

Regional Response Team III Meeting

Wednesday, May 7, 2025
Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge
Bateman Education Center

0900-1615

- Sabina announces Wi-Fi for all attendees and ensures everyone checks in via QR code to ensure participation in the tabletop exercise.
- Kevin Holcomb, USFWS, gives a safety brief and reminds the group of the 911 system in the park.
- **Convene, Introduction and Co-Chairs Opening Remarks**
 - Mike Towel, US EPA, gives thanks to everyone for their efforts. Kelly Thorkilson, USCG D5 gives thanks for attendance.
- **Welcome to VA** (Beth Lohman, VDEQ and Mike Tolbert, Town of Chincoteague)
 - Beth gives thanks to all and introduces Mike.
 - Mike gives opening remarks and thanks group for their work.
- **Barrier Island Presentation** (Kevin Holcomb, USFWS)
 - Kevin's office manages the eastern shore of Virginia which is a critical habitat for migratory birds.
 - Chincoteague's recreational beach is very busy and unique as it has an assigned area for recreational beach area created by USFWS. The Air National Guard is helping to build new access roads for new recreational beach area. This will allow for bigger migratory bird habitat.
 - The Chincoteague ponies are owned by the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company.
 - 2025 is the 100th year of pony penning.
 - The Maryland ponies are deemed as wild horses and do not have much oversight. The Virginia horses receive vet care. A fence keeps the two herds separate.
 - Shoreline is changing and the change is being researched and documented.
 - Questions
 - Are there any issues with subsidence? Yes, on the eastern shore.
 - Is the propagation of eel grass positive or negative? Positive.
- **RRT3 Executive Committee Report** (Kelly Thorkilson. USCG and Mikey Towel US EPA)
 - RCP 5-year renewal and signed by co-chairs. More streamlined.
 - CHER
 - NAGPRA guidance is completed and pending review.

- Environmental Unit Quick Reference Guide is complete and pending review.
 - Unanticipated Discoveries
 - Spill Response and Countermeasures
 - Losing the main dispersant and moving to rapid consultation for other products.
 - Training and Exercise
 - Produced a tabletop exercise for this meeting.
 - Working on notification drill preparation.
 - Information Management
 - Produced new webpage and is currently in maintenance mode.
 - Workgroup is shifting towards data analytics with a focus on creating a common language for responses so the behind-the-scenes systems can view data in the same way.
 - Many goals were achieved under the 2025 Work Plan. Making updates to 2026 Work Plan and will be drafting within the next month to prepare for the December meeting.
 - Note of a whiteboard outside meeting room for members to give feedback for the next meeting.
 - Website will have posted products soon and group is reminded it is a helpful tool.
- **RRT3 Coordinator Report** (Sabina Bastias, US EPA)
 - Highlights neighboring RRT Meetings.
 - RRT3 December Meeting will be December 2-4. Location TBD.
 - Highlight of training and exercise opportunities broadcasted on the website.
 - Reminder that members can post trainings here as well.
- **FOSC/SOSC Highlights**
 - Virginia
 - December RRT3 Meeting highlighted high-profile incidents.
 - After-action reports on these incidents are finalized and can be viewed.
 - Hurricane Helene
 - HAZMAT mission was completed as of January. Debris removal is still occurring.
 - Lessons learned – worked with VDEM and VDEQ on how to do assessments for these sorts of incidents. Emphasis on how to collect the most useful and efficient data.
 - VDEM
 - 16 regional team activations.
 - ESF10 tabletop exercise.
 - Delaware
 - Chemical Vapor Incident – acid vapor release in Georgetown on January 8. Incident was preceded by a snowstorm and temperatures were in the

single digits. Vapor went out into the community. An accidental statewide shelter in place was initiated.

