

ORRT Planning & Standing Meeting Minutes

American Samoa April 22, 2008

The following minutes are considered an overview of the Planning Committee & standing meeting and exchange of information. It is not verbatim.

Planning Committee:

A Planning Committee meeting was arranged for 10:00 AM in American Samoa at the Tafuna American Samoa Power Authority (ASPA) facility. The intent was to organize and coordinate any specific topics for the upcoming standing meeting and review future meeting dates in an effort to improve meeting efficiency and effectiveness.

A conference call was arranged for those without VTC capability. By approximately 10:35 AM, no other conference participants had called in, so the conference call was terminated. The participants on-site continued with the Planning Committee meeting and finalized the agenda:

Participants on-site:

Dan Meer, EPA
Lance Richman, EPA
LCDR Joe Zwack, USCG
Chris Curatilo, ERRG

Meeting items:

Lance Richman discussed the **July 22-24 Honolulu standing ORRT meeting** and questioned as to whether it should be held at the Coast Guard District Fourteen's (CGD14) Executive Conference Room or at the Clean Island Council. Joe Zwack noted there are a lot of different exercises and meetings going on at that time and he will determine availability at both locations. Joe also thought it might be beneficial to conduct the meeting similar to a 3 day workshop that will include one day of training for the ORRT members and other invited participants. Both Joe and Lance agreed that it should also include some time to "hot wash" the information that resulted from NOAA's (Ruth Yender's team) USS CHEHALIS Environmental Risk Assessment project. Dan Meer would like to see a "hot wash" on the Kilauea Volcano incident presented at the Honolulu standing ORRT meeting. He is not exactly sure who the best person would be to present that but would like to see someone at the appropriate level, and the ORRT should be the lead. It may be FEMA, DOH, Fire Chief, County, etc... but certainly one of the lead players. Dan felt that Keith Kawaoka may be the appropriate person. Dan Meer also would like to pose these questions to the speaker: "How does the State make a decision as to when their resources are exhausted and ask for Federal or additional State assets?" And, "Why are they coming directly to EPA for support on CERCLA as opposed to using the process already in place to receive help? Lance Richman will take the lead on developing the agenda for the Volcano "hot wash". Joe Zwack offered to assist, if needed. Lance Richman noted that NOAA would like to have a one day workshop for the CHEHALIS project experts, prior to the standing meeting, to assemble key players and compare & coordinate information.

Discussion between Joe Zwack, Lance Richman and Dan Meer concluded that November 7, 2008, would make the most sense to hold the **Guam standing ORRT meeting**. This will allow for travel and training for the ORRT. Dan also felt that we should create some specific Subcommittees for the ORRT. The primary one would be for training and it was felt that this would be a primary role of the ORRT and we should be aggressive with training in an effort to help prepare for emergencies.

During this time members for the standing meeting were arriving and the VTC was being activated and tested. The topic of a **training sub-committee** was being discussed and simultaneously being used to test the VTC connectivity between locations. Lance asked each location specifically who would like to participate with the training. Janice Heple agreed to assist, Mike Gawel agreed to assist, William Sili of American Samoa EPA agreed to assist.

The planning meeting was concluded and a call to order for the 11:00 AM ORRT standing meeting was announced.

ORRT Standing Meeting Overview:

The meeting was called to order at 11:04 AM and it was anticipated that the **Governor** of American Samoa would attend to provide some opening remarks. However, this Governor's office called and indicated the Governor was running late. Dan Meer proceeded with the meeting and provided opening remarks to the participants. In addition, the participants in American Samoa, EPA Region IX, Coast Guard D14, Guam, and Saipan were participating via VTC. NOAA's Ruth Yender participated via telephone call-in but did not have VTC capability.

Participants on site in American Samoa:

Lance Richman, US EPA
Frank Thomsen, USCG
Scott Mercurio, USCG
Joseph Zwack, USCG
Dan Meer, US EPA
Tusipasi Suianunoa TEMCO/ ASDHS
CDR Brad Rea US PHS/AS-EPA
Carl Goldstein US EPA R9 PIO
Faamao Asalele, AS EPA
William Sili, AS EPA
Chris Curatilo, ERRG

Participants via CG D14 Honolulu VTC:

Richard Scott Mitchem, DHS, Protective Security Advisor
LCDR Jose Herrador, USCG Sector Honolulu

Participants via EPA EOC San Francisco VTC:

Matthew Bradley, FEMA
Janis Heple, UC Davis

Susan Muza, HHS-ATSDR
Pat Port, DOI
Ned Black, US EPA Ecologist
Chris Snyder, USCG PST
Aram Glasband, EPA Contractor

Participants via Guam VTC:

Hassan Rossell, USCG Sector Guam
Mike Gawel, Guam EPA (Planner)

Participants via Saipan VTC:

Ted Untalan, CNMI EMO (Acting Director)

Dan Meer provided **updates on the Volcano** and concerns about emissions. Through air monitoring and particulates monitoring on Hawaii (the Big Island), there has been a 10- fold increase in particulates and concern about population impacts. Response personnel were scheduled to demobilize Friday, April 25, 2008, but it may take more time. Dan reminded everyone that most information is either already posted or will be posted on the ORRT website. The NRT co-chairs meeting is coming up and will be posted on the website.

