

# ALASKA REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM

## Meeting Summary

**0830 – 1630 Wednesday January 18, 2017  
Pipeline Training Center  
Fairbanks, Alaska**

**The meeting agenda may be viewed [here](#).  
Sign-in sheets may 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. Nick Knowles, the Alaska Regional Response Team (ARRT) coordinator with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), welcomed the meeting attendees and conducted introductions. Mr. Chad Hutchinson, director of the Pipeline Training Center, provided a safety briefing for the facility, as well as a summary of the work of the Training Center.

The ARRT co-chairs— Captain (CAPT) Todd Styrwold, U.S. Coast Guard (USCG); Mr. Chris Field, (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**

CAPT Styrwold reviewed key ARRT-related actions and activities that have occurred since the last meeting, held in Nome, Alaska, in September 2016; these are listed [here](#). He also reviewed the current Biennial Work Plan, available [here](#).

Mr. Field also spoke on the Executive Leadership meeting held after the Nome ARRT meeting.

Ms. Ryan addressed some of the upcoming and recent changes to State rules on contingency planning. A manual is now available online that provides guidance for complying with State planning requirements. A proposed regulation regarding Medium-size tank facilities (Class II facilities) will require registration with ADEC to allow ADEC to be aware of facility locations and to provide technical assistance to reduce incidents. The regulations project is closed for public comment and under internal review. For additional information visit the following webpage:

[http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/regulation\\_projects/pprClass2Fac.htm](http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/regulation_projects/pprClass2Fac.htm)

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

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

Mr. Knowles summarized the proposal to reorganize how contingency planning is structured in Alaska. He provided an overview of the current and proposed framework, planning committees, and workgroups. He reviewed the work completed thus far, and the work remaining. A copy of his presentation is available [here](#).

Questions/Comments:

Mr. Doug Helton, Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) asked if a public review process approval beyond the ARRT is required to adopt and move forward with this proposal. Mr. Field replied that Mark Everett and he will determine whether a tribal consultation is necessary. Ms. Ryan stated that the State will require a regulatory change regarding the 10 subarea contingency plans and would also like to conduct another public review process.

Dr. Phil Johnson, Department of the Interior (DOI) summarized the comments submitted from DOI to the ARRT on Friday January 13, 2017. A primary concern of DOI is the division of the planning areas and a potential increase in planning workload. Mr. Field responded that he appreciates the concern regarding increased workload. He added that this proposal reflects requirements for improved planning updates and addresses the planning burden on agencies, in particular Sector Anchorage, with the number of subarea plans they are currently able to review and update in a timely manner.

### **Dispersant Avoidance Area Identification**

Lieutenant Commander (LCDR) Matt Hobbie, USCG Sector Anchorage, presented an overview of the effort to identify dispersant avoidance areas. The purpose of this effort is to identify areas within the pre-authorization zone that should be excluded from pre-authorization. He stated that avoidance areas need to be identified by January 27, 2018, or the pre-authorization zone for that subarea will revert to a case-by-case process to approve the use of dispersants. He also noted that the avoidance areas are not areas where dispersant use will be prohibited, but rather that any dispersant use in those areas will need to be decided using the case-by-case decision-making process. A project website is available at: <http://nukadraft.wixsite.com/avoidanceareas>. A copy of his presentation is available [here](#).

### **Science and Technology Committee**

Ms. Catherine Berg, NOAA Scientific Support Coordinator, provided an update on the status of the Science and Technology Committee. She reviewed the “State of the Science for Dispersant Science in Arctic Waters” report. The report tasks were divided up among work groups; these have been completed or are expected to be so by the end of March 2017. She also reported on the Dispersant Use Avoidance Areas Technical Committee. The USCG plans to conduct research and development testing projects in the Arctic on the USCGC Healy in summer 2017. A copy of her presentation is available [here](#).

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

Ms. Berg also reported on the status of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) Task Force. An ESA Survey was sent to the On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs) in November 2016 asking for feedback on the steps taken in

regards to compliance. The task force has also created the “ESA Consultation Initiation Form” to document the consultation process. They are currently in the process of developing a post-response consultation close-out form to document the response actions and timeline, mitigation measures, and lessons learned from the emergency response. Ms. Berg has also put together a 2-hour ESA Section 7 Consultation Training course. A copy of her presentation is available [here](#).

### **ARRT Cultural Resources Committee**

Dr. Johnson provided an update on the status of the ARRT Cultural Resources Committee. The committee has not met since the last ARRT meeting.

