

**U.S. Coast Guard  
Sector San Juan**

**Marine Fire Fighting Contingency Plan for Puerto Rico  
and the U.S. Virgin Islands  
(Revision 30 October 2015)**

COMMANDER  
SECTOR SAN JUAN

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SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO 00901  
787-289-2040/41

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## **8101 Purpose and Objectives**

Major marine firefighting incidents will likely require the coordinated efforts of federal, state, and local resources to carry out the level of response required. The purpose of this plan is to provide guidance to the Captain of the Port (COTP) and local fire agencies concerning fighting fires on vessels to ensure coordinated response to marine fires occurring throughout the Puerto Rico and United States Virgin Islands (USVI) region.

This regional contingency plan has the following major objectives:

- 1) To promote safety for first responders, protect lives and property within the ports communities of Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands;
- 2) Identify jurisdiction and clarify lines of authority and response during a response;
- 3) To secure a relationship among responsible federal, state, and local municipalities and commercial facilities so that resources may be employed to affect a swift, well coordinated response to vessel and waterfront fire emergencies.

## **8102 Scope**

The Marine Firefighting Plan is prepared and maintained by USCG Sector San Juan. The data recorded in this Plan reflects input from the Puerto Rico Fire Department, Puerto Rico Emergency Management Agency (PREMA), Virgin Islands Fire Service and the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) and encompasses all areas within the COTP San Juan Area of Responsibility (AOR).

## **8110 Definitions**

**CAPTAIN OF THE PORT (COTP)**: The Coast Guard officer designated by Commandant, USCG, to exercise federal responsibility for the safety and security of ports and waterways in a specific geographic area. For purposes of this Plan, COTP means COTP Sector San Juan.

**DANGEROUS CARGO MANIFEST**: The Dangerous Cargo Manifest (DCM) is a listing of all hazardous material cargo on a vessel and contains a great deal of information of interest to emergency response teams. Vessel information includes name, call sign, flag, port of loading/discharge, and date. Cargo information includes proper shipping name, gross weight of cargo, hazard classification, type of package, storage locations, and emergency response telephone number. Only hazardous materials subject to 49 CFR or the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) code may be listed on the DCM.

**EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER**: County and state run facilities with extensive inter-agency communications and coordination capabilities. It will be activated during significant emergencies such as a Level II fire as defined in this Plan.

**FIRE CONTROL PLAN:** A copy of this plan is prominently displayed in a weather tight enclosure, located outside the deckhouse (usually near the brow) for the assistance of shore side firefighting personnel. It contains a set of general arrangement plans showing, for each deck, the fire control stations, fire resistant and fire retardant bulkheads. It also contains particulars of the fire detection system, manual alarm, fire extinguishing systems, fire doors, means of access to different compartments, and ventilating systems including locations of dampers and fan controls.

**HAZARDOUS MATERIALS:** These are materials which, when commercially transported, are designated by the US Department of Transportation (DOT) as presenting an unacceptable risk to health, safety, and property. These materials are carried by vessel in accordance with US DOT or USCG regulations. Regulations applicable to the transportation of hazardous materials by vessel include:

- Title 49 CFR, Subchapter C (Packaged Materials)
- Title 46 CFR, Subchapter D (Tank Vessels)
- Title 46 CFR Subchapter O (Certain Bulk Dangerous Cargoes)

**INTERNATIONAL SHORE CONNECTION:** This device is used to connect the water system piping of the vessel with the water supply on the shore. International Code requires that the ship have a connection with the ship's fire system threads on one end and the international bolted flange on the other end. National Fire Code (NFPA 1405) requires the shore side fire department must have a connection with the shore side fire department's threads on one end and the international bolted flange on the other end.

**MARINE CHEMIST:** A person who is certified through the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) to determine if enclosed spaces are Safe for Workers and Hotwork or other operational restrictions for overhaul after the fire has been extinguished. The Marine Chemist should also be consulted for any fires involving hazardous materials.

**MARINE FIRE FIGHTING SUBCOMMITTEE'S:** Two subcommittees will be created, one for Puerto Rico and one for the U.S. Virgin Islands. The Puerto Rico subcommittee will be comprised of the Puerto Rico Fire Department, PREMA, members of the Area Committee and the USCG. The U.S. Virgin Islands Committee will be comprised of the Virgin Island Fire Service, VITEMA, and members of the Harbor Safety Committee and the USCG. These two sub committees will create workgroups that will enhance inter-agency coordination. Both committees will examine local policy issues and concerns regarding fire fighting in the Sector San Juan COTP area.

**SAFETY DATA SHEET (SDS):** The SDS is a chemical product information guide to be used if the product becomes a hazard because of a release, fire, or other unknown reaction. The SDS contains information as to the fire problems, health hazards, toxicity, and reactivity of the chemical or product for which the SDS was written. All chemicals and products for which chemicals were used in its manufacture must have an SDS sheet.

NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION (NFPA): An international non-profit organization of technical experts established in 1896 to reduce the worldwide burden of fire hazards by providing codes and standards, research and education. Many of these codes and standards have been incorporated by reference into federal and local regulations. *NFPA 1405 – Guide for Land-based Fire Fighters Who Respond to Marine Vessel Fires* is referenced in this plan as the accepted practices to be followed when responding to marine fires in COTP San Juan AOR.

CARRIBEAN REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM (CRRT): EPA and the Coast Guard co-chair the CRRT together with Industry and territory, as well as other federal government representation. The CRRT maintain an Area Contingency Plan (ACP) with planning, policy and coordinating strategies dealing with HAZMAT response and staging areas directly on scene. The CRRT can provide great assistance as requested by the On-Scene Coordinator during an incident.

SAFETY ZONE: A safety zone is a water area or a water/shore side area to which, for safety or environmental protection purposes, access is limited to authorize persons, vehicles or vessels. The safety zone is established by the COTP to protect vessels, structures, and shore areas. The safety zone can be fixed or mobile around a moving vessel. The COTP may direct who may operate within the safety zone.

SALVAGE COMPANY REPRESENTATIVE: A person or company who has been contracted to either assist in the firefighting effort or stabilize/recover the vessel following the fire for final disposition. The salvage representative may be contracted by the owner/operator of a vessel or a regulatory agency (local, territorial, federal) when the owner/operator has not responded in a timely manner. The agency decision to contract a salvor should be the function of a Unified Command.

SECURITY ZONE: Security zones are designated areas of land, water, or land and water established for such time necessary to prevent damage or injury to any vessel or waterfront facility to safeguard ports, harbors, territories, or water of the United States, or to secure the observance of rights and obligations of the United States. The security zone is established by the COTP or CG District Commander. The designation of a security zone may only be made for areas within the territorial limits of the United States.

STRIKE TEAM: A Coast Guard component comprised of highly trained professional cadre who maintain and deploy with specialized equipment and expertise to support Federal responses to pollution and salvage incidents. Puerto Rico resides in the Atlantic Strike Team zone home ported in Fort Dix, NJ.

## **8200 Authorities, Responsibilities, and Policy**

## **8210 Federal Policy**

The Coast Guard, under the provisions of the Port and Waterways Safety Act, has broad authority to prevent damage to, or the destruction/loss of any vessel, bridge or any other structure on or in the navigable waters of the United States. This includes land structures and shore areas immediately adjacent to those waters. This statute, along with the provision of 14 USC 88(b), provides authority for such assistance against fires as the Coast Guard may support with its available resources. This authority is exercised so as not to preempt other jurisdiction's or agency's fire fighting responsibilities. The Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (PL 93-498), declares that fire fighting is and should remain a state/territory local function. Fire departments in the location of a vessel or facility are responsible for fire suppression and are in charge of all firefighting efforts. Although the Coast Guard clearly has an interest in fires involving vessels or waterfront facilities, local authorities are principally responsible for maintaining the necessary fire fighting capabilities within U.S. ports and harbors and up to 3 NM from the coastline boundary as directed by the Governor or applicable county emergency operations center (EOC). The Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA 90) mandates that owners and operators of vessels and Marine Transportation Related (MTR) facilities must identify response resources with fire fighting capability. 33 CFR Part 154 requires MTR facilities that do not have adequate fire fighting resources located at the facility or which cannot rely on sufficient local fire fighting capability must identify and ensure the availability of adequate resources within 24 hours. 33 CFR Part 155 requires that vessel owners and operators must identify commercial resources capable of deploying to the port within 24 hours. In order to fulfill its obligation, which cannot be delegated, the responsible fire department may request mutual aid assistance from neighboring communities and advice/logistical support for other agencies through its EOC. Paramount in preparing for vessel or waterfront fires is the need to integrate Coast Guard planning and training efforts with those of other responsible agencies, particularly local fire departments and port authorities. Sector San Juan COTP shall incorporate fire fighting contingency planning in each local port's response plan in accordance with this chapter.

## **8220 State Policy/ Puerto Rico**

Article 3 of Law number 43 of June 21, 1988 (PR Fire Corps Regulatory Law) establishes the Puerto Rico Fire Department (PRFD) as the organization responsible for preventing and fighting fires. The Chief of the PRFD is appointed by the Governor and has the authority to employ the services, and coordinate the functions, of this organization.

Even though the term "marine fire" is not specifically used in Law 43, the PRFD recognizes the legitimate need to plan for and respond to fires in the marine environment. For this reason, the PRFD is taking part in the development of this plan so that federal, Commonwealth and municipal agencies respond jointly during a marine fire fighting function.

