



ARRT Annual Report 2014

ANNUAL REPORT ALASKA REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM (ARRT) CY 2014

Executive Summary

Period of Report: 01 Jan 2014 to 31 Dec 2014.

- I. **Introduction:** The Alaska Regional Response Team (ARRT) marked several important milestones in 2014:
 - a. Completion of the *Biological Assessment (BA) of the Alaska Unified Plan* and submittal to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in pursuit of compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. This effort included preparation of Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Analysis and submittal to NMFS as required under the Magnusson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act (MSA).
 - b. Revision of the ARRT Charter to: 1) balance internal procedural/administrative requirements with available resources; 2) better meet obligations to federally-recognized tribes; and 3) align USCG and EPA organizational responsibilities with decision-making processes to promote overall ARRT effectiveness.
 - c. Development and implementation of new *Guidelines for Coordination and Consultation with Federally-Recognized Tribes*.
 - d. Development of a proposed *Dispersant Use Plan for Alaska* (including Preauthorization Plan)

- II. **Challenges:** Some of ARRT's current challenges include:
 - a. Resources for ESA Consultation. Even with close cooperation between the Action Agencies (USCG & EPA) and the Services (USFWS & NMFS), performing environmental due diligence for the *Alaska Unified Plan* has proved challenging for all. This project has required a great deal of funding and staff time, often at the expense of other important work. The demand for this level of environmental documentation around the country is growing. We invite the NRT to bring this need for additional support for Action Agencies and the Services to the attention of relevant senior officials.
 - b. Policy for ESA Consultation. Despite the highly collaborative approach used to develop of the *Biological Assessment (BA) of the Alaska Unified Plan*, the process for consultation on such an extensive, complex, and



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precedent-setting consultation is not well suited to the process outlined in the *2001 Interagency Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Oil Spill Planning and Response Activities Under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act's National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan and the Endangered Species Act*. Recognizing the ongoing work of the NRTs National Environmental Compliance Subcommittee, we invite the NRT to continue to pursue means to facilitate the need for ESA compliance given the significant workload placed on Action Agencies and the Services. Meanwhile, we will provide more specific feedback directly to the Subcommittee.

- c. Completing required public comment and tribal consultation processes for the proposed *ARRT Dispersant Use Plan for Alaska* (including Preauthorization Plan) to pave the way for implementation.
- d. Continue USCG and EPA efforts (in coordination with the State of Alaska) to keep up with quickly evolving concerns and workload associated with Arctic warming, international Arctic policy development, and human activities in the Arctic.
- e. Continue work on defining logistical challenges of spill response in remote Arctic locations, per tasking by Executive NRT and 2013 SONS.
- f. Continue efforts to reach out and enhance tribal involvement in Area Planning and ARRT meetings, complicated by vast geographic distances and large number (229) of federally-recognized tribes and 12 regional tribal corporations.

III. Lessons Learned: N/A

III. Best Practices:

- a. The ARRT's new *Guidelines for Coordination and Consultation with Federally-Recognized Tribes* was developed by evaluating all existing federal departmental and agency tribal engagement guidance for NRT/RRT agencies and synthesizing into a single durable, useful interagency operating guide. It could easily be exported to other RRTs. See www.alaskarrt.org for a copy.
- b. The ARRT uses a Biennial Work Plan (BWP), updated annually, to track and prioritize tasks. See www.alaskarrt.org for a copy of the current BWP.