### **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 last ARRT meeting. Some administrative changes are needed for Annex G Wildlife Protection Guidelines. He inquired of the co-chairs whether an effort is appropriate at this time pending a potential reformat with the proposed planning reorganization.

A Natural Resource Damage Assessment workshop was held in Anchorage, Alaska, that was well-attended. He stated that he hopes to sponsor this workshop every two to three years.

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

Mr. Doug Helton, NOAA, provided an update on the status of the ARRT Food Safety Task. The task force has completed a summary document regarding food safety and security issues. This was presented to the ARRT in September 2015 and is available on the ARRT website, [here](#). The task force is looking at producing a streamlined document to assist in addressing food safety issues during an emergency response. They are seeking additional funding to complete this task.

### **Discussion of the ExxonMobil Point Thompson In-Situ Burn Exercise ARRT Activation**

Mr. Field reported on the ARRT activation that was part of the October 21, 2016, ExxonMobil Point Thompson in-situ burn exercise. This was one of the required annual ARRT exercises. Mr. Knowles was the Federal OSC representative at the exercise. Among the lessons learned from this exercise was the need to take role of the ARRT members on telephone calls. He noted that he appreciated the comments from Joe Sarcone, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

### **Alternative Planning Criteria Update**

LCDR Mark Neeland, USCG District 17 (D17), gave a presentation on the status the USCG Alternative Planning Criteria (APC). In 2015, D17 began developing an APC policy. However, USCG headquarters has prepared a draft national policy, which was re-opened for public comment on January 10, 2017 ([www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), Docket Number USCG-2016-0437). Comments are due April 10, 2017. D17 will conduct public outreach, particularly in Western Alaska communities. Once the national policy is published, D17 will develop APC Guidance to address Alaska-specific concerns. A copy of his presentation is available [here](#).

## **Polar Code Update**

LCDR Neeland also spoke on the International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (Polar Code) implementation, which went into effect January 1, 2017. The marine pollution rules went into effect immediately, and other requirements will be phased in over the next one to three years. The USCG's Office of Commercial Vessel Compliance issued a policy letter in December 2016 discussing Polar Code implementation. He noted that the biggest impacts will be on foreign vessels. The USCG also issued a Notice of Proposed Rule Making in November 2016 that would add a new Polar Ship Certificate to the list of existing certificates required to be carried on board all U.S. and foreign-flagged vessels subject to the International Convention for Safety of Life at Sea and operating in Arctic and Antarctic waters. In Alaska, the Polar Code applies to waters north of 60 degrees north, excluding Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound.

## **ON-SCENE COORDINATOR REPORTS**

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

Mr. Knowles presented on the recent activities of the EPA on behalf of the Alaska Federal OSCs. The activities he highlighted included the Trans Alaska Pipeline System worst case discharge response scenario gap analysis, recent health and safety training, the pipeline jurisdictional mapping tool, and the Kenai Peninsula vulnerability assessment. A copy of his presentation is available [here](#).

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

Captain (CAPT) Shannon Greene, USCG Sector Juneau, gave a presentation on spill responses in Southeast Alaska. She highlighted the response to the F/V Jewel, a mystery sheen in the Lake Street Neighborhood of Sitka, Alaska. She also reviewed the tribal outreach activities in Southeast Alaska, as well as upcoming events. A copy of her presentation is available [here](#).

### **U.S. Coast Guard Prince William Sound Captain of the Port Zone**

Commander (CDR) Joe Lally, Marine Safety Unit (MSU) Valdez, gave a presentation on spills and responses in Prince William Sound since October 2016. Of particular note was a radiation response at the Valdez Container Terminal. During a routine inspection, low levels of gamma and neutron radiation were detected in two shipping containers. The 103<sup>rd</sup> Civil Support Team from Anchorage responded to the site at the USCG's request and confirmed phosphorus-40 but not iridium-192 or neutron radiation. The Civil Support Team sent samples to the Department of Energy (DOE) for final analysis, and shipment was cleared for transportation after confirmation from DOE. CDR Lally also reviewed recent responses and exercises, and future projects, training, and exercises. A copy of his presentation is available [here](#).

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

CDR Stacy Mersel, USCG Sector Anchorage, reviewed the recent spill responses and lessons learned in Western Alaska. The primary spill contributor was the sinking of the M/V Exito in December 2016 near Unalaska, Alaska, which also resulted in two deaths. Another major response, which ultimately did not result in a release of any oil to the environment, was at Hilcorp's Tyonek Platform in Cook Inlet in November 2016. In this response, CISPRI was contracted by Hilcorp to remove approximately 20,000 gallons of diesel fuel that had leaked into one of the platform legs. CDR Mersel also reviewed recent

outreach and drills, planning activities and initiatives, and upcoming drills and exercises. A copy of her presentation is available [here](#).