Based on mutual agreement and in recognition of the hazards of marine fires, the PRFD will assume necessary positions within the Unified Command structure organized to fight marine fires. Possible functions and responsibilities for the PRFD may include Fire Suppression Group (led by the Fire Department Chief) within the Emergency Response Branch. The PRFD will assure the development and maintenance of fire fighting capabilities within Puerto Rico ports and harbors.

Initial response operations will be the responsibility of the owner/operator of the vessel or facility. Owners and operators of vessels or facilities must develop their own contingency plans to respond to shipboard fires. The Commonwealth expects local municipalities to initially respond to the incident. The PRFD will be prepared to respond within the limits of their training and capabilities. If fire fighting personnel are not trained or capable of handling a shipboard fire, they will take appropriate measures to prevent the fire from spreading to nearby spaces. The PRFD recognizes that marine fires have many aspects that warrant special attention because of the unique environment encountered aboard a vessel.

### **8225 State Policy/ U.S. Virgin Islands**

Under the Organic Act of 1954, the Government of the Virgin Islands is the elected head of the USVI Government. The authority to combat marine fires has been delegated to the Virgin Islands Fire Service (VIFS).

The VIFS shall act as the **Fire Suppression Group** within the Unified Command Structure. The responding Fire Department Chief will act as the Fire Suppression Group Supervisor and shall report to the Emergency Response Branch Director (or directly to the Operations Section Chief in the Absence of the Emergency Response Branch Director). The VIFS shall be relied upon to combat fires on shore facilities, vessels in port, or anchored in the bays of the U.S. Virgin Islands. The VIFS is responsible for maintaining the necessary fire fighting capabilities within USVI ports and harbors. Coordination and assistance from other agencies remain under the Governor's control.

The VIFS has determined that it has enough mobile units to combat a fire from shore. However, for a significant incident, the VIFS will need to procure additional fire fighting resources, particularly foam.

The availability of fire fighters is not an issue for the VIFS. However, in the event that hazardous materials (HAZMAT) are involved, the VIFS will require assistance. The VIFS and VITEMA need to identify other sources of trained personnel. They may be from other government agencies, such as DPNR and the Virgin Island Ports Authority, or from commercial sources, such as WICO.

The Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) is charged with providing coordination of a unified marine fire fighting response. VITEMA's goal is to coordinate and organize all other Federal, State, Municipal, Commercial, and Volunteer efforts in aiding the VIFS with its mission.

### **8230 Local Responsibility**

The owner/operator of a waterfront facility and the Master of a vessel moored at a facility have a vested interest in the protection of the crew, facility, vessel and cargo. In the event of a fire, prompt notification must be given to local response agencies. The vessel/facility should contact the local fire department by calling 911.

It is essential that both emergency management officials and COTP be notified immediately of any marine fire. Notifications should be conducted in accordance with section 8410 of this Plan for rapid, efficient dissemination of information. Local standard operating procedures may dictate additional notifications.

The fire department within whose jurisdiction the vessel/facility lies, or moored, is the responsible fire suppression agency and is in charge of all firefighting efforts. The fire department which has jurisdiction will:

- Act as Incident Commander;
- Establish a command post when acting as IC;
- Request necessary personnel and equipment including fire boats and appropriate medical aid;
- Determine the need for, and request mutual aid;
- Make all requests for Coast Guard/federal personnel, equipment, and waterside security through the COTP;
- Establish liaison with police departments for landside traffic and crowd control, scene security, and evacuation;
- Provide portable communications equipment or common use frequency to response personnel from outside agencies.

In port areas where a vessel is underway or at anchor and near the boundary between adjacent cities, such that the exact location of the vessel is not easily determined, the fire department closest to the site shall respond until a position can be fixed by the Coast Guard, pilot, or Master. If another department has jurisdiction, a transition process will occur and the relieved fire department will then provide support as requested.

### **8240 Captain of the Port Sector San Juan Responsibility**

COTP Sector San Juan will work with port authorities and local governments within its jurisdiction to maintain a current and effective marine fire fighting plan supported by the port community fire departments to ensure coordination of responding entities to marine fires and other incidents. This policy is consistent with the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (PL 93-498).

The Coast Guard is designated as the primary search and rescue (SAR) agency in the maritime region. First priority must remain the saving of those from peril at sea and this will be undertaken without delay while fire fighting resources are being notified and requested to respond.

During a major fire onboard a vessel or waterfront facility, the COTP Sector San Juan is responsible for:

- Assume Incident Commander for a burning vessel underway or at anchor when the fire department with jurisdiction is unable to respond or no fire department has jurisdiction;
- Assume operational control of all Coast Guard forces on-scene;
- Establish safety or security zones as necessary;
- Provide information on involved waterfront facilities;
- Provide information on the location of hazardous materials on the vessel or at the facility, if available;
- Provide technical data on ship's construction, stability and marine firefighting techniques;
- Respond to oil or hazardous material discharges;
- Obtain tugs to assist in relocating moored or anchored vessels;
- Alert owners/operators of terminals or vessels at risk.