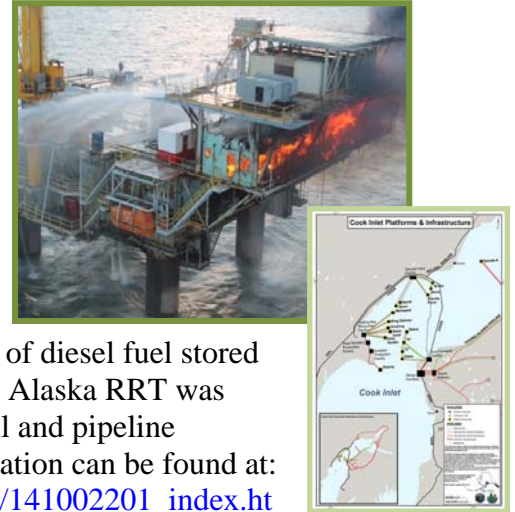


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I. MAJOR ACTIVITIES

A. Major/Noteworthy Response Activities:

Hilcorp Alaska Baker Natural Gas Platform Fire: On 02 October, 2014 a fire broke out on the Baker Natural Gas Platform located in Cook Inlet, Alaska. The platform is one of several in Cook Inlet. The fire was isolated to the berthing area and did not affect any operations. Four workers were onboard at the time of the fire. No injuries were reported and the crew was safely evacuated. Approximately 10,000 gallons of diesel fuel stored on board for daily operations was not involved in the fire. The Alaska RRT was activated for informational purposes only. The natural gas well and pipeline infrastructure were secured as a precaution. Additional information can be found at: http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/perp/response/sum_fy15/141002201/141002201_index.htm



NANA Diesel Fuel Tank Truck Rollover: On 07 June, 2014, a NANA Oilfield Services, Inc. (NOSI) tractor-trailer hauling fuel from Fairbanks to the North Slope left the highway and rolled over, damaging the tank trailer. The tanker spilled 2,561 gallons of the 9,700 gallons being carried. A portion of the spill area was located in the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company (APSC) Trans Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) right of way. The right of way contains a high-pressure natural gas line that fuels North Slope pump stations which was exposed during the removal of the contaminated soil. No damage occurred to the gas line. The spill flowed roughly 300 yards across gently sloping tundra to a small stream which required more than 750,000 gallons of water to flush fuel from the tundra. Over the course of the response, responders recovered more than 565 bags of oiled absorbents. Additional information can be found at: http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/perp/response/sum_fy14/140607301/140607301_index.htm





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Norton Sound Hospital Fuel Tank Overfill: On 20 June, 2014, approximately 2,528 gallons of home heating oil was discharged during routine transfer operations between two storage tanks at the Norton Sound Regional Hospital (NSHC). The Dept of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) was the OSC for the response. The spill was caused by a valve actuator failure on tank # 2. The discharged fuel migrated under the Hospital buildings where patients and staff could smell the fuel vapors. The hospital contracted Bering Straits Native Corporation (BSNC) to monitor vapor levels in the hospital and remove contaminated soil. Over 400 cubic yards of contaminated soil was removed. No patients had to be evacuated as a result of the spill. Additional information can be found at:

http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/perp/response/sum_fy14/140620301/140620301_index.htm



BP Exploration (Alaska) Inc. (BPXA), H-08 Flowline Three-Phase Liquid Release: On April 28, 2014, a 6 inch dead leg line off the H-08 well ruptured, releasing a large amount of natural gas and produced water containing crude oil. The line discharge uncontrolled for several hours before it could be secured. Approximately 33 acres of snow-covered tundra and two acres of gravel pad were sprayed with an oily mist to varying degrees of coverage. Cleanup lasted more than one week. Cleanup personnel worked on clearing oil-contaminated snow from the tundra and removing oil that coated areas on well housing and piping on H Pad.

Approximately 1,600 cubic yards of contaminated snow were removed and transported to BP's grind & inject facility for final disposal. Recovered melt-water and assorted fluids 1,788 barrels, which were taken to Pad 3 for injection disposal. Due to the fine misting of the oil, an exact quantity of oil discharged could not be determined. The of the rupture is unknown. Additional information can be at:

http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/perp/response/sum_fy14/140428301/140428301_index.htm



Other Response Activities: Overall, 8 additional response summaries were completed and posted on the State of Alaska website for other significant spills. A complete list of all response activities is online at ADECs website:

http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/perp/response/sr_active.htm (under Active Response and FY14/15).