Joe Zwack asked if everyone had a copy of the **2007 annual ORRT report** and if not, it can be downloaded from the website.

An **ORRT Planning Committee** was officially created to meet in advance of each standing meeting to review the topics and schedule. Additionally, this Planning Committee will convene each January to set the slate for the upcoming year. Lance Richman noted that a Planning Committee met earlier this year (as a test) to review the schedule of meetings throughout the year and coordinate the meetings with events going on at each location, as much as possible.

Lance Richman provided the **scheduled dates for meetings for the rest of the year** to the group. July 22-24 is scheduled for Honolulu, and will consist of a workshop focusing on the risks posed by USS CHEHALIS, the standing meeting, training, and a “hot wash” on the Kilauea volcano response. The date for the Guam ORRT meeting is tentatively set for November 7, 2008 and intends to better support travel and follow-on training the following week.

Chris Curatilo provided an update on the status of the **Oceania Regional Contingency Plan** (ORCP) and how changes and updates would be addressed in the final version. The final draft is expected to be provided to the Co-Chairs for signature in early November, 2008, which will provide some time to make any amendments or changes.

Joe Zwack re-emphasized member use of the ORRT website to obtain information and the Co- Coordinators will be continually uploading the website with relevant ORRT information.

Lance Richman again more formally requested for **volunteers to participate on the Training Sub-Committee**. Again, Janis Heple agreed and would like to participate. Ruth Yender also felt that NOAA should be involved on the Training Sub-Committee because of the significant amount of training that NOAA provides. Both Hassan Rossell and Mike Gawel in Guam also

agreed to assist. Additionally, Ted Untalan from Saipan, and American Samoa EPA acknowledged that William would be participating. Lance Richman pointed out that it isn't expected to be a large burden of anyone's time.

Throughout the meeting, Dan Meer was receiving messages that the **Governor was running extremely late** but still hoped to appear. The Co-Chair pressed on and re-organized the schedule of presentations slightly to accommodate the Governor's arrival, as the Governor specifically expressed a very large interest in the USS CHEHALIS presentation.

Mike Gawel (Guam EPA) had to depart to attend another meeting but wanted to bring up the issue of **grounded vessels** and the struggle that Guam was having with them. Joe Zwack briefed the attendees on the status of the vessel currently grounded on Guam's north beach, and the CG's response and overall status. Dan Meer acknowledged the issue and agreed that they represent a significant danger to the environment.

Matt Bradley from **FEMA presented** his PowerPoint slides on the **NRP/NRF changes** (available via the website link).

Ned Black (US EPA) then presented "**Predictive Ecological Risk Assessment**" (available via the website link).

LT Scott Mercurio introduced Frank Thomson and his role at **MSD Samoa**, and Frank outlined activities in American Samoa. So far this year, MSD American Samoa has responded to 15 spills totaling 410 gallons. Of those 15 spills, 12 required enforcement actions and tickets were issued. American Samoa averages 20 spills a year (all less than 100 gallons) mostly from foreign fishing vessels. They are currently conducting safety and environmental inspections and pursuing enforcement actions. They believe they have reduced spills with their aggressive stance.

LCDR Joe Herrador then presented **Sector Honolulu's status** via PowerPoint (available via the website link). He also mentioned that there was a large oil spill exercise being conducted in Honolulu in September, 2008.

The American Samoa Power Authority representative stated that they **have restructured** slightly and are in two divisions; one is a Land Division and the other is an Air division in an effort to prevent and enforce oil spills. They are also conducting inspections to ensure they meet Federal and local laws and SPCC requirements. A strong emphasis is being placed on prevention measures, facilities on the bay, and providing compliance assistance & monitoring. For land-based source spills, they are working with the CG and marine patrol. The agency cooperation and coordination has been excellent. The Coast Guard did a great job. They're also phasing out and decommissioning owner fabricated tanks throughout the island. Of the 16 known tanks, 15 have complied by changing their tank out to an approved tank. The one that hasn't yet made the change is however, still trying to purchase a tank and is willing to make the change. There remains a problem with unknown cylinders in the scrap metal yard. Approximately \$200K of hazmat gear was purchased and is ready to go.