COTP San Juan will respond to calls for assistance and also advise local firefighting authorities on stability and salvage. ***The local community cannot rely on Coast Guard assets as the primary fire fighting resource.*** Through his/her broad federal authorities to assure safety of the port and the environment, the COTP will convene a Unified Command to constantly monitor all activities involved in responding to the marine fire event, support the local Fire Chief as forward Incident Commander and develop an integrated response plan. Senior representatives from assisting departments/agencies should comprise the Unified Command for consultation to determine options and methods to conduct a coordinated response. The local emergency operations center (EOC) provides an excellent central location for joint agency responses. If additional resources are needed, they could be requested through CG District Seven Command Center. For SAR operations, the largest CG vessel on scene, or as directed by COTP, will assume On-Scene Commander and will act as the command and control platform. Upon the conclusion of rescue operations, an assessment will be made by the Unified Command as to the continued need for all units on scene. The operations now shift to fire fighting, salvage, and support of the safety zone (if established).

The Unified Command will then prioritize those and other needed functions as needed with the designated Fire Chief responsible for all fire fighting functions. If unassigned by the Unified Command, the COTP will act as the liaison between the Coast Guard, other response organizations and the media.

### **8250 Owner/Operator Responsibility**

This plan is not intended to relieve the vessel/facility owner or operator (Master) or restrict their fundamental responsibility for safety or security of their vessel/facility. The Master provides a vital role to the Incident Commander in vessel orientation, on board cargo and stores, crew accountability and other vital information needed to safely extinguish the fire. It must be recognized, however, that the local Fire Chief is the most experienced in fire fighting and will be designated overall command of the fire response.

The Master, officers, and crew shall assist in the firefighting effort with the Master being the liaison between the Fire Chief and the vessel crew. The Master should provide the Fire Chief with crew members to act as guides, and shall control the actions of his crew. The Master shall not normally countermand any orders given by the local firefighters in the performance of their duties unless that action taken or planned clearly endangers the safety of the vessel or crew. In the absence of the Master, the senior deck officer will act for the Master.

### **8300 Planning and Response Considerations**

#### **8301 Levels of Response**

Not all marine disasters require the full response set forth within this plan. The following parameters may be used as a guide in determining the scale and size of response organization required given the prevailing emergency conditions:

**Level I Response – Local command structure** – A marine casualty involving a vessel or facility that does not pose a major threat to the port. Examples include pleasure craft, small vessels in boatyards, houseboats, etc. This level of disaster can usually be handled by one fire department on the local level with minimal waterside support. Minimal state and federal assistance will be required. Sector San Juan shall be notified in accordance with section 8410 and will send a Pollution Responder or Federal On-Scene Coordinator Representative to the scene that will provide direct liaison to the COTP.

**Level II Response – Unified Command structure** – A marine casualty on a vessel or facility that has the potential to be a significant risk to the port. Examples include small freight vessels in San Juan harbor, container fires aboard container ships, tug fires, any ship/barge fires, etc. This level of disaster may involve the extra alarm response of two or more fire departments with mutual aid and waterside support requiring the coordination of county EOCs and dispatch centers. A Unified Command Post will be established by the jurisdictional fire department and notifications will be coordinated through the local EOCs and Sector San Juan command center. Sector San Juan will dispatch a port operations team and additional personnel required who will supplement the Unified Command staff to coordinate any support and resources outside the existing mutual aid agreements. Examples include stability calculations, obtaining salvage consultation, networking with port officials to move the affected or adjoining vessels, etc. Responses of this complexity will necessitate a NIMS compliant Incident Command structure of appropriate size only to manage the response.

#### **8302 High Risk Areas and Cargoes**

Those following areas within the San Juan and USVI region with stored regulated liquids in bulk include:

PASSENGER VESSELS: Port of San Juan/ Port of Fajardo/ Charlotte Amalie ST  
Thomas/ Frederiksted St Croix

BUNKERING: Port of San Juan/ Port of Guayanilla/Port of Peñuelas/ Port of Guayama/  
Port of Yabucoa/East and West Gregerie Channel St. Thomas / Limetree Bay, St Croix

BARGES: Port of San Juan/ Port of Guayanilla/ Port of Guayama/ East and West  
Gregerie Channel St. Thomas / Limetree Bay, St Croix/ Christiansted, St Croix

MILITARY VESSELS: Port of San Juan/ Port of Ponce

RECREATION VESSELS: Port of San Juan/ Port of Fajardo/ Charlotte Amalie ST  
Thomas/ Christiansted St Croix

### **8303 Minimum Notification Information Required**

Once the notification of a marine disaster has been received it is important that the receiving agency, whether it be a local fire department, local EOC, or the Coast Guard, will assess the situation to correctly dispatch the needed resources to contain the fire in a timely manner.

