

Appendix K. Environmental Unit (ENV Unit) / Special Technical Advisors

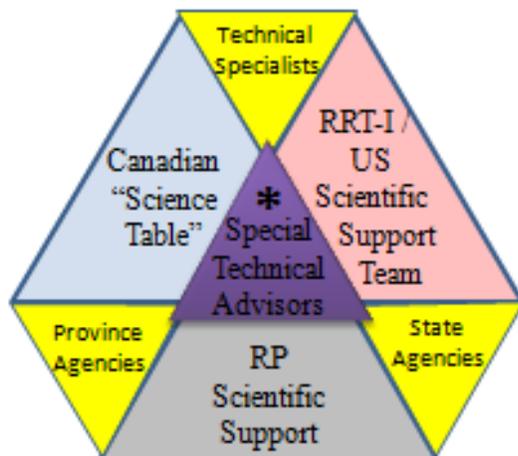
When CANUSLANT is activated for an environmental incident, the **Environmental Unit** (ENV Unit) works within the Planning Section to support Incident Command (IC)/Unified Command (UC) at the Incident Command Post (ICP) and is responsible for environmental matters associated with the response. These environmental matters include answers to questions such as these specific to an incident:

- What was spilled? Determine magnitude, extent and chemical hazards.
- Where was it spilled? Identify economic and natural resources at risk.
- Where will it go? Model spill trajectory, chemical fate, and develop response strategies.
- What will it hurt? Establish environmental protection priorities, necessary response actions, consultations with natural resource trustees and historic preservation officers.
- What can be done? Plans for monitoring, surveillance, alternate technologies, response measures, cleanup endpoints, waste disposal, fishery closure/opening, and SCAT assessments.

Environmental Unit within a Single ICP

Typically, only one ICP is established initially and the ENV Unit is comprised of co-located environmental agency representatives from the two countries, the Responsible Party (RP) and other subject matter experts. The ENV Unit is formed to address the challenges of coordinating scientific environmental and regulatory advice during an international spill incident. The **Environmental Unit Leader** (ENVL) should be from a public environmental or natural resource management agency to ensure compliance with applicable environmental laws, regulations, and ordinances.

The US NOAA Scientific Support Coordinator (NOAA SSC) and Environment Canada National Environmental Emergencies Centre (NEEC) Environmental Emergencies Officer typically play a lead role within the ENV Unit but often do not fill the role of ENVL. Instead, they are responsible to coordinate the gathering of scientific environmental and regulatory information specific to the response and facilitate the ENV Unit achieving consensus on advice that reflects input from all impacted stakeholders. They function as **Special Technical Advisors** within the Planning Section and aid the response because they lead representatives of the ENV Unit toward consensus and may brief the IC/UC and maintain their principal role as science advisor to Federal On-Scene Coordinator in the US (FOSC) or Federal Monitoring Officer/On-Scene Commander in Canada (FMO/OSC).



