



U.S. National Response Team

RRT Best Practices: 2006
Calendar Year 2005

RRT Use During Hurricane Katrina / Rita Response	
Immediately following the flooding of New Orleans, most member agencies of the RRT VI were activated by FEMA under the National Response Plan. EPA and USCG, co-leading the ESF-10 element, initiated a series of RRT conference calls in the first few weeks of the response. Status reports on hazardous materials responses, as well as oil spill responses, were covered. Significant interest was given to the Murphy Oil spill and response in St. Bernard Parish. DOI provided technical assistance on all of these issues and subsequently obtained special appropriations to address the container issue on DOI lands.	
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Outreach during Transportation Community Awareness and Emergency Response (TRANSCAER) Workshops / Whistle Stop Tours	
TRANSCAER is a voluntary outreach effort that focuses on preparation for and response to possible hazardous material transportation incidents for local communities. TRANSCAER members consist of representatives from the transportation industry, distributors, chemical manufacturing facilities, and emergency response industry, as well as the government. EPA and State members of the RRT participated in numerous workshops throughout the State of Texas in 2005, providing information on EPA's emergency response program, local government reimbursement program, and RRT activities.	
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Fact Sheet for Local Responders on Chemical Countermeasures for Spills	
EPA recognizes the major role of local government responders as the first line of defense for mitigating threats to public health and the environment from spills of oil and hazardous substances. In recognition of this role, EPA and other RRT member agencies developed a fact sheet for local responders on how and when to appropriately use chemical countermeasures to spills. This fact sheet was distributed to all LEPCs within Region 6, as well as all major / medium fire departments. Additionally, presentations on countermeasure use has been conducted at the last 3 Hotzone conferences, sponsored by RRT member agencies.	
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Combined RRT/Area Committee Meeting	
For several years now, Region I has held its fall RRT meeting following a two-day seminar sponsored by the ME/NH Area Committee. This year's seminar was entitled, "Preparing for and Responding to a Northern New England Hurricane – a Port Perspective" and focused on raising awareness in the response community to port vulnerabilities to natural disasters and examining current preparedness gaps at the federal, state, local, and private industry level. Holding the Area Committee's annual oil spill seminar with the fall RRT meeting has proved to be a best practice, as many of the seminar participants and RRT I members play dual prevention and response roles in the two organizations. Travel times and expenses and logistical arrangements are minimized, and aligning the two events facilitates increased levels of interaction between the seminar's target audience (which includes operational port sector components) and higher level state and federal government planners within the RRT community.	
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Developed a Federal/State Program to Deal With Unattended or Derelict Vessel Problems	
The USCG Sector Seattle embarked on Operation Trash Compactor with the assistance from the Washington Department of Natural Resources and the Washington Department of Ecology to prioritize and address abandoned or neglected vessels that pose threats of release of oil to the marine waters of Washington State. The purpose of the program is to list and catalogue all abandoned or derelict vessels according to highest risk of pollution either through onboard oil or hazardous materials or by an illegal dump site potential. A risk matrix is maintained and through coordination with partner agencies, the oil or hazardous materials with the greatest risk are removed. Routine patrols constantly monitor vessel status and to add vessels as necessary.	
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Keywords: Derelict vessels	

Regional Exercises and Local PREPs	
When NOAA sponsored a major regional exercise in San Francisco as part of its SAFE SEAS series the 11 th Coast Guard District encouraged all concerned to do the extra work to make this exercise count as an oil spill PREP exercise and Sector San Fran rose to the challenge. The result was a much more realistic exercise and a broader mix of responding agencies than would have been possible within either pre-existing exercise format. We recommend that future SAFE SEAS exercises be combined with PREPs, as appropriate.	
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Keywords: SAFE SEAS, PREP	



Enhanced Stakeholder Input on Geographic Response Plans by Improvements to Website and Real-time Feedback on Status of Various Response Strategies	
Developed a web-based tool to collect and share information on suggested changes to Geographic Response Plans. Uses a public web site interfaced with a private password protected web site to manage data and develop reports which can be accessed by spill response contractors to ensure they have the most up-to-date information possible on oil spill response strategies.	
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Keywords: Geographic Response Plans, stakeholder input,	

Developed Database for Culturally Sensitive Area Notification in Washington State	
In an effort to increase the protection of culturally significant resources during emergency response activities, the US Department of the Interior worked with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in Washington State and the Washington Department of Ecology to develop a database of State and tribal contacts for notification of oil spills that may potentially impact sensitive areas of cultural significance because some of these sites are too sensitive to have their locations identified in publicly available documents. This effort has increased awareness of these issues and has improved the federal government's overall relationship with tribes in the Pacific Northwest.	
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Keywords: Culturally sensitive areas, historic properties, SHPO	