### **8304 Initial Response Coordination**

Prompt notification to the jurisdictional fire department is the first and most important step in mobilizing the necessary response resources. Initial notification of a fire will normally be received by the local fire department through the 911 network for facility fires and vessels within the port or to the Coast Guard through channel 16 VHF-FM for vessels underway within the port or off shore. If hazardous materials are involved, make sure to notify the National Response Center at **1-800-424-8802**. If a waterfront facility involves a fire with hazardous materials, you must notify your Local Emergency Planning Committee as per the SARA Act.

The jurisdictional fire department will assume Incident Commander for all fires within the port and offshore out to 3 NM. Assistance to areas further offshore will be determined by distance, sea state, and prevailing weather and will be in agreement with COTP. The COTP may establish a safety zone at any time during the incident to protect the attending responders and control traffic in and around the area as needs dictate. The COTP will also query the vessels and cargoes in the fire zone to determine any additional safety precautions such as relocation or active monitoring for exposure. Local shipping agents will be notified of any potential involvement or delays in arrival or departure from their assigned moorings. When conditions warrant, a broadcast notice to mariners and/or marine safety information bulletin will be made to alert the port community and any imposed navigation restrictions.

### **8305 Access for Fire Fighting**

Few disasters provide optimal circumstances. A facility fire may occur in a little used warehouse space where access is difficult. A vessel fire may occur while at anchor/underway away from the resources necessary to combat it or in lower decks

limiting the efficiency of firefighting water. Facility fires must be fought at the scene and in most cases, vessels which are moored will remain at their location to allow local fire departments to combat the fire. However, vessels other than those aground or involved in a collision are generally mobile and may be maneuvered away from further damage and brought to a location to optimize the fighting of the fire.

**The COTP has final authority in:**

- **Ordering/allowing movement of a burning ship;**
- **Creating accesses or penetrations into a hull of a ship or other issues involving hull integrity;**
- **Opening flooding boundaries or other issues involving stability.**

### **8306 Burning Vessel Movement Considerations**

An optional and crucial decision that may be made by the COTP/Unified Command is whether or not to order/allow a burning vessel to be moved or allowed to enter the port. A number of movement scenarios are possible, and may be required in an emergency including:

- From sea to an anchorage or a pier;
- From an anchorage to a pier;
- From a pier to anchorage;
- Grounding a vessel;
- Scuttling a vessel offshore.

The COTP approaches a burning ship from a systematic point of view. This marine transportation system is used by various parties for transportation, recreation, and commerce. The possibility of having a ship sink in a key navigation channel or anchorage, or spreading the fire to other port assets must be evaluated. Risk evaluations and cost-benefit analysis are to be employed with a broad vision of the best interest to the entire port. The following information will normally be gathered and considered prior to making a decision to allow/order movement of a burning ship:

- Location and extent of fire;
- Vessel condition; possibility of vessel capsizing or sinking;
- Class, amount and nature of cargo;
- Possibility of explosion and/or release of hazardous materials (oil/fuel/hazmat);
- Hazard to crew or other resources where vessel is presently located;
- Potential for spread of fire to pier, nearby vessels/structures or other port assets;
- Maneuverability of the vessel (dead ship, etc.) and status of shipboard firefighting equipment;
- Pier access and firefighting resources available at new location;
- Present and forecast weather;
- Alternatives if the vessel is not allowed to move or enter port;
- Change in jurisdiction or government agency input; consultation with elected officials (mayor, city commissioner, etc.).

[NOTE: A request for entry into the port by a burning vessel under declaration of "force majeure" should be evaluated under the same previously listed criteria.]

Once the decision to permit entry or movement of the vessel has been made, consideration should be given to:

1. Consultation from harbor pilots to determine their procedures for handling emergency movement of vessels and response times.
2. Broadcast Notice to Mariners and moving safety/security zone.
3. Locating the vessel to optimize the use of available resources in fire fighting.
4. Ordering the movement of other vessels or cargo stored in the designated destination to preclude their involvement;

### **8307 Dewatering**

Dewatering considerations should be addressed without delay. Although vessels will have bilge pump capacity, these pumps are limited to pumping water which settles into the lowest areas of the vessel; they are also susceptible to clogging. Moving and operation of portable pumps aboard a vessel/barge will require hoisting equipment and personnel in addition to those assigned to the fire fighting.

### **8308 Delays in Resource Arrival**

- Protracted operations, such as during Level II responses, will require relief of first responding units and mutual aid elements that may be traveling long distances;
- Due to the large Sector San Juan Area of Responsibility and its outlying units, response planners and Incident Commanders must be cognizant that resource delays may be encountered:

Of particular concern is logistical support of adequate quantities of extinguishing agents in bulk, larger volume fire boats, and portable fire fighting apparatus. Any necessary resources not immediately at-hand should be requested through the appropriate channels (local EOC, State EOC, RDSTF, etc.) as soon as possible.

