

# ALASKA REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM

## Meeting Summary

0830–1700 Tuesday, October 30, 2018  
Robert B. Atwood Building, 550 W. 7th Ave., Anchorage, AK

Sign-in sheets can be viewed [here](#). The agenda is available [here](#).

Presentations and Background Information from the meeting are available as follows:

- [Introductions, ARRT Committee and OSC/Area Committee Reports](#)
- [Alaska Contingency Planning Status Report](#)
- [Special Topic: Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement Oil Spill Preparedness for U.S. Offshore Facilities](#)
- [Special Topic: Alaska Ocean Observing System “Assessing Risk to Arctic Subsistence Harvesting Areas from Marine Oil Spills”](#)
- [Special Topic: Cook Inlet and Kodiak Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines](#)

The Agenda provided hyperlinks to the following recommended background information:

- [EPA Area Contingency Planning Handbook \(August 2018\)](#)
- [Regional Contingency Plan and Area Contingency Plans \(September 2018\)](#)  
[BSEE Oil Spill Preparedness Division, Standard Operating Procedures, OSRP Review Capability \(Section 1\)](#)
- [Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines](#)

### **Safety Briefing, Introductions, Opening Remarks**

Ms. Mary Goolie, 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, the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG); Mr. Calvin Terada (EPA); and Ms. Kristin Ryan, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)—welcomed all attendees to the meeting and offered opening remarks.

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

Mr. Everett and Marc Randolph, USCG ARRT Coordinator, provided a review of the ARRT’s actions, activities, and informational items since the last meeting, held in Juneau, Alaska, in May 2018. Of note, the Regional Contingency Plan and four Area Contingency Plans have been promulgated. He also noted some recent personnel changes—new ARRT Coordinators for both ADEC (Clara Crosby) and EPA (Mary Goolie). He also remarked on policy issues that the ARRT is working on with the National Response Team

(NRT). He summarized international exercises and meetings that are being conducted with Canada and Russia. A list of the major events can be found on slide 6 of the presentation [here](#).

## **Working Group, Subcommittee, and Task Force Reports**

### **Science and Technology Committee**

Ms. Catherine Berg, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Scientific Support Coordinator (NOAA SSC), provided an update on the Science and Technology Committee (STC). The topics she covered were dispersant project outreach as well as Unmanned Aerial Systems UAS (a.k.a. drones) and molting waterfowl in spill response and Potential Places of Refuge review. She highlighted a Sea Grant Oil Spill Science Outreach program workshop scheduled for February 20-21, 2019. The STC has enlisted Sea Grant to assist in determining how to communicate dispersant science to the public throughout Alaska.

Mr. Everett requested that Ms. Berg communicate with and follow-up with Dr. Kinner to determine if these outreach efforts are meeting the needs of her request for assistance.

Dr. Angela Matz, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), presented on the use of unmanned aircraft system (UAS), also known as drones, around molting waterfowl during spill response. She summarized the findings of a study of waterfowl reactions to drones and USFWS's recommendations to on-scene coordinators (OSCs) for drone use during spill response. This includes:

- No use of UASs below 150 feet over flightless waterfowl flocks.
- When possible, fly in high and descend rather than fly in low.
- No use of predator-shaped UASs over any waterfowl, especially flightless.

The ARRT Tri-chairs will follow-up on disseminating this guidance to the OSCs and Area Committees for potential inclusion in the Area Contingency Plans and to oil spill response contractors for inclusion in their operations plans. They also acknowledged that a clear policy should be established, which takes into account this USFWS guidance, other species-specific guidance or regulations, land management regulations, and Federal Aviation Administration rules. Mr. Everett noted that he will coordinate with the NRT on any national guidance that may exist or be in development.

Dr. Rick Bernhardt, ADEC SSC, presented on the STC review and analysis of the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council (PWSRCAC) study on the validation of Potential Places of Refuge. The STC determined that while the study has great analysis and information, they could not conclude that the findings of the PWSRCAC study were actionable or not.

A copy of the STC presentation is available [here](#), slide 10.

