlining efforts and to achieve consistency among the regions regarding ESA compliance. Mr. Everett added that future revisions to the Unified Plan will be subject to ESA consultation; this step has been added to the Unified Plan update protocol.

### **Food Safety Task Force Update**

Mr. Doug Helton, U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), provided an update on the status of the ARRT Food Safety Task Force. The task force is currently looking at the appropriate structure and members to make progress on the initiatives identified in the Food Safety and Security white paper submitted to the ARRT in September 2015. He recommended that the ARRT consider establishing the task force as a food safety committee to continue addressing these issues.

## **Unified Plan Update Committee Update**

CDR Lally presented a summary of the progress and work of the Unified Plan Update Committee (UPUC). The revision to Annex D, “Unified Plan Review and Update Process,” is complete and final. The draft revision to Annex B, “Process for Community Outreach,” relating to the Regional Stakeholder Committee process has been submitted for public review. The public review period was extended until May 29, 2016. At the end of the comment period, the comments will be sent to the section authors and the OSC Working Group for adjudication. The next section to be reviewed for revision is Annex B regarding Area Command.

## **Area Planning Task Force**

Mr. Knowles presented on the Area Planning Task Force. Mr. Knowles reviewed the history of planning in Alaska to explain the current system used in the state, and compared the Alaska system to how plans are prepared in the rest of the U.S. At the January ARRT meeting, the state submitted a proposal to consider adoption of a planning system similar to that used in the rest of the country. The ARRT established this task force to address this proposal. The Task Force recommends maintaining the 10 subareas, but four Area Contingency Plans (ACPs) for Southeast Alaska, Prince William Sound, Western Alaska and Arctic. These four plan boundaries represent a hybrid of the three USCG Captain of the Port Zone, and the three ADEC regions. His presentation is available online [here](#).

The summary of the proposed timeline is as follows:

- June 1, 2016 – Solicit stakeholder input for draft boundaries, ACP conceptual model, and timeline for transition.
- September 15, 2016 – Complete framework design and begin compiling Subarea Contingency Plan and Unified Plan sections to create a Regional Contingency Plan (RCP) and ACPs. Begin State Regulatory amendment process.
- November 15, 2016 – Solicit comments from tribes, the ARRT, State Emergency Response Committee and the public for draft RCP/ACPs.
- March 1, 2017 – Promulgate RCP/ACPs. Area Committees assume responsibility to update plans.

## **Science and Technology Committee**

Ms. Catherine Berg, NOAA Scientific Support Coordinator, offered a presentation on the Evaluation of Environmental Risk for Spill Response on behalf of the Science and Technology Committee. Her presentation is available online [here](#).

## **GENERAL DISCUSSION TOPICS**

### **Internal Discussion of the new Dispersant Guidelines**

Mr. Everett reviewed the dispersant use guidelines with the purpose of comparing the preauthorization versus case-by-case protocol. This was followed by a discussion on the details of each and differences between them. His presentation is available online [here](#). A summary of the steps in the preauthorization area protocol and case-by case protocol is available here.

## CONCLUDING COMMENTS AND REMARKS

- Non-member meeting attendees were given the opportunity to offer public comments. Three people requested to make comments (Lisa Matlock, Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council [PWSRCAC]; Linda Swiss, PWSRCAC; and LT Todd Bagetis, USCG). The comments included the following:
- Regional Stakeholder Committee (RSC) Process Revision: Ms. Matlock expressed appreciation for extension to RSC public comment period and made the following recommendations:
  - Recommend to withdraw proposed changes on the RSC process and initiate a process to allow dialogue with local and tribal governments, Regional Citizens' Advisory Councils, and other stakeholders.
  - Request ARRT reconsider decision to split current RSC into the Tribal and Local Governments Group and the Affected Stakeholders Group and instead focus on refining RSC process and membership parameters.
  - If RSC is split into two groups, request that the RCACs be placed with the Local and Tribal Governments Group.
  - Request that the current level of access to Unified Command and Incident Action Plans is preserved in the new process.
- Dispersant Use Plan: Expressed appreciation to the ARRT for improving the Dispersant Use Plan by making the preauthorization more rigorous, for conducting outreach and holding public meetings, and for incorporating comments from the various stakeholders in the plan. Ms. Swiss made the following recommendations:
  - Recommend defining avoidance use areas and exclusion areas (as there may be confusion with those terms).
  - Recommend explaining the difference between case-by-case authorization process for avoidance areas in undesignated areas and avoidance areas in the preauthorization zone.
  - Recommend clarification for vessels traveling into the next subarea with difference avoidance areas.
- LT Bagetis expressed thanks and recognition from Sector Anchorage IMD to Sector Juneau's CAPT Greene for involving them on the response to the M/V Challenger; to CAPT Diane Durham, USCG District 17, for the Hazwoper Training; and to the Pacific Strike Team for their consultation.

Representatives of the ARRT member agencies and the OSCs offered closing comments and remarks.

The co-chairs closed the meeting by making their final remarks. The co-chairs expressed their appreciation for the attendees' participation and the meeting was adjourned.

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## Upcoming Meetings

- Fall 2016 in Nome (September 27 & 28, 2016)
- Annual ARRT Strategy Session in Anchorage (September 29, 2016)

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## Follow-up Subjects & Assignment of Tasks

- None Identified

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## Participant Summary:

### Member Agencies Attendance

Member Agency	Present	Not Present
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation	●	
Department of Agriculture	●	
Department of Commerce	●	
Department of Defense	●	
Department of Energy		●
Department of Health and Human Services	●	
Department of Homeland Security (Federal Emergency Management Agency)	●	
Department of Interior	●	
Department of Justice		●
Department of Labor		●
Department of State		●
Department of Transportation		●
Environmental Protection Agency	●	
General Services Agency		●
U.S. Coast Guard	●	

### Federally-recognized Tribes

Tangirnaq Native Village (Lesnoi Native Village/Aka Woody Island Tribal Council)

### Non-member Organizations in Attendance

Alaska Chadux Corporation  
Alaska Clean Seas  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Alaska Maritime Prevention and Response Network  
BP Alaska  
Cook Inlet Regional Citizens' Advisory Council  
Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council