### **8309 Assist Tugs**

In nearly all marine fire situations, tug companies should be contacted early in the planning phase to evaluate their capability and willingness to provide towing assist services to burning ships. They may also be called upon to move barges or moored vessels in close proximity of the fire or provide logistical support to firefighting teams.

### **8310 Fire Boats and Marine firefighting**

The Puerto Rico fire department has currently one fire boat; 27 feet Boston Whaler with a 2 exit monitor of 2.5 inch with a capacity of 750 gallons per minute located in the Cataño Municipality Fire Station. 14 members from their organization are currently certified in land based marine firefighting. These firefighters are located throughout the island:

- 1) Sgto. Joel Figueroa Betancourt- DOE Hato Rey
- 2) Sgto. Alejandro Santiago Negrón-DOE Ponce
- 3) Bomb. José De Jesús-Negociado de Adiestramiento San Juan
- 4) Bomb. Víctor Soto-Negociado de Adiestramiento San Juan
- 5) Sgto. Earl Santiago González-Humacao II
- 6) Sgto. José De León Félix-HLS Juncos
- 7) Bomb. Mervin Pomales Rolón-HLS Juncos
- 8) Bomb. Javier Félix Delgado-Yabucoa
- 9) Bomb. Luís Valentín Nieves-HLS Juncos
- 10) Bomb. Ángel Cotto Nieves-HLS Juncos
- 11) Bomb. Dennis Vega Quiles-Rio Piedras
- 12) Bomb. Abimael Rodríguez-DOE Barceloneta
- 13) Sgto. Julio Pantojas Feliciano-Cataño
- 14) Sgto. Néstor Batiz Velázquez-DOE Ponce

(Note) USVI has no marine firefighting personnel at this time. There are no fire boats but they do have private tugs and salvage vessels that have some marine firefighting capabilities. For further information please contact VITEMA.

### **8311 Communications**

#### **EMERGENCY/CONTACT NOTIFICATION LIST FOR PUERTO RICO AND United States Virgin Islands:**

##### **P.R. Emergency Contacts:**

**FIRE DEPARTMENT/RESCUE MEDICAL/ POLICE : 911**

##### **Puerto Rico Emergency Management (PREMA):**

**Address:**

PO Box 194140  
San Juan, PR00919-4140

**Phone:**

(787) 724-0124

**Fax:**

(787) 725-4244

**Email:**

info@prema.pr.gov

**Website:**

<http://www2.pr.gov/agencias/aemead/contactenos/Pages/Oficina-Central.aspx>

##### **USVI Emergency Contacts:**

**FIRE DEPARTMENT/RESCUE MEDICAL/ POLICE : 911**

**VIFS (Virgin Islands Fire Service):** 340-774-7610 / 340-774-5156

**USVI Port Authority:** (340) 774-6755

**USVI Police Dept:** (340)-774-2211

**USCG MSD St Thomas:** (340) 776-3497

**USCG Rio St Croix:** (340)-772-5557

**ST Thomas:**

**VITEMA: VITEMA Headquarters:**

8221 Estate Nisky  
St. Thomas, VI 00803  
Tel: (340) 774-2244  
Fax: (340) 715-6847  
Police: 340-774-2211

**St John:**

**VITEMA: St. John Office:**

6 Susannaberg  
St. John, VI 00830  
Tel: (340) 776-6444  
Fax: (340) 714-4470  
Police: 340-693-8880

**St Croix:**

**St. Croix Office:**

2164 King Cross St.  
Christiansted, VI 00820-4840  
Tel: (340) 773-2244  
Fax: (340) 778-8980  
Police: 340-778-2211  
Fire Dept: 340-772-0213

**Web site:** <http://www.vitema.gov/>

**FEDERAL AGENCIES:**

- USCG SECTOR SAN JUAN COMMAND CENTER (24 hrs) (787)-289-2040/41
- EPA (REGION II) (732) 321-6656
- EPA (CARB. OF) (757) 977-5815
- D7 CC (305) 415-6800
- NSFCC (252) 331-6000
- ATLANTIC S/T (609) 724-0008
- NAVY SUPSALV (202) 781-3889

## **8400 Marine Fire Fighting Response**

### **8401 Marine Firefighting Guidance**

Land based fire fighters will normally fight fires at waterfront facilities using structural tactics. Vessel fires require entirely different strategy and tactics. Fire departments are strongly encouraged to use the extensive information and advice in NFPA Standard 1405, *Guide for Land-Based Fire fighters Who Respond to Marine Fires*.

### **8402 Basic Priorities of Firefighting**

It is impossible to anticipate every task or activity that will be required to effectively respond when dealing with a major marine fire. There are, however, several basic priorities which must be addressed particularly in the case of a vessel fire at sea. Operational fire fighting priorities listed in order are as follows:

Rescue: Life safety must always be the first consideration in any fire or emergency situation. When lives are in danger, the IC must quickly assess whether the situation necessitates immediate removal of personnel and the number of persons that need to be.