- Announcement that the Chief of Emergency Response position is open.
- Pennsylvania
 - Industrial incidences
 - Chemical explosion when an industrial process went wrong a blew the roof off the building.
 - Metal plating plant accident.
- West Virginia
 - Reviewed 1,300 spill reports, some were emergency responses, some were not.
 - Received woody debris from Hurricane Helene.
 - February 15, 16 counties were impacted in southern West Virginia.
 - Coordinated with EPA for FOSC involvement when state became overwhelmed.
 - Debris site management included sorting and mitigating debris. 11,000 pounds of hazardous waste was collected.
 - Reported an uptick in semi-trailer accidents. Figuring out how to mitigate.
 - New governor update.
- Maryland
 - Reported an uptick in rail incidents, mostly insignificant.
 - CSX derailment of leaking diesel fuel. A small amount of fuel leaked, and the tank was patched. Two days later, the same fuel tank was leaking again.
 - Sector Baltimore – mystery spill on Jones Falls River
 - Difficult response because a large portion of the river is subsurface making it difficult to track unknowns. 50 gallons were contained with sorbent and the incident was USCG federalized.
- EPA Region III (Myles Bartos US EPA)
 - Largest response was the LA Wildfires, 10 FOSCs were deployed. Response focus on household hazardous materials and lithium-ion batteries.
 - Radford, Virginia – NRC report of 6,500 gallons of nitric acid released. Reported there was not good communication with county emergency management.
 - Hazmat technician courses occurring throughout the region.
 - GRP efforts
 - New federal and regional administration.
- Sector Delaware Bay
 - January 8, motor vessel grounding with 45,000 gallons of bulk solar salts.
 - Unusual weather patterns
 - Atlantic Strike Team response workshop
 - Josh Miller has retired.

- Sector Maryland
 - January – airplane collision with helicopter accident. 3,000 gallons of jet fuel were released into the Potomac River. Atlantic Strike Team assisted.
 - Busy winter pollution season.
 - Urges to make reports to NRC.
 - New department head.
- Sector Virginia
 - Diesel fuel spill in shipyard. 6,200 gallons of fuel were recovered, and 8,000 gallons went into the James River.
 - Leaning on training and exercise.
 - New IMD chief.
- Sector Eastern Great Lakes
 - No significant cases.
 - Upcoming exercise report.
 - New captain
 - Response department and prevention department heads are retiring.
- Sector North Carolina
 - February 13 – vessel ran aground with 2,000 gallons of red dye diesel aboard. Occurred in a remote area with inclement weather moving in. Response lasted five days.
 - UAS program is up and running. Only one pilot as of now.
 - New captain and response department head.
 - Influx of new personnel this summer.
- MSU Huntington
 - February – Towing vessel lost propulsion on the Ohio River. Lots of ice on the river due to cold temperatures. Hypothesis of ice strike on the fuel tank. 15,000 gallons of diesel fuel were removed from the vessel safely.
 - Marathon exercise
 - New drone pilot
- MSU Pittsburgh
 - No notable cases.
 - Training exercise with the Three Rivers Pollution Response Council occurring today (May 7, 2025)
 - Losing some junior personnel.
 - Standing up the UAS system with two pilots to complete hands-on training in June.
- **Presentation/Case Study – RAIL (Brain Moore, PADEP)**
 - East Palestine was not Pennsylvania’s only significant derailment response.
 - PA DEP roles
 - Airborne plume evaluation – plume models in GIS software to evaluate if it will affect sensitive areas.
 - Air monitoring – MultiRAE monitoring with more resources received from EPA and ERT.

- Water monitoring – source water protection and sampling to make determinations about public water supply actions.
 - Spill pathway evaluation
 - Sampling actions – need to know what to analyze and what labs can analyze it.
 - Communications – short form videos can create miscommunication with the public.
- Why was East Palestine different?
 - Derailment occurred in Ohio, but deposition and vapors affected Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Needed to effectively communicate with downstream partners.
 - There has never been a vent and burn of five rail cars at one time.
 - Lots of misinformation creating a large space for speculation.
- Unsure if Pennsylvania should participate in the response. Ultimately OSC acted as unified command.
- A soot plume was received three weeks later. If the plume was received sooner, it would have helped sampling plans.
- Most surface water in Pennsylvania was unaffected.
- Soil sampling was conducted as information for the agricultural community to clear farms and prove to customers they were safe.
- Response created unique situations regarding butyl acrylate.
 - There was no information on butyl acrylate on IP.
 - Questioning if butyl acrylate could be detected with a PID. If it can be detected, it is not common to carry butyl acrylate to calibrate equipment. Also was not looking for it at the beginning of the response.
- Questions
 - If the incident had occurred in Pennsylvania, how would you have set up unified command? Would you have included neighboring states?
 - Note who has statutory authority.
- **Tabletop Exercise** (Kevin Gaynor, Kevin Heym and Chris Guzzetti, US EPA)
 - The purpose of this exercise is to practice the incident specific RRT activation process and all that goes with that. Includes the RRT Activation Quick Response Guide (QRG), identify members of the incident specific RRT, discuss roles and considerations, identify long term goals of the RRT and deactivation processes.
 - Emphasizes that this is for the RRT processes and procedures, NOT response actions.
 - Review of the R3RRT Activation QRG
 - Can hand off to EPA or USCG with approval of EPA/USCG accepting.
 - Exercise Scenario Brief
 - Initial response - Unified Command
 - Agencies? CSX, Local FD, EPA, VDEM, VDEQ
 - Cooperating agencies – DOI, USACE, Tribes, USCG, NTSB
 - FOSC – EPA
 - Primary concerns? Air, water, responder safety, residential, recreational,

