

REGION 2 REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM 2010 ANNUAL REPORT
Period of Report: January 1, 2010– December 31, 2010

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, 2010 through December 31, 2010.

Summary: The Spring 2010 RRT II meeting was cancelled due to personnel deployed in support of Deepwater Horizon. A fall 2010 RRT II meeting was held in November 2010. At the height of the spill, there were over 600 Coast Guard and EPA personnel deployed in theatre. There was fear that a 'loop current' would eventually bring oil to Long Island, NY. This resulted in member agencies of RRT II participating in town hall meetings to quell any rumors and educate the public about this event. RRT II members also participated in several incident-specific conference calls throughout the year, several of which are detailed in this report.

I. MAJOR ACTIVITIES

A. MAJOR/NOTEWORTHY RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

M/V SICHEM DEFIANCE

At 0820 on 10 JAN 2010 – Sector New York VTS received a report of an explosion onboard the *M/V SICHEM DEFIANCE* during loading ops with the tank barge *FREEDOM* while anchored in Gravesend Bay. There were no personnel casualties or damage to hull integrity, and no known discharge occurred into the water from the initial incident. There was a report of product being blown into the air. FDNY tested the water for ethanol, and the air for vapors. The vessel was a 443' oil/chemical tanker flagged in the Marshall Islands with 18 persons onboard, 1,722,000 gallons of Denatured Ethanol, and 650,000 gallons of linear alkyl benzene. An Incident Management Team was put into place on 10JAN2010 with the USCG, NYS DEC, OEM, FDNY, NOAA, the ships' agent and contractors. The USCG Atlantic Strike Team arrived 11JAN2010 to provide air and transfer monitoring. USCG assets patrolled a 1000 yard VTS Safety Measure around the vessel. FDNY Marine was on scene for safety, and the RRT was notified and held an incident specific conference call on 16JAN2010. Rupture of the main deck resulted in a 3.5' x 1' hole and a 1' by 3" crack above the #3 starboard cargo, and several tanks (cargo and ballast) on the vessel were compromised. Personnel utilized internal cargo transfer pumps to move product to undamaged cargo holds, and stripped the damaged tanks as much as possible until

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leaching ceased. “Over-the-top” transfers were conducted to remove product from the ballast tanks, and cargo was transferred from the SICHEM DEFIANCE to two different vessels.

Issues presented

- Products on board threatening discharge
- The need to perform tank cleanings
- Number of times the tanks needed to be washed and stripped before allowing subsequent water to be discharged overboard.

Decisions

It was agreed upon to allow the vessel to resume discharges into the water after each ballast tank was washed three times. The water used to wash the tanks was transferred to “slop” tanks.

EPA REGION 2 RESPONSE TO HAITI

On January 12, 2010 at approximately 1730 hours, a magnitude 7.0 earthquake hit the Island Nation of Haiti. EPA Region II has ties to the government of Haiti through the Caribbean Regional Response Team and through US Coast Guard assets. Through SOUTCOM funding, EPA deployed 2 separate teams to support Joint Task Force (JTF) Haiti. EPA visited and assessed additional locations for possible use as debris staging and/or disposal areas. Recommendations were made on such matters as solid waste disposal, siting of public housing, contamination from mass grave sites, plastic container recycling, medical waste disposal, and inspections of the container port area for hazardous materials and oil spills. Continuing concerns are for construction debris landfills and disposal of solid and medical waste. Information on portable medical waste incinerators and refuse compactors (for plastic bottles) was also provided. EPA Region II demobilized in early March 2010, as the emergency response phase ended. Further EPA actions were overseen by EPA’s Office of International Affairs.

DEEPWATER HORIZON/MISSISSIPPI CANYON 252 OIL SPILL

RRT’s 1 and 2 conducted weekly joint conference calls during the DWHZ/MC252 oil spill, to discuss available regional resources and response capabilities. Discussion focused on allocation of government resources and OSRO preparedness.

At the height of the spill, over 600 Coast Guard personnel from the First Coast Guard District were deployed in response to this incident, representing 20% of the total available workforce. Throughout the incident, EPA Region II also deployed On-Scene Coordinators, Public Information Officers, and various Response Support Corps personnel to supplement EPA Region IV’s response activities.