Exposures: The fire should be fought so as to prevent the spread of fire on or off the vessel. Typical exposures include flammable liquid or gas tanks, open stairways, explosives, or any other substance which would accelerate or aid the spread of the fire.

Confinement: The effort to establish control over the fire through impeding the fire's extension to non-involved areas and limiting the fire to its area of origin. To accomplish proper containment:

- Secure all closures and generally all ventilation (unless personnel are trapped inside the space);
- Establish primary fire, smoke, and flooding boundaries. Primary boundaries are critical to the control of a fire;
- Monitor and cool the boundaries, as necessary (if steam is produced when sprayed with a fog pattern, continue to cool the surface), on all six sides of the fire (fore, aft, port, starboard, above, and below).

Extinguishment: The main body of the fire should be attacked and suppressed. The goal is to cease combustion by disrupting the cycle of the fire tetrahedron. Tactics and agents to be used will be determined by the fuel source, amount of fuel/surface area and location of the fire.

Stability: The introduction of large amounts of water for firefighting can significantly alter the center of gravity of a vessel. Experts from the Marine Safety Center, National Strike Force, or Navy Supervisor of Salvage should be consulted for stability calculations and advice. Regardless of the degree of list, common hazards to compromised stability include:

- Diminished footing for response personnel;
- Difficulty in maintaining a foam blanket;
- Closure failures to automatic fire doors;
- Reduced effectiveness of fixed dewatering systems;
- Shifting of unsecured equipment and machinery (failures to securing mechanisms).

Overhaul: Actions to complete incident stabilization and begin the shift to property conservation. Considerations during overhaul include:

- Hazards from structural conditions at the fire scene;
- Atmospheric conditions (air packs should remain mandatory in the case of interior fire overhaul due to the likely presence of toxic vapors, carbon monoxide, and low oxygen levels);
- Monitor scene to ensure the fire will not re-ignite;
- Determination of the fire's point of origin and source of ignition;
- Access control of watertight doors to manage flooding boundaries (stability and free surface effect);
- Detailed photographic records of the fire scene prior to clearing any debris is highly recommended to aid in post fire investigations.

Ventilation: Ventilation tactics will vary depending upon the location and conditions of the fire. Generally, all ventilation on a vessel will initially be secured and all dampeners shut upon receipt of a fire alarm. The purpose in ventilation shutdown is both to decrease the flow of oxygen to the fire area and to begin the containment process.

De-Watering and Salvage: As noted in NFPA 1405, basic stability data should be gathered during the initial stages of the incident:

- Drafts should be monitored at least every 30 minutes to quickly identify any changes in stability;
- Monitoring should continue at least four hours after water flow has stopped.

Oil and hazardous materials may enter the water during fire fighting and dewatering operations. Containment and recovery of these materials is an important consideration. The determination to fight the fire over the environmental concerns will continually need to be evaluated to the prevailing conditions (tires, burning containers, potential for sinking the vessel, etc.).

### **8403 Response Sequence**

Action in response to a fire incident is broken into five phases for this plan's purposes:

- Phase I Discovery and Notification
- Phase II Evaluation and Initiation of Action
- Phase III Assessment of the Situation:  
Rescue>>Exposure>>Confinement>>Extinguishment>>Overhaul

- Phase IV Demobilization
- Phase V Documentation and Cost Recovery (Collection of Lessons Learned)

### **8410 Notifications and Dispatch**

Regardless of the agency first to discover the fire, it is agreed the following agencies will be also notified if the incident is their jurisdictions:

All ports: USCG Sector San Juan 787-289-2040/2041

### **8420 Command Posts and Jurisdictional Command**

To effectively combat a major fire, an Incident Command Post (ICP) must be established as soon as possible. A command post provides several critical services:

- A single central site for command and control of the response. This reduces confusion among response personnel;
- Ready access to continuous communications between on-scene and off-scene personnel.

The nature and location of the fire will be the deciding element in determining which agency assumes overall command or the lead in a unified command. The lead agency must be determined as early as possible in the incident to ensure effective use of personnel and equipment. Upon arrival of the *first response unit*, the senior response officer assumes incident command, assesses the situation, determines what additional assistance is needed, and reports conditions observed to the emergency dispatch center for relay to all jurisdictional agencies.

During the course of an incident (from arrival to clean-up), the lead agency may change as incident conditions change. The COTP may be the Incident Commander (IC) for any fire involving a vessel underway or anchored within the AOR. For vessel moored, the local fire department is the IC and the COTP will support the IC system. For any vessel fire, the local and mutual aid fire departments will be the primary fire fighting resources. When fire is involved at a shoreside facility, the local fire department is the Incident Commander. Note the required COTP consultations in Sections 8305 and 8307.