federal land, tribal lands.

- What is UC requesting from RRT? Additional resources, technical expertise, intra-agency coordination.
- Who in UC is requesting RRT review? RRT member, FOSC,
- Does VA identify an FOSC for VDEM and VDEQ?
 - They share an FOSC
- Activation – other RRT members not in UC
 - The person who can request RRT activation are in UC. Are we limiting members in RRT command?
 - Member agencies can request RRT activation
- Incident specific RRT
 - Who is incident specific RRT chair? Mike Towle
 - Participating agencies – USCG (D5), EPA, VDEM, VDEQ, DOI, NOAA, FWS, DOT, Chickahominy, ATSDR
 - Notification/Communication – Everbridge – MANS (RRT coordinators)
 - Need to verify NRC participation if MANS unavailable
 - How to choose who is pulled into notification?
 - FOSC → co-chair → activation decision → coordinators → notification
 - Information/Resources available
 - USCG: co-chair role/concurrence
 - EPA: co-chair/concurrence, FOSC supply, FOSC updates
 - VDEM: state concerns, SOSC support
 - VDEQ: same as above
 - DOI: resource concerns, outreach to tribes, concurrence
 - FWS: resource concerns, outreach to tribes, concurrence
 - NOAA: NOAA resources at risk, trajectory modeling, subject matter experts, concurrence
 - DOT: additional HAZMAT information
 - ATSDR: address public health concerns
 - Chickahominy – resources concerns, concurrence
 - Documentation – meeting minutes, record of concurrence
 - Questions/concerns/priorities
 - Contingency plans
 - “What ifs”
 - Second pair of eyes
 - Time constraints
 - Pressure from higher
 - Other options
 - Long term RRT / delineation procedures
 - Concurrence vs consultation
 - Long term impacts
 - Is the OSC seeking an incident specific approval or advice/input?
 - Is RRT approving or giving advice? In this instance, seeking concurrence based on CSX plan

- What is a realistic timeline of activation?
 - Conference call within 2 hours
 - At what level are tribes involved in concurrence within RRT?
 - Would chairs want conference call audio recorded?
 - No, just meeting minutes
 - Change “recorded” to “documentation.”
 - Would trustee agencies want involvement to continue after the fact?
 - Some follow-up may be needed
- RRT3 Activation Conference Call
 - Mike Towel (US EPA), Kelly Thorkilson (USCG), Beth Lohman (VDEQ), Frank Csulak (DOC – NOAA), Myles Bartos (US EPA)
 - Reached out to plume modeling SMEs
 - Decide on controlled release
 - Mike – What questions would we ask the FOSC proposing this?
 - What other stakeholders down river are going to be impacted?
 - What other options exist?
 - Do we have time to get other experts to weigh in or does this vent and burn have to occur now?
 - Let’s say this this has already happened, and they are looking for concurrence now.
 - Note from Sabina - the conference call template needs to be updated.
 - Assuming that this vent and burn is the decision of unified command and recommendation, but they are looking for RRT concurrence.
 - We can’t make them not do it.
 - But unified command may reevaluate if the RRT said no.
 - Hoping that UC has already talked to stakeholders.
 - Beth – this was helpful.
 - The agenda is based on activities outside of this scenario... group suggests we create two template incident specific RRT conference call setups made, one with an approval process and one with a recommendation process.
 - Who would take the notes in an actual scenario? Is there someone set to take the same level of notes that START has during this exercise?
- Would this be different if it was in USCG UOR?
 - External pressure for transportation
- Improvements
 - Wanted more info than what was meant for the exercise, bogged down
 - Separate based on approval or support
 - RRT3 concurrence memo is only as good as the information they are working on.
- Kevin G – if you have any additional feedback reach out to Sabina, Kevin G or email the RRT email address.