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

Ms. Ashley Adamczak, ADEC, reviewed recent cases and responses of ADEC. She also referred to the new Class II Facilities Regulations, which apply to facilities with storage capacity between 1,000 to 420,000 gallons and underground storage tanks greater than 500 gallons. She also remarked that ADEC is working on a survey and visioning process to improve response exercises; a report on this process will be available at <http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/ppr/drills>. A copy of her presentation is available [here](#).

Mr. Calvin Terada (EPA) inquired whether the outreach to tanker truck companies conducted in spring 2015 had been successful. Ms. Adamczak responded that the outreach was in response to truck rollovers on the Dalton Highway, and many of the recent rollover have occurred on the Richardson Highway. An update and refresher training are being planned which will also include HAZMAT response.

Ms. Adamczak was also asked if any of the recent truck incidents are attributable to highway design and whether the Alaska Department of Transportation (ADOT) is investigating this matter. She responded that ADOT is looking into it, although two of the spills were due to equipment failure and not highway features.

## **GENERAL DISCUSSION TOPICS & SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

### **Deployable Assets Available through Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management**

Mr. Bryan Fisher, Chief of Operations for the State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM), reported on the personnel and equipment assets and capabilities of the DHSEM and how they may be of assistance in a spill response. A copy of his presentation is available [here](#).

### **State of Dispersant Science in Alaska**

Ms. Kelly McFarlin, a PhD student from the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, presented on the state of dispersant science in Alaska. The major subjects she addressed are listed below:

- Biodegradation and the impact of chemical dispersants on biodegradation;
- Impact of dispersants on bacteria involved in biodegradation;
- 30–36% of unweathered crude oil biodegraded within 28 days; and
- Dioctyl sulfosuccinate (DOSS) saw 77% biodegradation in arctic surface water; Non-ionic surfactants were nearly 100% biodegraded.

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

### **Arctic Spill Response Equipment Database**

Mr. Steve Pearson, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, provided a follow-up report on international arctic spill response equipment. He previously reported on the database at the January 2016 ARRT meeting in Anchorage. The purpose of this database is to identify oil spill response

equipment (government-owned and commercially owned) that may be used to respond to an arctic oil spill.

The final database was received in September 2016 and approved by the Arctic Council Emergency Prevention Preparedness and Response working group in December 2016. The next step is for the database to be presented at the Arctic Council ministerial meeting in May 2017 and published. A copy of his presentation is available [here](#).

### **BSEE Marine Spill Calculator**

This presentation was cancelled due to illness.

### **CONCLUDING COMMENTS AND REMARKS**

Non-member meeting attendees were given the opportunity to offer public comments. One person requested to make a comment, as follows:

- Patty Burns, Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR), stated that there is a lack of geographical information system (GIS) data to accurately identify land ownership/land status on the shore and tidelands. Currently, staff can quickly address and determine land status for small spills; however, ADNR would not have the staff capacity to make this determination for a large spill. Previously, ADEC provided ADNR with funding, but this is not available at this time. If desired by the OSCs, ADNR would take the steps to request additional funding via ADEC or other funding sources.
  - Mr. Calvin Terada stated that he saw value in the product and supported the development of a project scope to be used to identify funding sources.

Mr. Knowles expressed his appreciation to Mr. Field for his service to the ARRT, prior to his retirement at the end of April 2017. Mr. Field made some remarks regarding his retirement.

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

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### **Upcoming Meetings**

- Spring 2017 in Sitka (May 24–25, 2017)
- Fall 2017 in Cordova (September 19–20),
  - Sept 21 will be a meeting of the Alaska Planning Committee

### **Follow-up Subjects & Assignment of Tasks**

- None Identified
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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 Interior	●	
Department of Justice		●
Department of Labor		●
Department of Transportation		●
Environmental Protection Agency	●	
Federal Emergency Management Agency	●	
General Services Agency		●
U.S. Coast Guard	●	

**Non-member Organizations in Attendance**

- Alaska Chadux Corporation
- Alaska Clean Seas
- Alaska Railroad
- DOI, Bureau of Land Management
- Prince William Sound Regional Citizens Advisory Council
- State of Alaska, Department of Fish and Game
- State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources
- State of Alaska, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
- The Response Group
- University of Alaska Fairbanks
- Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council