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TUGBOAT WM. MCALLISTER, WESTPORT, LAKE CHAMPLAIN, NY

The *WM. McALLISTER*, a WWII era, 80-foot long vessel, sank in 150 feet of water in 1963, with as much as 14,000 gals of diesel fuel on board. The Lake Champlain Maritime Museum (LCMM) has identified persistent oil sheen on the surface over the wreck, and referred this site to EPA. The NPFC was contacted and opened a spill account for an assessment of the wreck and a feasibility study for off-loading any recoverable fuel. NAVY SUPSALV was contacted to review documentation and offer an opinion on whether the project is feasible, and the approximate costs. A meeting with LCMM staff, the OSC, and EPA's Archaeologist, was held in March 2010 in Ft. Edward, NY. Topics discussed included the viewing of a 1997 underwater ROV video of the wreck, access to the wreck, timing of operations, applicability of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the need for another ROV dive to obtain an updated view of the wreck. EPA's archaeologist began the NHPA process of devising a plan to document the wreck and activities associated with the underwater oil removal process.

An ROV survey of the wreck was successfully performed on June 15, 2010. Video observations showed the wreck to be in essentially the same good condition that was observed during the 1997 ROV survey. The two ROV dives on the wreck identified two fuel tank vents and two deck-mounted fuel tank filler ports on the starboard side. There are two tank vents on the port side but no filler ports were seen, which may indicate that both aft saddle tanks are manifolded to each other, as may be the two forward saddle tanks. The ROV was able to look underneath the overhanging upper deck over each of the four fuel tank vents, and there was no accumulation of oil in these areas, indicating no on-going release from the tank vents. The video also showed that there are no obstructions on or around the wreck, so it will be safe to send a diver to the wreck in Phase II to try to sample the fuel tanks to determine if there is any fuel still on-board.

The Coast Guard's Atlantic Strike Team (AST) has committed to support the Phase II assessment, and the US Navy's Mobile Division Salvage Unit Two (MOBDIVSALU TWO), based in Hampton VA, has offered to provide Navy divers and equipment to support this assessment as well. The OSC has sent a formal letter request for Navy assistance to the DOD Defense Coordinating Element. However, due to intemperate weather conditions making diving unsafe in the fall, Phase II was postponed until Spring 2011. EPA and its partners will use the intervening time to bring either the Navy dive team or a commercial dive team up to speed, review and award bids for supporting assets such as a work barge, push boat, shore crane etc, and devise a dive plan and a HASP.

INDIAN POINT NUCLEAR GENERATING FACILITY

At 6:39pm on 7 November 2010 in Buchanan, NY a transformer exploded and a fire erupted at a nuclear power plant located 24 miles north of New York City.

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This lead to an emergency shutdown of the one of the reactors. The alert was called off at 10:18pm and no radiation was reported released. Following clean-up of the contents of the transformer, Clean Harbors (OSRO) reported that 7,500 gallons of an oil/water product mixture was vacuumed into their vacuum truck. It was estimated that the 7,500 gallons constitutes a bulk of the dielectric fluid discharge. Due to the location of the transformer discharge, an adjacent turbine building basement is believed to have received the brunt of the dielectric fluid discharge. The sewer lines for this turbine basement lead into the plants industrial canal. On a normal basis any water which may or may not come into contact with the dielectric coolants is treated before discharge into the industrial canal, which leads to the Hudson River. The rate of flow from the industrial canal is estimated to discharge 2 million gallons of water per hour. Although many RRT agencies were put on alert, lessons learned include the facility being concerned primarily with the nuclear aspects of the incident and less with the response to the transformer. The initial NRC report that Entergy made was for 100 gallons, when in fact, the transformer had a capacity of 20,000 gallons. Another issue was that the initial incident notifications appeared to be through an informal network of radiological program staff, and not through the NRC to the pollution response network. Increased participation and communication by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in future RRT meetings and the utilization of incident-specific teleconferences to better communicate during future events were identified among the lessons learned.

B. RRT II MEETING SUMMARIES

SPRING 2010:

The Spring RRT II Meeting was cancelled due to the Deepwater Horizon Spill response.

FALL 2010:

On 16-17 November, RRT II convened in Morristown, NJ. Presentations and discussion topics included:

- USCG Atlantic Strike Team Capabilities
- Deepwater Horizon Incident Response Summary
- Deepwater Horizon In-situ Burn presentation
- Lake Champlain Spill Conference and ACP development
- Use of ERMA during Deepwater Horizon
- MSRC operations during Deepwater Horizon
- McAllister tug salvage operations in Lake Champlain
- Tri-State Bird operations during Deepwater Horizon
- Status review of RRT II dispersant and in-situ burn MOUs
- Sector NY Summary of events-2010

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The presentations from the meeting can be found on the RRT II website at:
<http://www.rrt2.nrt.org/production/NRT/RRT2.nsf/AllPages/rrt2present.html>

C. COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUP UPDATES

RRT II received additional information from DOI on the Limited Pre-Authorization Policy for Use of Solidifiers, to supplement the ESA Section 7 consultation from the Fish and Wildlife Service. The supplemental information addresses emergency response activities that require approval from National Park Superintendents, National Wildlife Refuge Managers, or Tribal Leaders; specifically regarding:

- Cleanup and Response Measures
- Ground Disturbance
- Aircraft Operations
- Access
- Land, Beach, or Waterway Closures
- Completion of Cleanup

A meeting with NOAA Fisheries to review and discuss their ESA Section 7 consultation response is scheduled for January 2011.

