



ALASKA REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM

Status of Revitalization

The Alaska Regional Response Team (ARRT) is an interagency, intergovernmental collaboration group consisting of representatives of 14 federal agencies, the State of Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, and federally-recognized tribes. The ARRT is responsible for regional planning and coordination of preparedness and response actions involving discharges of oil & releases of other hazardous substances in Alaska & surrounding waters. See the ARRT Charter for more detail.

In 2017, the ARRT embarked on an ambitious effort to streamline and revitalize the local interagency coordination committees, called area committees, responsible for development and maintenance of the (government) plans necessary to respond to a worse case discharge or release of pollution in that geographic area. Good progress has been made:

- The former joint EPA/USCG/ADEC system of *Alaska Unified Plan* with 10 subarea contingency plans (SCP) has been converted to a more *National Contingency Plan* (NCP) compliant structure featuring one Regional Contingency Plan (RCP) and four Area Contingency Plan (ACPs). All former plans have been rescinded. The ARRT maintains the RCP.
- Area committees have been established in each of the three coastal zones and in the single statewide inland zone. The Area Committees maintain their ACP. Each of these area committees has had at least two meetings and are working on annual revisions to their ACP.
- In effect, we've rebalanced workload from the ARRT to the area committees – where it belongs – and reinforced the planning & preparedness authority of the OSCs.

Although much has been accomplished, there is more to do. At this pivotal waypoint, the ARRT needs to recalibrate and reengage. This may entail:

- Shifting focus from tactical to strategic, reactive to proactive;
- Fostering approaches/mechanisms/sources to enhance our understanding of inter-area pollution risks and response gaps across the region;
- Developing means and methods to increase ARRT productivity and maximizing a shared, but limited, resource base;
- Bolstering our messaging;
- Re-emphasizing the NCP based whole-of-government approach to pollution preparedness and response in Alaska; and
- Validating and prioritizing work and establishing a doable roadmap for the ARRT's efforts over the next 3 years.