

# ALASKA REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM

## Meeting Summary

**0900–1700 Wednesday January 31, 2018  
BP Energy Center  
Anchorage, Alaska**

Sign-in sheets can be viewed [here](#).

A copy of the agenda is available [here](#).

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

### Safety Briefing, Introductions, Opening Remarks

Mr. Nick Knowles, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Alaska Regional Response Team (ARRT) coordinator, welcomed the meeting attendees and conducted introductions. The ARRT co-chairs—Mr. Mark Everett, U.S. Coast Guard (USCG); Mr. Calvin Terada, EPA; and Ms. Kristin Ryan, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)—welcomed all the attendees to the meeting and offered opening remarks.

### Review of Actions Since Last Meeting and Biennial Work Plan

Mr. Everett reviewed the ARRT's actions and activities since the last meeting, held in Cordova, Alaska, in September 2017. A list of the major events may be found [here](#). Of note, the Dispersant Use Policy is in full effect with the completion of the identification of pre-authorization avoidance areas.

Marc Randolph, USCG ARRT coordinator, reviewed the tasks outstanding from the September 2017 meeting. These outstanding tasks are included in the "Follow-up Subjects and Assignment of Tasks" on Page 6 of this meeting summary.

Mr. Terada and Ms. Ryan also offered opening reports, both noting their support and enthusiasm for the new planning revitalization and reorganization process. Ms. Ryan also reviewed the ADEC regulatory and legislative efforts, including a regulation allowing for a covenant assigned to properties with environmental contamination and legislation clarifying when ADEC will seek cost recovery for spill cleanup costs. Ms. Ryan also recognized the increase in participation by industry and native corporation representatives at the meeting.

## Working Group, Subcommittee, and Task Force Reports

### Science and Technology Committee

Ms. Catherine Berg, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Scientific Support Coordinator, provided an update on the Science and Technology Committee (STC). She reviewed the status of the “State of the Science for Dispersant Use in Arctic Waters” project. The ARRT Dispersant Task Force completed Oil Dispersant Guidelines, Dispersant Avoidance Area Sections by Subarea, and the On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs) signed the promulgation letters. These files are posted online on the ADEC website according to subarea at <http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/ppr/contingency-plans/response-plans/>. Ms. Berg introduced two new members of the STC: Tim Mayers (EPA) and Angela Matz (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; USFWS). She noted that the Alaska Marine Science Symposium was held the previous week. STC members are also involved in planning the Alaska Oil Spill Technology Symposium (March 28–30, 2018 at Hilton Hotel in Anchorage, Alaska; <https://dec.alaska.gov/spar/ppr/response-resources/publications-conferences/aosts-2018>). Currently, Rick Bernhardt (ADEC) is looking for information on sea states and conditions when various types of boom begin to fail. The USFWS is looking into the use of unmanned aerial vehicles and impacts on molting sea ducks and has requested that any pertinent information be forwarded to Angela Matz.

A copy of her presentation is available [here](#).

### Area Contingency Plan/Regional Contingency Plan Task Force Update

Mr. Knowles updated the ARRT on the reorganization of Alaska’s contingency plans and transition from the current Subarea Contingency Plans and Unified Plan to Area Contingency Plans (ACPs) and a Regional Contingency Plan (RCP). The new plans will consist of an RCP and four ACPs (three coastal plans covering the four USCG Captain of the Port Zones, and one inland plan). He reviewed the proposed new planning framework that includes the OSC Working Group, four Area Committees, and the Alaska Statewide Planning Committee.

Mr. Marc Randolph followed up Mr. Knowles’s presentation with a review of the Plan of Action and Milestones (PoA&M) for the plan development process. The task force intends to produce the initial four ACPs and RCPs for OSC approval and activation. Once that is accomplished, the plans will be turned over to the Area Committees for future maintenance and improvements. Once under that responsibility of the Area Committees, it is envisioned that the plans will be more localized with better opportunities for local involvement. Mr. Randolph encouraged participation in the Area Committees to fulfill this goal. The task force will be working on developing a Po&AM for the formation of the Area Committees. There was an open discussion for questions and comments on the Area Planning proposal and process and the Area Committees.

Area Committee Contacts		
Southeast Alaska	Kathy Hamblett	Kathy.A.Hamblett@uscg.mil
Prince William Sound	LT Jason Scott	Jason.R.Scott@uscg.mil
Arctic & Western Alaska	LCDR Matt Hobbie	Matthew.M.Hobbie@uscg.mil
Inland Area	Nick Knowles	knowles.nicholas@epa.gov

Copies of their presentations is available [here](#) and [here](#).

### **ARRT Cultural Resources Committee**

Dr. Philip Johnson, U.S. Department of the Interior, updated the ARRT on the status of the ARRT Cultural Resources Committee. The committee has not met since the last ARRT meeting and are hoping to have a meeting in fall 2018.

