



Alaska RRT Biennial Work Plan

September 2024-September 2026

Updated: September 11, 2024

Scope, Structure, and Responsibilities

This is the biennial work plan set forth in Article VII of the Alaska RRT Charter. It outlines planned work over the two-year period for the Alaska Regional Response Team (RRT) and its work groups and offers priorities for consideration by On-Scene Coordinators (OSC) and Area Committees, and area planning managers. This is a living document subject to the direction of the Co-chairs, ADEC, with input from the other Alaska RRT members, and the needs of the OSCs.

Article III of the Alaska RRT Charter describes the Alaska RRT's responsibilities as articulated in the National Contingency Plan (NCP) at section 300.115. Goals expressed herein support those overall responsibilities, but account for the unique demands and complexities of the Alaska region. Priorities are intended to advance, in whole or part the goals, but may also reflect more immediate needs or requirements. Tasks are specific, measurable, time-based initiatives usually assigned to work groups (i.e., committees and task forces), which advance Priorities.

Goals

Goals represent a best-case long-term shared vision – spanning beyond two years but are subject to external factors and resource and personnel availability. The goals are not prioritized. The Alaska RRT shall:

- Continuously improve the Federal and State capabilities and Contingency Plans to respond to an oil or hazardous substance incident.
- Enhance area planning and spill preparedness to keep pace with expanding transportation and oil exploration and production activities throughout remote Alaska, with emphasis on new development areas and emerging threats.
- Enhance readiness of Alaska RRT members to support OSCs when called upon to respond to an incident.
- Provide a forum to exchange information on spill response technologies and procedures.
- Prioritize and coordinate the Alaska RRT's combined resources and funding for optimum outcomes.
- Support Area Committees and encourage participation by federally recognized tribes, industry, Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and the public.
- Enhance outreach to and seek participation by federally recognized tribes in spill preparedness and response planning, including membership in the Alaska RRT and area committees.
- Seek involvement of other stakeholders and all interested parties in spill preparedness and response planning, with an emphasis in encouraging involvement with the State Emergency Response Commission, Local Emergency Planning Committees/Districts, and Statewide Hazardous Materials Response Team.

- Provide guidance and support to the OSCs on spill response and area planning. The primary emphasis will be on the significant increased projections for shipping through the Bering Strait, circumpolar route, Great Circle Route, and Dixon Entrance in southeast Alaska.
- Provide guidance and information to Alaska OSCs and agency planners regarding lessons learned from major marine and inland discharges and releases in the Continental United States that may have relevance to spill planning in Alaska.
- Provide guidance and information on international developments in spill preparedness and response, federal rulemakings, Federal research and development efforts and topics relevant to Alaska from major spill conferences. Multilateral agreements under development for the Arctic as well as bilateral agreements will be reported with consideration of how they affect operations in Alaska.
- Identify best practices and policies from other regions and identify features or information that would be useful for improving area planning in Alaska.
- Provide information and guidance to Area Committees and/or OSCs on emerging technologies, industry preparedness and new initiatives, and other state or federal initiatives (e.g., vessel of opportunity programs and 24-hour cleanup capability).
- Advocate for improvements in the national response system via the U.S. National Response Team (NRT) and report on developing initiatives, Spills of National Significance (SONS) guideline updates, changes proposed for the National Response Framework, lessons learned from other key national incidents, procedures for retention of state response experts to fill Incident Command System (ICS) positions in major responses, and others.
- Encourage Alaska RRT members, OSCs, area committee participants, and other responders to attend relevant training, as appropriate.

Priorities

Priorities advance, in whole or in part, the stated Goals. They may also reflect more immediate needs or requirements. Priorities for the next two-year period are as follows.

- Continue to act as a resource for Area Committees;
- Implement the Conservation Recommendations from the NMFS and USFWS Biological Opinions, to the extent practicable, and encourage Alaska RRT member agencies to work collaboratively to implement the Reasonable and Prudent Measures (RPM), with Terms and Conditions, from the NMFS ESA Biological Opinion;
- Utilize web-based technologies (i.e., MS Teams, Zoom.gov, WebEx) to enhance the experience for call-in participants at Alaska RRT meetings;
- Ensure continued cooperation between the three RCP signatory agencies, for training, exercises, and planning activities;
- Through the Science and Technology Committee (STC), participate in the NRT STC, interpret new science, spill response issues, response lessons learned (related to science and technology) and the findings of the national-level work groups and communicate key messages for Area Committees and OSCs.
- Recommend to Area Committees adoption and/or incorporation of lessons learned and improvement plans. Through the Statewide Planning Committee (SPC), work with Area

Committees to incorporate lessons learned and strive for continuous improvement of the Regional and Area Contingency Plans.

