

REGION II REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM 2009 ANNUAL REPORT
Period of Report: January 1, 2009– December 31, 2009

Mr. Mike Faulkner
National Response Team
USEPA Headquarters
OEM/ MC 5104A
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Mr. Faulkner:

As required by Section 300.115 of the National Contingency Plan, the Region II Regional Response Team Report is submitted for the period of January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2009.

I. MAJOR ACTIVITIES

A. MAJOR/NOTEWORTHY RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

o US AIR FLIGHT 1549 LANDS ON HUDSON RIVER NEW YORK

On January 15th 2009, A US Airways plane with 155 people on board ditched into a chilly Hudson River after striking at least one bird upon takeoff from New York's LaGuardia Airport. Sector New York responded and an Incident Response Team was mobilized along with Federal, State and Local agencies. Coast Guard FOSCR and Pollution Investigators were immediately on scene to ensure containment of 2,600 gallons of JP-5 fuel during salvage operations. Challenges included ice, low temperatures, strong currents, safety of personnel, evidence collection, and settling of the aircraft in the muddy bottom of the Hudson River. Aircraft was successfully salvaged 2 days later with no fuel spilled. A Pollution Case Study for this event is posted on the RRTII website under April 2009 Presentations.

o ABRACHEM CHEMICAL SITE; CLIFTON, NJ

On October 29th 2009, EPA received an NRC notification of a chemical release at Abrachem Chemical, a bulk chemical packaging facility that leased a building in Clifton, Passaic County, NJ. The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) was on-scene and requested EPA's presence. The company was found to be storing drums and bulk containers of known and unknown chemicals in seventeen intermodal shipping carriers (ISCs), stacked three tiers high (approx. 35 feet). Only five of the ISCs could be opened, and inside those it was observed that drums and bulk containers were staged behind tiers of empty poly drums, giving the impression that the ISCs were used for new drum storage. EPA observed that in the ISC where the release originated, at least one drum was leaking its contents onto a wooden pallet; strong chemical odors emanated from

the open door of the ISC and were also pervasive in the general area. The Operator of Abrachem and the Owner of the property were issued a Field Expedient Notice, and in response, the Operator stated he would initiate a removal action. When his efforts to respond proved to be inadequate, EPA sought voluntary access to initiate a response action. This access was denied on two occasions. On December 4th /2008, EPA issued a Unilateral Administrative Order (UAO) for access. The Operator refused to comply with the UAO, and EPA referred the matter to the Department of Justice for a legal remedy. On January 8th, 2009, a federal Magistrate issued an access warrant to EPA to initiate a response action at the Site.

Seven drums suspected of containing shock-sensitive peroxide were addressed on February 23rd 2009. An array of state, local, and federal agencies had preplanned a response strategy to be implemented when the drums were to be opened. The Clifton Fire Department (CFD) deployed its mobile command post, 10 pieces of fire apparatus, 30 firefighters, and foam tankers from the Passaic County OEM. EPA's ERT deployed a portable meteorological station to provide real-time met data, such as wind speed and direction. EPA PAD provided three people for Community Involvement, Press Relations, and Intergovernmental Relations. A high-hazard response team with Clean Harbors set up a remote drum opener apparatus. Each suspect drum was remotely opened and pH paper was used to test for acidity. At very low pH, peroxides won't form, and the test strips indicated very low pH, possibly 0. Clean Harbors then used peroxide test strips which tested negative, so the presumption was that the crystals on the drums were not peroxides. After conferring with the Clifton FD and OEM personnel, it was decided that the drums did not present an imminent danger of deflagration, and emergency response equipment and personnel were told to stand-down. Agencies involved in the response included: CFD, Clifton OEM, Clifton City Council, Passaic County Sheriff's Department, NJDEP, NJ Division of Fire Safety, NJ Attorney General's Office, NJ Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, EPA ERT, EPA PAD, EPA CID, Passaic County OEM, Town of Lyndhurst (Bergen County), and fire departments from Wayne, Totowa, Little Falls, West Paterson, Hawthorne, Passaic, and Nutley. Additional information on this site can be found at www.epaosc.org/abrachemchemical.