Tusipasi Suaiaunua of Territorial Emergency Management Coordinating Office (TEMCO) reported that **they reorganized recently** as they use to be under the Governor's office. As of February of 2007 TEMCO is now under the American Samoa Department of Homeland Security. It has also gone from approximately 20 employees to 3, and seems to be working well. The Acting director is Mike Sala. Funding is currently frozen but it is expected to be lifted soon.

Janis Heple reported that she will be working with Mike Sala in June 11-12 for first responder training.

CG Sector Guam's Hassan Rossell provided the **update for Guam EPA** while Mike Gawel was attending another meeting. There was an oil spill exercise which tested the Navy's response to a spill. The incident was designed to be beyond their control and required them to include the CG and EPA. It was a good test to indicate how they would work together. Dan Meer asked the question, "Do you think there are any issues that the ORRT should be aware of based on the military buildup?" Hassan recommended that we consider increased Table Top Exercises or workshops prior to the buildup. Also, we may need to review jurisdictional delineation between the Navy and Coast Guard. Dan Meer pointed out that the ORRT should be brokering discussion on these types of spills. All good things to discuss and we should help reiterate how things work, particularly with the current COTP Change of Command and new incoming Navy personnel.

CNMI-Emergency Management Office reported the ground breaking for their **new EOC center** which will have State-of- the-Art communications and technologies. The US Army Corps of Engineers is constructing the center. EMO outreach efforts should be able to engage with private sector to get help to make it a great center. An early warning Tsunami center will be part of the EOC. Their Emergency Operations Plan is also being developed. There will be an oil spill exercise simulated and run from the Saipan EOC that will impact the island of Tinian. Hassan Rossell added that the Tinian exercise objectives will be to develop an Incident Action Plan (IAP) and felt that it would be good to present the results of the exercise at the November ORRT meeting. The JTF and US Army will be holding an avian influenza (pandemic) exercise on island in May

It was announced that the **Governor** sends his regrets and will be **unable to meet** with the ORRT.

CDR Brad Rea provided the PowerPoint presentation on the **condition and status of the USS CHEHALIS** (available through the website link). At the conclusion of the presentation some questions and discussion began. Frank Thomson asked about whether an impact study has already been completed. CDR Rea wasn't sure and had no idea if there is a community response plan in place. ASEPA felt that that it would be prudent to involve TEMCO early and get other local stakeholders involved. Joe Zwack asked if the dive area has been restricted for recreational SCUBA diving. CDR Rea was unaware of any diver-related incidents, no restrictions are in place, and currently it's not known as a popular spot to dive. The fuel dock's regular security is aware of the USS CHEHALIS situation and is watching for any potential divers that might wander into the area. Joe Zwack stated that the area was easily accessible and may become a problem. CG PST's Chris Snyder felt the US Navy (USN) could secure it, but Brad Rea explained that the USN has denied any ownership or obligation to the vessel.

Dan Meer asked where we were with the ecological risk assessment (ERA). Ruth Yender stated that they are coordinating the assessment and hope that the experts can be assembled at the next ORRT meeting in advance to coordinate their findings. Travel funds may be an issue and it would be great to get some key experts to attend the Hawaii ORRT meeting. Joe Zwack asked how long the ERA would take. Ruth Yender said approximately a month. Dan Meer stated that the CG, USN, and the ASG will have to decide what to do.

Joe Zwack pointed out that the legal issue of ownership is a big issue right now, that the ORRT can still move forward, that an ERA should still be completed and asked NOAA if they had an estimate on the cost to complete the ERA. Ruth Yender stated that the cost consists of the travel for certain people (about four) that need to be part of the ERA team. Ruth recommends Karen Rosa from US F&W, Chris Curatilo, and someone from AS Marine Fisheries. Dan Meer concluded that we should move forward with the plan to conduct an ERA unless anyone has a concern. All agreed.

Ruth Yender is planning on conducting **SCAT training in November** in conjunction with the ORRT meeting in Guam.

Matt Bradley pointed out that there is a **new ICS 800 course** that reflects the changes to the NRF. FEMA is working on a lot of planning initiatives for Hawaii.

Dan Meer recognized Matt for his assistance and participation in the ORRT for the last few years. Matt will be moving on to another region of the country and he'll be missed.

That concluded the ORRT meeting and it was adjourned at approximately 2:35 PM American Samoa time.

END