### **ARRT Wildlife Protection Committee**

Dr. Johnson also provided an update on the status of the ARRT Wildlife Protection Committee. The committee has reformed, and the first meeting of the committee since 2012 will be held February 1, 2018. A key agenda item is to discuss the need and determine the process for updating the Wildlife Protection Guidelines (Unified Plan, Annex M).

### **Unified Plan Administrative Update Task Force**

Mr. Knowles presented on the status of the Unified Plan Administrative Update. The Administrative Update includes reviewing the entire plan for obsolete information, incorrect phone numbers, and web addresses and making necessary revisions. Since this is an administrative update, a public review was determined to be unnecessary. The Task Force expects to complete the Administrative Update by 2/9/2018 and submit it to the ARRT Tri-Chairs for their review and approval. Once approved by the ARRT Tri-chairs, the updated Unified Plan will be posted on the ADEC website. His presentation is available [here](#).

## **On-Scene Coordinator Reports**

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

CAPT Phillip Thorne, USCG Sector Juneau Federal On-Scene Coordinator (FOSC), gave a presentation on recent USCG activity in Southeast Alaska. He highlighted the response to the F/V Ocean Gem grounding and sinking. He reviewed the USCG Sector Juneau outreach efforts at the SEAPRO Board Member Meeting and Juneau Rotary Club Breakfast. An area maritime security full-scale exercise will be held in April 2018, involving a hazardous material response on a ferry. Sector Juneau also plans to test one or two additional Geographic Response Strategies this upcoming summer season. A brief conversation about the issue of derelict vessels followed his presentation. A copy of his presentation is available [here](#).

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

CDR Michael Franklin, FOSC for Marine Safety Unit (MSU) Valdez, reviewed the spills and responses in Prince William Sound since September 2017. He highlighted a September discharge of emulsified crude oil at the Valdez Marine Terminal. MSU Valdez has participated in several exercises this year, including a Conoco Phillips/Polar Tankers exercise. CDR Franklin included the lessons learned from the major responses and exercises. He also reviewed recent upcoming activities, trainings, and exercises.

- March 21, 2018 – Prince William Sound Subarea Committee
- February 20–27, 2018 – Arctic Eagle 2018. This is a joint USCG-Alaska National Guard exercise with a hazardous material component.

A copy of his presentation is available [here](#).

### **U.S. Coast Guard Western Alaska COTP Zone**

CAPT Sean MacKenzie, USCG Sector Anchorage FOSC, reviewed the recent responses and lessons learned in Western Alaska. Responses of particular note were the F/V Akutan response in Dutch Harbor, Alaska. A key lesson learned was the extended time required for the ammonia response and removal. He also reviewed recent preparedness exercises and outreach activities. Upcoming exercises and outreach events include a presentation on the dispersant use guidance project at the Alaska Forum on the Environment; the Oil Spill Technology Symposium; a Blue Crest Energy tabletop exercise; and the Arctic Guardian oil spill seminar and equipment deployment (scheduled for Bethel, Alaska, in July).

A copy of his presentation is available [here](#).

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

Mr. Matt Carr, EPA FOSC, presented on the recent EPA response and preparedness activities. EPA participated in three Alyeska Pipeline System Corporation combined resource exercises. He also spoke on the regulatory rulemaking affecting interpretation of Clean Water Act jurisdiction and definition of the Waters of the U.S., which governs where EPA has jurisdiction under the Oil Pollution Act. EPA is planning a removal of asbestos containing material at the Miller Salvage yard in Fairbanks, Alaska, in summer 2018. Mr. Carr also provided brief review of EPA's contribution to the responses to the F/V Akutan, Hurricane Maria, Hurricane Irma, and the California wildfires.

A copy of his presentation is available [here](#).

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

The three ADEC State OSCs reviewed the major responses in their respective areas of responsibility: Mr. Tom DeRuyter, for Northern Region; Mr. Geoff Merrell for the Central Region; and Mr. Bob Mattson for the Southeast Region. Mr. Merrell also spoke on the response and actions taken regarding the earthquake and tsunami warning on January 25, 2018. Mr. Mattson highlighted the joint response between ADEC, USCG, and Canadian agencies to the Tug Jake Shearer and Fuel Barge Zidell 227.

A copy of their presentation is available [here](#).

## **General Discussion Topics and Special Presentations**

### **USEPA Emergency Response Team**

Mr. Henry Gerard presented an overview of the EPA Emergency Response Team and its capabilities and recent response support. His presentation is available [here](#).

### **Circumpolar Response Viability Analysis**

Mr. Everett presented on the Arctic Council's Emergency Prevention, Preparedness, and Response Working Group Circumpolar Oil Spill Response Viability Analysis. This report assessed the potential for viable deployment of various spill response tactics and strategies in the Arctic in consideration of meteorology and oceanography conditions. It does not address the success of the tactics. His presentation is available [here](#).