o M/T COIMBRA POSSIBLY LEAKING OIL

On October 5th, 2009- The East Hampton (NY) Star Newspaper reported a recreational diver coming to the surface covered with oil after wreck diving on a WWII era tanker. M/T COIMBRA had been torpedoed approx 30 miles off Long Island by a German Submarine during WWII. Historical report of up to 8000 gallons of oil may still be in starboard side tanks. Overflights by Air Station Cape Cod have detected sheens in the area, but efforts to-date to align a surface vessel for sheen collection in concert with aerial sheen sighting have been unsuccessful. Some samples taken off a recreational diver were not positively matched to past tar ball incidents due to too small sample size and poor sample quality. DOI has

deceased birds taken from a recent mystery spill in frozen storage to cross check. NOAA survey vessel Thomas Jefferson definitively located wreck and collected side scan sonar data.

B. RRT II MEETING SUMMARIES

SPRING 2009:

On April 7-8, 2009, RRT II convened in West Point, NY. The meeting presentations are located on-line at:

<http://www.rrt2.nrt.org/production/NRT/RRT2.nsf/AllPages/rrt2present.html>

and include:

- Presentation on Biofuels-Response Strategies, Transportation, Logistics and Human, Environmental Health Impacts
- Presentation on TWIC Requirements
- Presentation on USAIR Pollution Prevention and Salvage Case Study
- Presentation on Coastal Zone Environmental Response Doctrine
- OSC and Agency Reports

FALL 2009:

On October 28-29, RRT II convened in Tinton Falls, NJ. The following meeting topics are located on-line at:

<http://www.rrt2.nrt.org/production/NRT/RRT2.nsf/AllPages/rrt2present.html>

and included:

- New York/New Jersey Regional Response Team Limited Pre-Authorization Policy for Use of Solidifiers.
- TRI-RAM Diesel Fuel Spill Portland, CT
- OSC and Agency Reports
- V/FRP Removal Equipment Requirements and Alternative Technology Revisions
- National Park Service Spill Response Program/NPS Annex to ACPs
- DOE's Radiological Assistance Program
- National Hazardous Materials Fusion Center
- The fall meeting also included a field trip to OHMSETT to observe dispersant testing and demonstrations of emerging spill technologies and interaction with a visiting delegation from the Korean Coast Guard.

C. COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUP UPDATES

RRT II has received the respective ESA and EFH consultations from FWS and NOAA on the Limited Pre-Authorization Policy for Use of Solidifiers. The policy is currently under final review by DOI and USCG in preparation for signature.

II. GENERAL PREPAREDNESS AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING

A. TRAINING

- Incident Command System: First Coast Guard District continues to expand its Incident Command System (ICS) training initiative. ICS-300, and 400 training sessions were conducted district-wide for all senior personnel, middle managers.
- EPA Region II continues to provide ICS-300/400 training for regional personnel, as well as for colleagues from federal and state agencies. Several regional EPA staff also served as instructors during the August 2009 EPA ICS Academy in Baltimore, MD.

B. EXERCISES/WORKSHOPS

- Spill of National Significance (SONS)
On March 24th and 25th 2010, a Spill of National Significance Exercise (SONS) will be held in South Portland, Maine and involve numerous Federal, State and Local agencies as well as three Sectors within the First Coast Guard District Area of Responsibility (AOR). The Concept and Objectives Meeting, Initial and Middle Planning Conferences, Master Scenario Exercise List Sync (MSELS) were all held in 2009 for planning of SONS 2010. Workgroups continue to meet and weekly teleconferences are occurring at the time of this report
- EMPIRE 2009 RADIOLOGICAL EXERCISE
Empire 09 was a large-scale consequence management exercise with a Radiological Dispersal Device (RDD) scenario. The focus of the exercise was the Federal, State and Local coordination of the technical response. The scenario for the exercise was a terrorist detonation of two RDD's in Albany, NY. Each device contained a different type of radiological material which had both a proximate and dispersed impact. The effects within Albany were significant, and there was detectable radiation into Vermont and New Hampshire.