- Review and maintain the 2022 Regional Contingency Plan
- Review list of MOUs in RCP Part IV, update the list as necessary and eliminate unneeded or obsolete MOUs.
- Continue to track the progress of the OSRI project regarding food safety, with consideration for eventual support of the development of Food Safety Guidelines

Table 1: Summary of Alaska RRT Committee Tasks

Task	Committee	Schedule
Review new Subpart J updates as final rules are issued and ensure our plans are consistent with any changes	Science and Technology Committee	New rules in May 2023; task on hold until new guidance is available.
Review and modify <i>Alaska Implementation Guidelines for Federal On-Scene Coordinators (Guidelines) for the Programmatic Agreement on Protection of Historic Properties during Emergency Response under the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan</i>	Alaska RRT Cultural Resources Committee	Plan dated January 2002. Committee subgroups currently meeting and working on select content updates. Introduction and Regulation Subgroup work almost complete.
Content update of the Wildlife Protection Guidelines for Oil Spill Response in Alaska.	Alaska RRT Wildlife Protection Committee	Administrative updated completed September 2023: Version 2020.2. Work will begin on select content additions in Winter 2024/2025.
Review and revise the Wildlife Protection Guidelines: Pribilof Islands	Pribilof Island Working Group (working group of the Wildlife Protection Committee)	Completed in April 2023.
Review, administrative update, and begin content revision of the Sensitive Areas Compendium	Sensitive Areas Working Group (working group of the Wildlife Protection Committee)	Work on hold/TBD. Statewide Planning Committee looking at resources.
Review and update the Alaska RRT Cultural Resources Committee Charter	Alaska RRT Cultural Resources Committee	Done. Signed October 2022.
Revision to Implementation Guidelines to the Programmatic Agreement	Alaska RRT Cultural Resources Committee	Initiated in 2023 and committee continues to meet.
Regional Stakeholder Committee Job Aide -Liaison Officer Job Aid -Committee Member Job Aid	RSC Task Force	LOFR Job Aid and Committee Member Job Aid completed in 2024, under review by SOSCs.
Tribal Engagement Guidance, Job Aid, etc.	Tribal Task Force	Initiated in January 2024, working on updates to ARRT Tribal Guidance.

Plan Status

A summary of the status of the Regional and Area Contingency Plans is provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Plan Status Summary

Plan	Committee Tasked with Plan Maintenance	Plan Schedule
Regional Contingency Plan	Alaska RRT Statewide Planning Committee	Current Version (2) signed February 2022. Review and Change 1, possibly Change 2 modification in 2025.
Alaska Inland Area Contingency Plan	Alaska Inland Area Committee	Current Version signed March 2021. Version 2020.2 out for public comment in June – August 2024.
Arctic and Western Area Contingency Plan	Arctic and Western Alaska Area Committee	Current Version, 2020.2, January 2023. Next review/modification 2025.
Prince William Sound Area Contingency Plan	Prince William Sound Area Committee	Current Version, 2020.2, January 2023. Next review/modification 2025.
Southeast Alaska Area Contingency Plan	Southeast Alaska Area Committee	Current Version, 2021.0, signed March 2021. Next review/modification 2025.
Note: The RCP and the ACPs are subject to an annual review, revisions will be made as determined appropriate by the Alaska RRT or Area Committees. Substantial changes to plan content may be subject to a state required public review process.		

Scheduled Meetings

To the extent practicable, the Standing Alaska RRT will hold a one-day meeting two times per year in a hybrid meeting format of in-person and virtual attendance. The Standing Alaska RRT may be held in conjunction with an Area Committee or other planning/preparedness meetings according to the following schedule/location as funds allow:

Meeting	Location & Date
Spring 2025	March 5-6, 2025 (Anchorage, AK and Virtual)
Fall 2025	September 10-11, 2025 (Anchorage, AK and Virtual)
Spring 2026	March 4-5, 2026 (Anchorage, AK and Virtual)
Fall 2026	September 9-10, 2026 (Anchorage, AK and Virtual)

Exercises

The goal of Alaska RRT exercises or participation in exercises is to test policies and procedures, determine where there are gaps, and implement corrective actions to close those gaps.

Internal. As practicable, the Alaska RRT will initiate an annual activation, consultation, or notification exercise. Exercise results will be documented. EPA and USCG will alternate as the lead for these exercises and will coordinate with ADEC in developing the exercise.

External. As practicable, the Alaska RRT will participate in at least one exercise sponsored by Federal agency, State agency, or industry. FOSCs and SOSCs should evaluate their exercise schedules and make recommendations for exercises that are suitable for Alaska RRT participation. For example, FOSCs and SOSCs may identify Alaska RRT notification or activation as an exercise objective during the exercise design process.

Alaska RRT Notification Contacts will be updated following every exercise.

Annual Report

The Alaska RRT, facilitated by the Alaska RRT USCG Coordinator, shall produce an Annual Report and submit it to the NRT.

Tasks

The Statewide Planning Committee will maintain an Action Tracker, the “Alaska RRT Project Tasks” spreadsheet. This will be reviewed monthly by the Co-Chairs, ADEC and Coordinators.