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B. Alaska RRT Meetings/Incident Specific Activation:

Meeting: Tri-Annual ARRT Public Session – January 2014 in Anchorage: EPA-coordinated. Ten Alaska RRT member agencies attended. Forty-four participants signed in. The meeting was held in conjunction with the Aleutian Island Risk Assessment and the Aleutian Island Area committee mtgs. Meeting summaries can be viewed on line at the ARRT website: <http://alaskarrt.org/files/final%20mtg%20notes.pdf> (Summary notes).

Meeting: Tri-Annual ARRT Public Session – May 2014 in Fairbanks: EPA coordinated. Six Alaska RRT member agencies attended. Thirty-three participants signed in. The meeting was held in conjunction with the Interior Area committee meeting. Meeting summaries can be viewed on line at the ARRT website: <http://alaskarrt.org/files/final%20summary.pdf> (Summary notes).

Meeting: Tri-Annual ARRT Public Session – October 28, 2014 in Valdez: USCG coordinated. Nine Alaska RRT member agencies attended. Twenty-seven persons signed in. The meeting was held in conjunction with the Prince William Sound Area committee meeting. Meeting summaries can be viewed on line at the ARRT website: <http://alaskarrt.org/Documents.aspx?f=11368> (Summary notes).

Activation: The Alaska RRT was activated twice in CY 2014 for informational purposes. The first was for the Baker offshore platform fire in Cook Inlet. The second was for the disabled Russian Freighter M/V SIMUSHIR - IVO Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Island) in Canadian waters. The Alaska RRT was also activated twice during two major exercises. The first was Alaska Shield [FEMA led Capstone National Level Exercise (NLE)] 2014 and the second was the annual TAPS tanker exercise “Sea River Tanker drill” held in Prince William Sound.



C. Working Group Updates:

Science and Technology Committee (STC): The Science and Technology Committee (STC) held several meetings. The STC completed the revision of the STC charter dated 28March2014. A copy is available at: <http://alaskarrt.org/Documents.aspx?f=9>

Wildlife Protection Committee: The Wildlife Protection Committee did not meet this year.

Cultural and Historic Properties Committee: The Cultural and Historical Properties Committee did not meet this year.



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Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 Compliance Task Force: The ESA Workgroup met several times to review progress and coordinate work on the Biological Assessment (BA). The BA has been forwarded to the Services, which are preparing their respective Biological Opinions. Once the consultation with the Action Agencies is completed, the ARRT will be briefed. This is expected to occur sometime in 2015.

Dispersant Task Force: This five-party group, in compliance with NCP Section 300.910(b), completed a draft final new *ARRT Dispersant Use Plan for Alaska* (including Preauthorization Plan). The proposed policy was included for formal consultation in the BA mentioned above. After follow-on action resulting from consultation with the Services, public comments (collected via the State-mandated process) and the results of consultation with federally recognized tribes will be adjudicated and published. The proposed policy will then be finalized and signed (with full implementation 24 months hence). Target is Fall 2015.

The Tribal Engagement Policy Task Force: The Tribal Engagement Policy Task Force completed the *Alaska Regional Response Team (ARRT) Guidelines for Coordination & Consultation with Federally-Recognized Tribes* which has been posted on the ARRT public website at: <http://alaskarrt.org/files/ARRT%20Tribal%20Guidance%20Final%204-15-14.pdf>.

II. GENERAL PREPAREDNESS AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING

A. Training: USCG District Response Advisory Team (DRAT) conducted 18 First Responder Operations Level HAZWOPER training classes for over 276 USCG personnel and qualified 3 new USCG HAZWOPER Instructors.

DRAT coordinated 8 ICS classes - 6 in Juneau, one each in Valdez and Kodiak, AK. ICS classes coordinated were; ICS-300 (3), ICS-339 (1), ICS-400 (2), and ICS-320 (2).