### **Cultural Resource Protection Committee**

Dr. Philip Johnson, U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) Regional Environmental Officer, noted that the committee is still inactive. The National Park Service (NPS) and Alaska Office of History and Archaeology (Alaska's State Historic Preservation Office, SHPO) are working to prepare and deliver Historic Properties

Specialist training in the first week of April 2019. Currently, there are few qualified individuals in Alaska. The potential audience for this training are individuals from agencies, contractors, Alaska native organizations, and graduate school programs. Nationally, NPS is working on a similar training curriculum.

### **Wildlife Protection Committee**

Dr. Johnson, chair of the Wildlife Protection Committee, provided a briefing on the committee. The committee has met four times this year—in March, June, August and September. The committee has scheduled additional meetings in November and December 2018. They are beginning work on an update to the Wildlife Protection Guidelines, incorporating new information and guidance and best practices from other agencies. The committee is planning to include more information on subsistence considerations and natural resource damage assessments. ADEC has reformatted the existing guidelines to correspond with the new Regional and Area Contingency Plans.

### **Food Safety Task Force/ Work Group**

Mr. Doug Helton, representing the Department of Commerce, NOAA, presented an update on the Food Safety Policy Task Force. On behalf of the task force, Nuka Research has been contracted to work with agency representatives to assemble and summarize applicable statutes, regulations, and jurisdictions that govern food safety and security issues during oil spills. The summary will include relevant case studies describing best practices during previous spills. The task force anticipates that a draft for ARRT review will be available in November 2018. Parties interested in obtaining a copy of the draft should contact Sierra Fletcher at [sierra@nukaresearch.com](mailto:sierra@nukaresearch.com)

### **OSC Reports on Area Committees**

#### **USCG Southeast Captain of the Port (COTP) Zone**

Commander (CDR) Mike Kahle, USCG Sector Juneau, representing the Federal On-Scene Coordinator (FOSC), presented on recent USCG activity in Southeast Alaska. He highlighted the Van Winkle chemical-biological-radiological-nuclear-explosive (CBRNE) exercise conducted in Sitka, Alaska, in partnership with the Alaska National Guard 103<sup>rd</sup> Civil Support Team. He also provided a brief on the Geographic Response Strategy (GRS) field test program in Southeast. He also reviewed the recent tribal engagements, particularly outreach to the Metlakatla Indian Community. The initial Southeast Alaska Area Committee meeting is planned for February 2019. A copy of his presentation is available [here](#), slide 30.

#### **USCG Prince William Sound COTP Zone**

CDR Michael Franklin, FOSC for Marine Safety Unit Valdez (MSU Valdez), reviewed the responses and exercises in Prince William Sound since June 2018. He highlighted a Government-Initiated Unannounced Exercise at the Valdez Petroleum Terminal and the fall 2018 ammunition load out. USCG MSU Valdez and Sector Anchorage participated in the ammunition load out in partnership with the U.S. Department of Defense and the City of Valdez. Effective July 2018, Edison Chouest Offshore has taken over the tanker escort services in Prince William Sound. CDR Franklin also addressed the concern of frequent

near misses between the tankers and fishing vessels in the Valdez Narrows. A copy of his presentation is available [here](#), slide 41.

### **Arctic and Western Alaska Area Committee/OSC Report**

Captain Sean MacKenzie, USCG Sector Anchorage FOOSC, reviewed the recent activity of in the Arctic and Western Alaska Area. He reviewed the progress and plans of the Area Committee. He reviewed recent federal cases, highlighting issues related to aging and deteriorating fuel transfer and storage infrastructure in Western Alaska. He remarked that poor maintenance and improper training, particularly in regards to fuel transfers, are contributing factors to actual and potential releases at several of these aging facilities. A copy of his presentation is available [here](#), slide 56.

### **Alaska Inland Area Committee/OSC Report**

Mr. Matt Carr, EPA FOOSC, presented on newly formed Alaska Inland Area Committee and the Area Contingency Plan. Mr. Geoff Merrell, ADEC State OSC, and Mr. Bob Whittier, EPA FOOSC, also presented on hazardous substance removal at the Miller Salvage Yard in Fairbanks (June 2018). A copy of their presentation is available [here](#), beginning on slide 61.