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 and 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.

B. EXERCISES/WORKSHOPS

LIBERTY RADIATION EXERCISE

In April 2010, EPA participated in LIBERTY RADEX, a DHS Tier 2 National Exercise Program Radiological exercise held in Philadelphia, focusing on response efforts approximately 30 days after the initial detonation of a Cesium 137 Dirty Bomb. LIBERTY RADEX was designed to exercise national capabilities to prepare and respond to the release of radiological materials, as it might occur during a terrorist attack where a Radiological Dispersal Device is detonated. Under the scenario, there were impacts to a wide area of southern New Jersey.

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Approximately a dozen EPA Region 2 OSCs and personnel participated in the exercise.

AGRICULTURAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

On 7 Oct 2010, USDA/APHIS and the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets held a workshop in Albany, NY to bring together state and federal departments/agencies who would be involved in agricultural emergencies. Participants included EPA, USDA, FDA, NYSDAM, NYSDEC and NYSDOH. As part of the workshop, two table-top scenarios were presented, addressing chemically contaminated feedstock incidents.

REDZONE EXERCISE, NORTHERN NJ

On 4 Nov 2010, FEMA, DOD, and NJOEM held the first in a series of exercises to be conducted over the next several months, simulating a radiological dispersal device at a major sports venue. EPA Region II and Sector NY personnel attended the exercise, and provided input on response resources available under the National Response System.

PREPAREDNESS FOR RESPONSE EXERCISE PROGRAM (PREP):

- PREP Quarterly Notification drills conducted by USCG Sectors.
- 15-16 Sept 2010, NY/NJ Industry led Preparedness for Response Exercise Program Table Top Exercise
- 14 Jan 2010, D5 first aid pollution response trailer Drill
- 31 Aug 2010, Sector Delaware Bay Booming Strategy Function Exercise
- 15 Dec 2010 Sector Long Island Sound Preparedness for Response Exercise

VESSEL OF OPPORTUNITY SKIMMING SYSTEM (VOSS)/SPILLED OIL RECOVERY SYSTEM (SORS) EQUIPMENT DEPLOYMENT EXERCISE:

- VOSS Demonstration during SONS2010 Portland Harbor, ME
- VOSS Equipment later deployed to DWHZ
- USCGC JUNIPER w/SORS deployed to DWHZ

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's ACP was updated in April 2009; Sector Long Island Sound was updated June 2010.

LAKE CHAMPLAIN AREA SPILL RESPONSE PLANNING

EPA Region 2 met with EPA Region I and USCG Sector Northern New England (SNNE) to discuss development of a strategy to engage in meaningful spill response planning in the Lake Champlain region. Lake Champlain is a planning concern, as it is an area which is host to industry, industrial commerce and

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population centers, within the inland zone OSC response jurisdiction, although remote to both Regions. Lake Champlain also is a boundary water between Regions 1 and 2 (VT and NY), as well as the international border with Canada. With the goal of initiating a planning process among federal, state, and local agencies, and appropriate private sector entities in the area, EPA and USCG held a Lake Champlain regional spill response symposium in September 2010. The symposium brought together the appropriate local audience to work together on solutions to spill response and preparedness issues, as well as serving as a barometer for the overall interest in the spill response community for continued planning.

III. PERSONNEL CHANGES/ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

Coast Guard:

- RADM Dan Neptun replaced RADM Joe Nimmich as Commander First Coast Guard District.
- RADM Nimmich retired this past summer.
- CAPT Tom Vitullo is the Coast Guard RRT1 and 2 Co-Chair and Chief of Response for D1.
- CAPT Linda Fagan is the Commander of Sector New York.
- CAPT Joe Vojvodich is the Commander of Sector Long Island Sound.

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 Buffalo to Delaware Bay east to New York.


V. FUTURE PLANS

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- Next RRT II Meeting: The spring Region II meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 27-28, 2011 in the state capital region of Albany, NY.

VI. CONCURRENCE



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

1 2/15/11



CAPT Thomas Vitullo
U.S. Coast Guard Co-Chair
First Coast Guard District

1 4/3/2011
(Date)