B. Exercises/Workshops:

North Slope Mutual Aid Drill 23 April 2014: This year's drill was led by the EPA. The scenario this year involved a tanker truck roll over at Mile Post 24.8 on the Badami tundra winter ice road east of No Name River between E Mikkelsen Airstrip and the Badami Sales Oil Export Pipeline. Approximately 250 barrels (10,500 gallons) of ultra-low sulfur diesel (USLD) was discharged onto the roadway and surrounding tundra. Two USCG Sector Anchorage personnel role-played EPA representatives at the spill site while the EPA stood up a unified command in Anchorage.

Annual TAPS TANKER Exercise in Prince William Sound: SeaRiver Maritime Inc. (SRM) hosted the annual exercise in Oct 2014. An estimated





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250 people participated. The ARRT conducted an incident specific activation exercise to discuss the possible use of dispersants and as part of the drill.

National Preparedness for Response Exercise Program (PREP) Exercises:

- One Government-led PREP full scale exercise occurred in the Western Alaska FOSC zone. The ARRT did not participate in this exercise.
- PREP Government Initiated Unannounced Drills (GIUs). USCG COTPs initiated: four (4) of ten (10) required annual unannounced drills. 0 of 4 at Sector Anchorage, 4 of 4 at Sector Juneau and 0 of 2 at MSU Valdez. EPA and BSEE did not initiate any unannounced drills in the Alaska Region.



- PREP Equipment Deployment Exercises: Equipment deployments occurred throughout Alaska. Types are listed below:

- Aerial Dispersant Delivery System (ADDS) training exercises. The USCG Air Station Kodiak air crews participated in an ADDS deployment this year in Kodiak. Participants included USCG and Alyeska SERVS.
- Spilled Oil Recovery System (SORS) training exercises. Four (4) SORS training exercises occurred in Sitka, Homer, Cordova and Kodiak, AK.
- Vessel of Opportunity Skimming System (VOSS) training exercise: One (1) VOSS training exercise was conducted in Ketchikan, AK.
- Pre-Staged Oil Spill Response Equipment deployments. One (1) USCG led equipment deployment exercise occurred in Sitka, AK, one of the eighteen (18) pre-staged sites throughout Alaska.
- USCGD17 DRAT Remote equipment sites visited. The USCGD17 DRAT owns 51 containers containing near shore boom and oil spill response equipment in 18 cities for use by community first responders. 45 containers in 14 cities were visited by USCG members. At each site routine maintenance and inventory of all contents was conducted. Training with community responders was conducted in Sitka AK this year.





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C. Federal, State, and Local Planning and Coordination Efforts:

Alaska Subarea Contingency Plans (SCPs): ADEC, Coast Guard and EPA coordinated. Stated goal: complete two (2) of ten (10) Subarea Contingency Plan (SCP) updates every year.

No SCPs were completed or published in 2014. The Interior Subarea Committee continued to work on Change Two to the Interior SCP and hopes to have it completed in 2015. The Prince William Sound Subarea Committee continued work on Change Three to the PWS SCP and expects to publish this plan update in 2015. The Aleutians Subarea Committee continued working on Change Three to the Aleutians SCP and hopes to have this plan published in 2015. All SCPs can be seen at: <http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/perp/plan.htm>

III. PERSONNEL CHANGES/ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

New Rep	Organization	Date	Departed Rep
CAPT Todd Styrwold	USCG	06-01-2014	CDR Paul 'Bo' Stocklin
Eric Bleakney	DOD	10-1-2014	None
Matt Odum	USCG-STC Rep	10-1-2014	Mark Wagner
Catherine Berg	NOAA-SSC	11-10-2014	John Whitney
Philip Johnson	DOI	10-01-2014	Pamela Bergmann
Laurie Dubriel	DOJ	12-01-2014	Justin Smith
Patricia Bower (ADEC Coordinator)	ADEC	12-10-2014	None

IV. ISSUES OR OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS REQUIRING NRT ATTENTION

Issue: ARRT letter to NRT dated September 10, 2009 requesting the NRT re-evaluate the 1995 guidance containing recommended limits for short term exposure to particulate matter (PM) and potential impacts to safe distances in guidance for *in situ burning* as an alternative countermeasure. Still pends.