- **Agency Open Forum**
 - PHMSA
 - January 31 – Sunoco pipeline leaking
 - PADEP informed PHMSA samples from private property had kerosene
 - Partnership with PHMSA, PADEP and health departments to communicate/coordinate responses
 - Consent agreement
 - Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement
 - Pause of some renewable energy activities
 - Clean harbors exercise
 - NOAA
 - Responses
 - Atlantic strike team advanced responder operations exercise May 13-15
 - Alternative fuel fact sheets
 - In the process of preparing these
 - Drafting and being reviewed by ITOPF
 - NOAA ORR departures
 - 100+
 - ERMA
- **Closing Remarks and Meeting Adjournment**
 - Thanks to all
 - Reminder to utilize the website
 - Happy hour at Ropewalk

Meeting Attendance Roster	
Attendee Name	Attendee Organization
Andersen, Troy	DOI – FWS
Anderson, Ben	DNREC
Banda, JoAnn	DOI - USFWS
Bartos, Myles	US EPA
Bastias, Sabina	US EPA
Belcer, Joshua	USCG D8
Boyd, Kevin	US EPA
Britton, Peggy	DHS
Brown, Holly	VDEQ

Burkett, Patrick	USCG D5
Calvin, John	DOI
Ciani, Lydia	START – Tetra Tech
Clark, Kevin	US EPA
Collier, Melanie	USCG D5
Collison, Candice	MD-DNR
Cook, Elisha	USCG D5
Cox, Allison	USCG
Csulak, Frank	DOC - NOAA
Damian, Leonard	USCG D5
Deal, Holly	USCG D5
Dinkins, Sam	ORSANCO
Farrell, Robert	VDEQ
Feist, Brian	PEMA
Fennick, Kimberly	USCG
Flowers, Max	MSRC
Gaulding, Donna	DOT PHMSA
Gawarzewski, Joey	US EPA
Gaynor, Kevin	US EPA
Guzzetti, Christopher	US EPA
Heym, Kevin	US EPA
Hoppe, Michael	US EPA
Hornbacher, Robert	US EPA
Hughlett, Emily	USCG D9
Johnson, Christopher	USCG D5
Klopfenstein, Brandon	Colonial Pipeline

Klostermeyer, Bryan	USCG D5
Kormos, Dane	US EPA
Langley, Susan	MD SHPO
Lohman, Elizabeth	VDEQ
Lukasik, Heather	DHS
Martin, William	US EPA
McElhaney, Josh	USCG D5
McKelvey, Ray	Gallagher Marine Systems, LLC
Meadows, Nathan	WV DEP
Moore, Brian	PA DEP
Nelson, John	DOI
Nilsen, Ashley	US EPA
Nowak, Troy	MD SHPO
ORourke, Patrick	Energy Transfer
Pillow, Lauren	VDEQ
Porter, Benjamin	DOD USACE
Raju, Nitander	DOT
Regan, Patrick	VDEQ
Scheaffer, Sarah	DOI – FWS
Shaffer, Kate	National Aquarium
Sigler, Silvia	USCG D5
Smith, Jess	START – Tetra Tech
Steinfeld, Mike	MSRC
Strickland, Brooke	VDEQ
Takaki, Daniel	DOC – NOAA
Thorkilson, Kelly	USCG D5

Towle, Micheal	US EPA
Townsend, Tracy	OSHA
Voyles, Phillip	USCG
Walker, Max	USCG D8
Waters, Brian	DHS
Watson, Samantha	USCG D5
Welsh, Monet	USCG D5
Whitby, Mike	Halen Hardy
Wickersham, Jon	
Wilkinson, James	MSRC
Wilson, Daniel	Tri-State Bird Rescue and Research
Wrieden, Kristopher	USCG D5
Zanella, Matthew	USCG D8
Ziolkowski, Lila	ORSANCO