### **ARRT Coordinator Presentations**

#### **Regional Contingency Plan & Area Contingency Plans Status Update**

Mr. Marc Randolph presented on the status the Regional Contingency Plan and four Area Contingency Plans. This included an overview of the relationship between these plans to each other and to other contingency plans. He also confirmed the process for public comment review.

#### **Statewide Planning Committee**

Ms. Mary Goolie presented on the Statewide Planning Committee. This committee will be composed of the ADEC, USCG, and EPA ARRT coordinators and additional ad-hoc members, as appropriate. She reviewed the tasks assigned to the Statewide Planning Committee, which are itemized in her presentation, slide 22.

Their presentations are available [here](#).

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

#### **Assessing Risk to Arctic Subsistence Harvesting Areas from Marine Oil Spills**

Ms. Molly McCammon (Alaska Ocean Observing System, AOOS) and Will Koeppen (Axiom Data Science) presented on a project to develop an analysis tool to assess risk from vessel-based marine oil spills to subsistence harvests in Utqiavik, Kaktovik and Nuiqsut. This tool uses Automatic Identification System (AIS) data from ship-based transmitters and land- or satellite-based receivers on vessel traffic, and data collected on subsistence harvest areas. The data is viewable and searchable on the AOOS Data Explorer at <https://portal.aos.org/>. A copy of the presentation is available [here](#).

### **Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement Oil Spill Preparedness for U.S. Offshore Facilities**

Mr. Steve Pearson, representing the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, presented on the current oil spill response plan review process and the proposed process for the Arctic Oil Spill Response Plan review. A copy of the presentation is available [here](#).

### **Cook Inlet and Kodiak Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines**

Jen Duchane, a contractor to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), presented on how to develop disaster response guidelines for marine mammals in Cook Inlet and Kodiak Island area. She reviewed key concerns and challenges to marine mammal response as well as the NMFS Alaska response standards and major features of the guidelines. A copy of the presentation is available [here](#).

### **Public Comments**

Two meeting attendees signed up to offer public comments.

- Karen Pletnikoff with the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, offered some comments. She noted that the tone of the meeting regarding tribes has improved. She commented on the noted the importance of facilitating telephonic participation in the meetings and emphasized the need to have presentations posted online at least one day prior to the meetings to allow for poor internet connections in rural areas. She remarked that the current food safety policy project does not address her concerns regarding the toxicity of dispersants and oil in subsistence food sources. She looks forward to the work group's future products. She also recognized and thanked USCG Lieutenant Commander Matthew Hobbie for his outreach in the Aleutian-Pribilof Islands region.
- Jessica Garron, University of Alaska Fairbanks. She appreciates the ARRT actively addressing the use of UASs.

### **Concluding Comments and Remarks**

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

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### **Upcoming Meetings**

- ARRT Meeting: January 25 Anchorage, Alaska,
- Alaska Inland Area Committees and Arctic and Western Alaska Area Committee meetings: May 14, 2019 in Fairbanks, AK
- ARRT Meeting: May 16, 2019 in Fairbanks, AK

## Follow-up Subjects and Assignment of Tasks

(Assigned party in bold)

- **Science and Technology Committee representative** will contact, and communicate with, Dr. Kenner and confirm if the Sea Grant outreach products and workshops meet her request for assistance.
  - **[TBD]** will distribute USFWS recommendations on the use of UASs near molting wildlife.
  - **Mr. Everett** will communicate with NRT to confirm any guidance or developing guidance regarding the use of UASs.
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**Participant Summary:**

<b>Member Agencies in Attendance</b>		
<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	●	
<b>Non-member Organizations in Attendance</b>		
152 Degrees West Environmental		
Alaska Chadux Corporation		
Alaska Clean Seas		
Alaska Ocean Observing System		
Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association		
Alyeska Pipeline Service Company		
Arctic Slope Native Association		
British Petroleum		
Cook Inlet Regional Citizens' Advisory Council		
Cook Inlet Spill Response Inc.		
Hilcorp Alaska		
Kawerak, Inc.		
Kodiak Area Native Association		
Nuka Research		
Prince William Sound RCAC		
Prism Environmental (Exxon Mobil consultants)		
SLR International		
State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources, Office of History and Archaeology		

State of Alaska, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
U.S. Department of Commerce, National Weather Service
U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Infrastructure Protection
U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement
U.S. Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service
Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council