#### **8420.1 Shoreside Incidents**

For fires at a facility or on a vessel moored to a facility, there should be one Incident Command Post. It should be established as close to the incident as safety permits. Ideally the ICP would be located in an office at the facility. At a minimum, it should:

- Provide a large open area to permit status board maintenance
- Adequate lighting and communication with IC

## **8420.2 Underway/At Anchorage Incidents**

For incidents involving vessels underway or at anchorage, the Incident Command Post may be afloat, or at the Sector Command Center or nearest port office with a forward command afloat. Potential afloat ICP platforms include:

- Coast Guard cutter
- Municipal Fireboats
- State Marine Units (e.g. FWCC Randall)

The COTP will request a fire department liaison be provided aboard any CG floating Incident Command Post to provide technical advice on scene. If a fire department establishes a floating ICP, the COTP will provide a CG liaison officer.

## **8420.3 Unified Command**

In instances where several jurisdictions are involved or several agencies have a significant management interest or responsibility, a Unified Command with a lead agency designation may be more appropriate for an incident rather than a single command response organization. Generally, a unified command structure is called for when:

- The incident occurs within one jurisdiction but involves several agencies with management responsibility due to the nature of the incident or the resources needed to combat it;
- The incident is multi-jurisdictional in nature because it affects, or has the potential to affect, several jurisdictions.

## **8421 Coordination of Special Resources**

Requests for federal resources and special forces should be submitted through the COTP (Navy, Supervisor of Salvage, International Cargo Bureau, etc.). All resources and special forces made available will normally come under the direction and the control of the COTP unless otherwise agreed upon by the COTP and Fire Dept IC. State and local agency resources and special forces made available during an incident will normally come under the direction and control of the Fire Dept IC unless otherwise agreed upon by the Fire Dept IC and COTP.

## **8422 Termination of Response Activities**

This decision will be made by the Incident Commander (IC) after consulting with the COTP unless it is a Level II response where the Unified Command will determine cessation of activities.

Note: Although firefighting efforts may be terminated, the vessel/facility should maintain a fire watch for at least 48 hours after the fire is out.

## **8423 Resolution of Disputes**

Disputes will normally be resolved at the lowest level possible. If not resolved there, they will be referred to the ICP for resolution between the senior Coast Guard and jurisdictional Fire Dept representatives. If not resolved at the ICP, they will be referred to the COTP and appropriate Fire Chief.

## **8500 Plan Administration**

### **8501 Exercises**

Proper training and exercises are necessary to ensure smooth coordination in the event of an actual fire or incident. Realistic exercises also demonstrate the capabilities of the various organizations involved. These exercises also expose possible conflicts and create opportunities to improve the plan.

COTP Sector San Juan will schedule periodic exercises with selected fire departments, port facilities and government agencies within the various ports of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the USVI. It is recommended that each fire department or response organization coordinate with the port facilities and shippers in their respective jurisdictions and develop training and orientation on their own. The COTP will also assist coordination with other organizations if a larger exercise is required for assistance in arranging an exercise, contact:

USCG Sector San Juan  
Attn: Contingency Planning & Force Readiness Staff  
La Puntilla Final #5  
San Juan, PR 00901  
(787) 289-2040/2041

### **8502 Training**

Training is the cornerstone of effective response. Effective training makes the difference between saving lives and property and having a major port disaster. In addition to the numerous colleges offering advanced firefighting curricula, the COTP may provide training sessions periodically for local fire departments, facility owners/operators and shipping companies. Such training might discuss ship construction and basic stability, shipboard/facility firefighting, salvage and hazardous material response. Suggestions for other training, volunteer speakers and general comments concerning this program should be directed to:

USCG Sector San Juan  
Attn: Contingency Planning & Force Readiness Staff  
La Puntilla Final #5  
San Juan, PR 00901  
(787) 289-2040/2041

For further information consult, National *Fire Protection Association; NFPA 1405: Guide for Land-Based Fire Fighters Who Respond to Marine Vessel Fires*

### **8510 Plan Review**

This Plan, as well as the entire Sector San Juan Area Contingency Plan, will be available for review on the USCG Homeport website at <http://homeport.uscg.mil> , select “San Juan” in the port directory table. Revisions/comments may be made to Sector San Juan Contingency Planning Staff.

The COTP is responsible for the administration of this Plan and will keep it current by convening a meeting with the Marine Fire Fighting Planning Committee. This committee will meet at least annually to review this Plan for accuracy and/or revision.

The Marine Fire Fighting Planning Committee is comprised of representatives from each of the ports of the Sector San Juan COTP AOR. A separate record will be maintained of any scheduled or ad-hoc Plan meetings with the roster and minutes available for review by all Marine Fire Fighting Planning Committee members.

**Any changes and/or revisions will be annotated in the Record of Changes.**

### **8520 Memorandums of Agreement / Memorandums of Understanding**

*None at this time.*