

# REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAMS

REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAMS (RRT) ARE MULTI-AGENCY COORDINATING GROUPS WHO ARE KEY PARTNERS IN ENSURING EFFECTIVE PLANNING, PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE TO OIL AND CHEMICAL INCIDENTS AFFECTING HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY, AS WELL AS THE ENVIRONMENT.

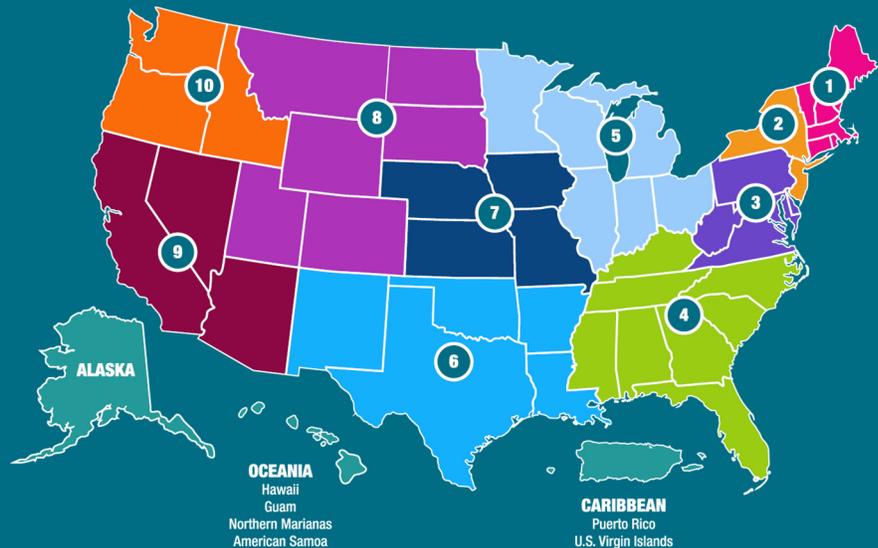
RRTs ensure coordinated, efficient, and effective support of federal, state, tribal and local responders to significant oil and hazardous substance incidents within a particular geographic region of the United States. RRTs are an intergovernmental forum that strengthen oil and hazardous substance planning, and build relationships among responders through the following activities:

- Develop Regional Contingency Plans (RCPs);
- Coordinate regional oil and chemical incident preparedness activities;
- Coordinate assistance and advice to the Federal On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) and state and local partners during response actions;
- Conduct and participate in training and exercises;
- Serve as a resource to Area Committees, State Emergency Response Commissions (SERCs) and Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs); and
- Participate in planning and coordination activities along borders shared with other RRTs or other nations (i.e., Canada, Mexico, and Arctic Nations).

## Membership

There are 13 RRTs, each representing a particular geographic region (including Alaska, the Caribbean, and Oceania). RRTs' membership is composed of representatives from:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)
- Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- Department of Defense (DOD)
- Department of Commerce/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (DOC/NOAA)
- Department of Energy (DOE)
- Department of the Interior (DOI)
- Department of Justice (DOJ)
- Department of Labor/Occupational Safety and Health Administration (DOL/OSHA)
- Department of State (DOS)
- Department of Transportation (DOT)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- General Services Administration (GSA)
- Health and Human Services (HHS)
- Nuclear Regulatory Commission (US NRC)
- State, territorial/tribal, and local representatives



Representatives from industry, environmental organizations, and civic groups may also participate in public RRT meetings and activities.

## Function

RRTs function in two ways: as a standing team and as an incident-specific team.

**Standing RRTs** participate in planning, preparedness, and training year-round, and are co-chaired by the EPA and the USCG. Standing RRTs may establish collaborative working groups and assign work as deemed appropriate, such as committees, workgroups or task forces.

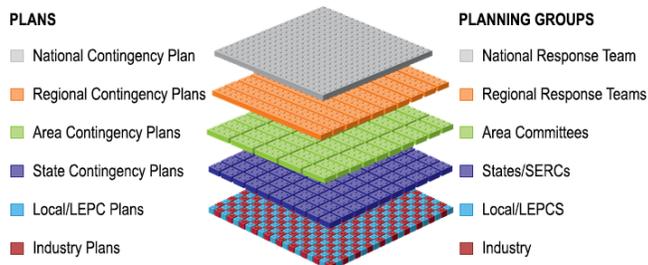
**Incident-Specific RRTs** provide assistance to Federal OSCs and responding agencies during an incident. Activation of an incident-specific RRT usually occurs at the request of a Federal OSC. Standing RRTs can also activate an incident-specific RRT if it is evident that the Federal OSC needs additional support, or a discharge transects state boundaries, may pose a substantial threat to the public or environment, or is a worst-case discharge. An incident-specific RRT is chaired by the federal agency providing the Federal OSC.