## Public Comments

Three members of the public in attendance (both in person and telephonically) requested to make public comments.

**Karen Pletnikoff, Aleutian and Pribilof Islands Association**, thanked the ARRT for their support of the Alaska Federation of Natives Resolution on Oil Spill Response. She also spoke on the importance of tribes receiving Incident Command System training to be more engaged in spill responses. She acknowledged that there are changes affecting the landscape conservation cooperatives, but noted that the Aleutian and Bering Sea Islands landscape conservation cooperatives will survive. Finally, she noted that the Aleutian Islands Waterway Safety Committee is having its first meeting in February at the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands Association offices.

**Eugene Asicksik, Bering Straits Native Corporation (BSNC)** spoke of his concerns regarding the Bering Strait region, climate warming, and the increased USCG presence in the area. He noted that BSNC has installed four commercial mooring systems in Port Clarence. He also remarked that the Bering Straits region has two of the four coastal villages in imminent danger of loss due to erosion and noted that the BSNC is looking for funding for relocation of these villages.

**Steve Russell** asked about the fate of the tax that funded the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund. Mr. Everett responded that the fund presently has a very substantial balance remaining, and response funding is not threatened; therefore, renewal of the tax is not a time-critical concern. However, he remarked that he expects it to be addressed in future budget deliberations. Mr. Russell also asked if the Alternative Planning Criteria (APC) should be addressed in the Unified Plan or specific Subarea or Area Plans. Mr. Everett replied that the APC is a unique USCG authority and therefore, the ARRT will remain aware of developments but has no authority over APCs.

## Concluding Comments and Remarks

Representatives of the ARRT member agencies and the OSCs offered closing comments and remarks, and the meeting adjourned at 1630.

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## Upcoming Meetings

- May, ARRT Meeting in Juneau, Alaska

## Follow-up Subjects and Assignment of Tasks

(Assigned party in bold)

- Co-chairs requested the request that **STC** review their charter to assess whether and how the STC can be more inclusive of non-member interested parties or subject-matter experts. As part of this review, the STC should consider whether it is appropriate for the new Area Committees to have their own STCs to enhance inclusivity.
  - **EPA** will coordinate with the **USFWS and National Marine Fisheries Service** to provide Section 7 training for EPA OSCs and response staff. Training is tentatively scheduled for spring 2018.
  - Co-chairs requested that the **STC** evaluate the PPOR criteria and compare these to the new methodology used for the Prince William Sound Study—and report findings at the next ARRT meeting.
  - **Coordinators** will post STC reports on the ARRT website.
  - **Coordinators** will post USCG Guidance on the requirements of Area Committee membership.
  - **Area Planning Task Force** will create a Plan of Action and Milestones (PoA&M) for the creation of Area Committees.
  - **Tri-Chairs** will complete and submit an Annual Report to the NRT Report, including a report on Endangered Species Act Compliance Report
    - **OSCs** need to prepare & submit to Tri-Chairs their area’s Endangered Species Act Compliance Reports
  - **Tri-Chairs** will draft and submit a letter to member agencies explaining planning initiative and requesting support.
  - **Food Safety Task Force** will review proposals received by OSRI
  - **Cultural Protection Committee** will schedule a meeting for fall 2018.
  - **Wildlife Protection Committee** is meeting February 1 and initiate work to update the Wildlife Protection Guidelines.
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**Participant Summary:**

**Member Agencies Attendance**

<b>Member Agency</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Not Present</b>
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 the Interior	●	
Department of Justice	●	
Department of Labor		●
Department of State		●
Department of Transportation		●
Environmental Protection Agency	●	
Federal Emergency Management Agency	●	
General Services Agency		●
U.S. Coast Guard	●	

**Non-member Organizations in Attendance**

1Call Alaska Resolve
Ahtna, Inc.
Alaska Chadux Corporation
Alaska Clean Seas
Alaska Response Co, LLC
Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association
Aleutian Spill Control Inc.
Association of Village Council Presidents
Bering Straits Regional Corporation
Conoco Phillips
Cook Inlet Regional Citizens' Advisory Council (RCAC)
Cook Inlet Regional Inc.
Cook Inlet Spill Prevention and Response, Inc.
Crowley Fuels
Endeavor (formerly Tesoro)
Environmental Management, Inc.
Exxon Mobil
Gallagher Marine Systems

Global Diving and Salvage
Hilcorp Alaska
HMS/ Olympic Tug and Barge
International Bird Rescue
Prince William Sound RCAC
Prism Environmental
Resolve Marine Group
SeaRiver
State of Alaska, Department of Fish and Game
State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources/ Office of History and Archeology
State of Alaska, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
State of Alaska, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
The Reponses Group
U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement
U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement
U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Kenai National Wildlife Refuge
U.S. Department of Transportation, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
U.S. Forest Service, Chugach National Forest