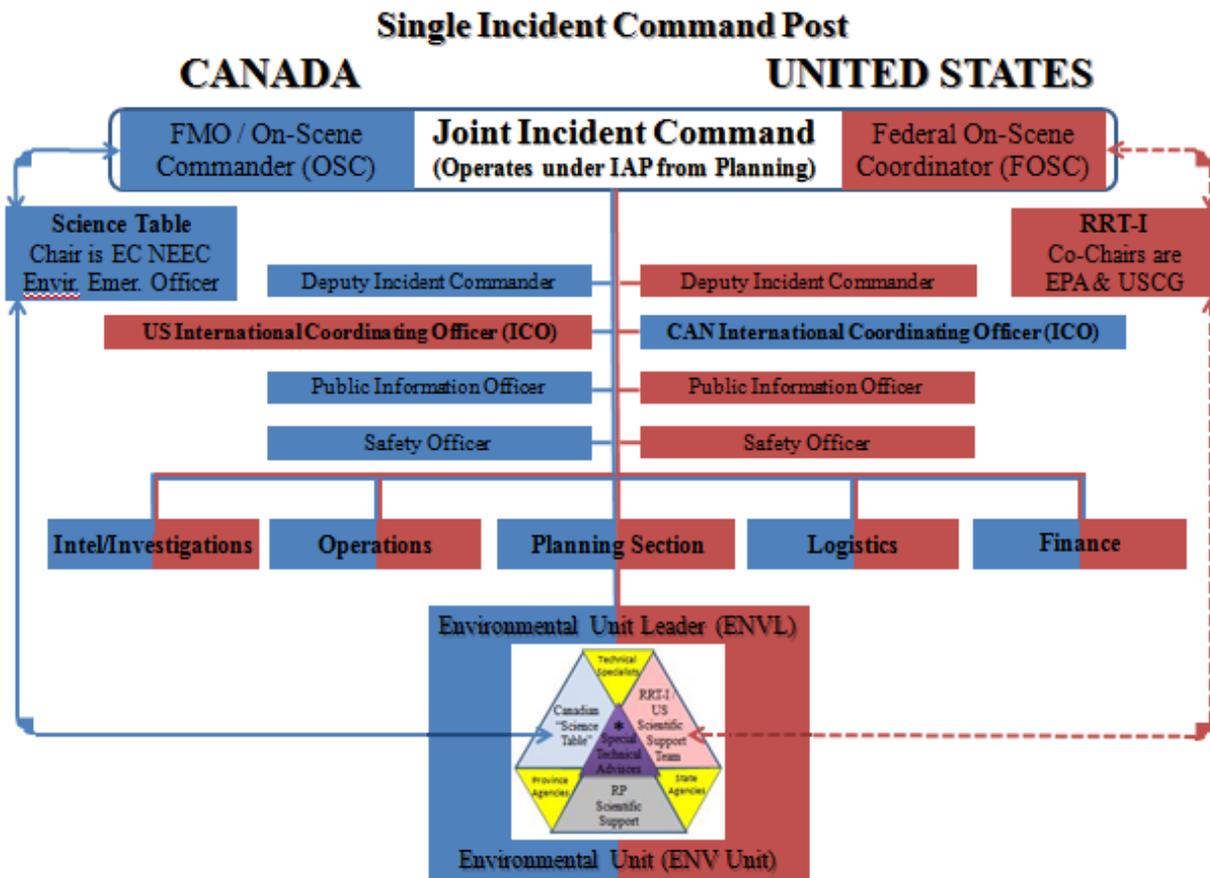
HIGHLIGHT BOX:

Special Technical Advisors lead ENV Unit(s) to work toward consensus on environmental matters that reflects input from all impacted stakeholders if possible.

Consensus advice is channeled through the Planning Section so it becomes part of the joint decision process at the ICP(s).

The NEEC Environmental Emergencies Officer can convene an Environmental Emergencies Science Table (Science Table) at the request of the Lead Canadian Agency coordinating an emergency response. The Science Table is an advisory body that gathers and coordinates the best available scientific environmental and regulatory information to identify environmental protection priorities for a given pollution incident. The Science Table supplies advice relevant to environmental concerns, priorities and strategies, thus enabling and optimizing the environmental response for Canada. The Environmental Emergencies mode of the Science Table could involve both on-site and off-site response and information gathering on affected natural resources, human, economic and physical use sensitivities. Finally, the NEEC Environmental Emergencies Officer plays a critical role in maintaining uninterrupted government chain-of-command from Canadian environmental agencies to the FMO/OSC.

Similarly in the US, the NOAA SSC has access to technical advisors within the NOAA Scientific Support Team, academia, Regional Response Team Region 1 (RRT-1) and other government advisory bodies, and non-governmental organizations. Input from these technical advisors and advisory bodies should be channeled through the ENV Unit at a respective ICP so it becomes part of the joint decision process and is considered before consensus advice is formed and sent to IC/UC and incorporated into environmental portions of the Incident Action Plan (IAP) for the next operational period. This step ensures that advice is properly vetted by the Planning Section Chief to the Operations Section Chief and Safety Officer during the Tactics Meeting, and is reviewed by the full Command and General staff during the Planning Meeting and is incorporated into the IAP.



Environmental Unit within Dual ICPs

As outlined in Section VI, there are times when a two ICP structure is merited. In these situations, representatives from the initial ENV Unit within a single ICP will split up into two ENV Units at two separate ICPs, or initially there may be two. The former is a preferred option initially so that close coordination between representatives on environmental matters specific to the incident can be established effectively in-person initially. Afterward if/when the ENV Unit splits into two, the communication and close coordination established initially can be maintained effectively.

There is need to closely coordinate efforts between both ENV Units across the border at dual ICPs. This is particularly true for environmental matters impacting the *International Response Zone (IRZ)* which is defined as the geographic area where protection and treatment decisions made in one country may impact the environmental resources of the other country. Coordination of environmental decisions affecting the IRZ requires that the Special Technical Advisors lead representatives of the ENV Unit within dual ICPs toward consensus advice for IC/UC approval and planning. The process can be coordinated by regular cross-border phone calls, teleconferences, email exchanges, and/or periodic face-to-face meetings. Environmental activities that affect individual countries outside the defined IRZ will not require substantial coordination between ENV Unit representatives of the two countries.