The exercise was broken up into different phases. Phase I, held during the week of May 11th, was a tabletop exercise, during which agency resources were identified and initial field tactics were developed. Phase II was the full-scale portion of the exercise and occurred during the week of June 1st. Picking up the scenario 48 hours into the incident, multiple local, state, and federal agencies participated in Albany and various locations in Vermont. Personnel and equipment were deployed to specified locations, a FRMAC was set up, and an Incident Command Structure was established. Real life media events were also held throughout the week.

Long-term response/removal issues were discussed during the Phase III Conference held during the week of June 15th. This phase was set at 45 days post RDD attack, and was a facilitated discussion involving key personnel from each agency. EPA played a critical role in this Phase due to the FRMAC transfer from DOE to EPA, as well as the many critical issues such as cleanup levels, long range monitoring plans, and waste disposal. Approximately 100 EPA participants from around the country attended this phase. Finally, an After-Action Report Conference was held during the week of August 3rd.

Preparedness for Response Exercise Program (PREP):

- PREP Quarterly Notification drills conducted by USCG Sectors.
- 15 Jun 2009 Sector Buffalo ACP FE
- 30 Jul 2009 Sector LIS PREP TTX
- 30 Jul 2009 Sector DELBAY AMSC WS
- 11 Dec 2009 Sector DELBAY PREP TTX

Vessel of Opportunity Skimming System (VOSS) and Spilled Oil Recovery System (SORS) Equipment Deployment Exercise:

- 02-04 Jun 09 CGC STURGEON BAY/VOSS/Bayonne, NJ

C. FEDERAL, STATE, and LOCAL PLANNING/COORDINATION EFFORTS

- Area Contingency Plan Updates: Coastal Area Contingency Plans (ACPs) are updated on a triennial basis one year following the triennial Preparedness for Response Exercise Program Area Exercise. Sector New York ACP updated April 2009, Sector LIS due June 2010.
- EPA's National Approach to Response (NAR) Preparedness Plan provides a framework within EPA to address overall Agency readiness for multiple simultaneous nationally significant events. Beginning in 2008, regional groups were tasked with development of Regional Plans (RPs) for five specific DHS scenarios: anthrax, radiological dispersion, blister agent, earthquake and hurricane. The purpose of the RPs was to allow regions to increase their emergency preparedness, provide a foundation for exercises, demonstrate existing resources and capabilities, and identify gaps. All EPA regions have been provided all five RPs, and have conducted a critical review to consider how those plans could potentially be used during a response in their respective regions. EPA Region II intends to share the RP scenarios and EPA resource capabilities with our federal and state counterparts through RRT II, and conduct follow-up activities to address identified gaps; clarify respective roles and responsibilities; and identify

potential resource needs based on state planning priorities and existing local, state and federal available resources.

III. PERSONNEL CHANGES/ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

Coast Guard:

- o RADM Joe Nimmich replaced RADM Dale Gabel as Commander First Coast Guard District.
- o CAPT Joe McGuinness replaced Capt Craig Gilbert.
- o CDR Wayne Clayborne has assumed RRT Co-Chair.

EPA: No Changes

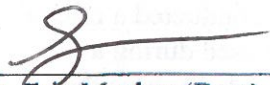
IV. ISSUES OR OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS REQUIRING NRT ATTENTION

Funding for State Participation: The National financial crisis has had significant impacts on state budgets, limiting their ability to participate in exercises and training events. States have been challenged to obtain funding and approval for out-of-state travel, and this situation is likely to worsen with further state budget cuts and furlough days. Some multi-state Area Committees are beginning to see these constraints impact state participation even at the smaller Area Level. While not a new issue, or one easily solved by the NRT, it appears likely to grow in importance and may require means for remote participation in Regional Response Team and Area Committee meetings. This is especially true in Regional Response Team II due to the geographic boundaries extending from Detroit to Delaware Bay east to New York.


V. FUTURE PLANS

Next RRT II Meeting: The spring Region II meeting is tentatively scheduled for May 26-27, 2010, at a New York State location to be determined.

VI. CONCURRENCE



Mr. Eric Mosher (Date) 1/15/10
EPA Co-Chair
U.S. EPA, Region II



CDR Wayne Clayborne 1/23/09 (Date)
U.S. Coast Guard Co-Chair
First Coast Guard District