## Responsibilities

As outlined in 40 CFR 300.115 of the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP), the four major responsibilities of the RRTs are Planning, Response, Training, and Coordination.

### 1. PLANNING

Under the NCP, planning is divided into national, regional, area, state, local, tribal, and industry (vessel and facility) levels. Each level requires the development of a plan consistent with higher level plans. Statutes, regulations and plans at the local, state, tribal, regional, and national levels integrate federal, state, local, and tribal governments, and industry under a common mission.



Section 300.210 (b) of the NCP requires standing RRTs to develop RCPs to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of federal, state, local, and other organizations at an incident are clearly defined in advance. RCPs also outline when an incident-specific RRT should be activated, and the role of the RRT in supporting the Federal OSC. RCPs also delineate the inland and coastal zones upon which the EPA and the USCG have agreed. Following an incident, the standing RRT may request and review the Federal OSC's report to identify areas for improvement to Area Contingency Plans (ACPs) and RCPs.

The geographic region covered by an RRT can be divided into subareas based on considerations such as ecosystem, topography, or risk/threat considerations in the inland zone, or USCG Captain of the Port zones in the coastal zone. Area Committees, composed of federal, state, and local agency representatives, develop ACPs to support regional planning efforts to clearly define roles, hazards and response strategies prior to an incident. Standing RRTs may review ACPs and provide feedback and guidance. If conducted, the review ensures that the RRT member agencies' resources and issues are addressed, and provides consistency of individual ACPs with the RCP and the NCP. In addition, RRTs and Area Committees authorize the use of appropriate oil spill control agents listed on the NCP Product Schedule.

### 2. RESPONSE

While called a "response team," incident-specific RRTs do not deploy as a team to the incident, but member organizations reach back into their organizations to access resources and obtain technical advice needed by the OSC. RRTs provide technical advice, equipment, or manpower to assist Federal OSCs, federal agencies and state agencies with incident response. Incident-specific RRTs coordinate the decision-making processes for certain response strategies, including chemical countermeasures and in-situ burn. RRTs also provide a forum for federal and state agencies to exchange information about their abilities to assist Federal OSCs.

### 3. TRAINING

Training and exercises are implemented to enhance and test the ability of response agencies to execute plans and coordinate during a simulated event. An RRT may analyze exercise lessons learned of regional, area, and/or local plans to identify gaps or overlaps that require additional attention in an RCP or, as appropriate, other plans. Joint training provides a forum for planning and response partners to increase understanding and coordination among organizations.

### 4. COORDINATION

Standing and incident-specific RRTs promote awareness of and identify available resources from each federal agency and state within their regions. These resources include equipment, guidance, training and technical expertise for dealing with chemical releases or oil spills. If additional resources are required, the RRT can contact federal or state authorities to request assistance. This coordination by the RRTs ensures that resources are properly distributed and that no region is lacking what it needs to protect human health and the environment.



## THE OIL RESPONSE LANDSCAPE

- OVER 15,800 OIL SPILLS IN FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2018\*
- OVER 140,000 MILES OF RAIL, TRANSPORTING OVER 476,000 BARRELS PER DAY
- OVER 2,000 OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF OFFSHORE FACILITIES, ACCOUNTING FOR 18% OF U.S. CRUDE PRODUCTION
- OVER 10,000,000 BARRELS OF CRUDE OIL IMPORTED DAILY  
OVER 6,000,000 BARRELS OF CRUDE OIL EXPORTED DAILY

\*Reports to the National Response Center (NRC) in FY18

## THE HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES RESPONSE LANDSCAPE

- ROUGHLY 7,500 REPORTED RELEASES IN FY 2018\*
- AN ESTIMATED 3,800 AGRICULTURE FACILITIES
- ROUGHLY 1,800 CHEMICAL MANUFACTURING FACILITIES
- MORE THAN 1,700 ENERGY FACILITIES
- AN ESTIMATED 1,800 WATER AND WASTEWATER FACILITIES
- MORE THAN 2,500 FOOD AND BEVERAGE FACILITIES

\*Reports of "non-oil" releases reported to the NRC in FY18

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## National Response System

RRTs are part of a larger planning and response system known as the National Response System (NRS). The NRS ensures that oil and hazardous substance planning and response are effectively managed through its network of interagency, intergovernmental and private sector relationships and plans, providing federal resources to support state, local and tribal activities. The NRS is detailed in the NCP, 40 CFR part 300.

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## Additional Information

For more information about your RRT, please visit [www.nrt.org](http://www.nrt.org) > RRTs.

For more information about the NRS, please visit [www.nrt.org](http://www.nrt.org) > About NRT.