

Mr. Mike Faulkner
National Response Team
USEPA Headquarters
OEM/MC 5104A
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Mr. Faulkner

Section 300.115 of the National Contingency Plan requests that Regional Response Teams (RRT) provide letter reports to the NRT, summarizing recent activities, organizational changes, operational concerns, and efforts to improve state and local coordination. This Caribbean RRT (CRRT) report is submitted for the period of January 1 to December 31, 2011.

Executive Summary: The CRRT does not have any Challenges, Lessons Learned or Best Practices to share from incidents or activities in the region this past year. Several key members of the CRRT continued to be engaged in response activities in the Gulf of Mexico throughout the year, and the lessons learned and best practices observed during that response were reviewed and discussed during the 2011 semi-annual CRRT meetings.

I. MAJOR ACTIVITIES

A. Major/Noteworthy Response Activities

- **M/V ROYAL MISS BELMAR (VIN #1100671)**. On July 4th, 2011 Sector San Juan responded to a vessel that grounded near Great St. James in Pillsbury Sound, St Thomas. Five minor injuries reported and 400 gallons of diesel spilled into water due to a breach of the vessels tank. Numerous compartments compromised.
- **Barrio Vietnam Drum Storage Site; Guaynabo, PR** - Located in a residential area in the municipality of Guaynabo, this site was discovered through a 'tip' to the FBI. The Responsible Party (RP) was an individual, now deceased, who operated an off-spec/rejected chemical distribution company, shipping chemicals to such places as the Dominican Republic. Agents responded and discovered the dangerous conditions at the Site in September 2011. The FBI notified the Coast Guard, who subsequently transferred FOSC responsibility for the Site to EPA via a formal Statement of Agreement. EPA OSCs with the Caribbean Environmental Protection Division (CEPD) performed an assessment of the Site on 9/27/2011 and determined that conditions were so dangerous that an emergency removal action was necessary. Verbal authorization for CERCLA funds was obtained from the Division Director of ERRD, security service was established on 9/30, and the removal action was initiated on 10/4/2011.

Upon closer examination, actual site conditions were far worse than the original site assessment indicated. There were hundreds more containers than originally observed, and the conditions of most of the chemicals were much worse than depicted in the initial photos. The OSC met with Guaynabo officials, including Public Safety, Fire, Housing and office of the Mayor, to discuss contingency plans for the temporary relocation of residents downwind of the site. The municipality of Guaynabo assisted EPA in many aspect of the removal action, such as by providing free garbage and recycling dumpsters, removing a large derelict boat from the Site, and providing frequent police patrols. The Guaynabo Haz-Mat squad also toured the Site and set up their response truck in a vacant lot adjacent to the Site.

Stabilization, segregation, overpacking and containerization of damaged and degraded drums and small containers were conducted from October through December. Large quantities of scrap metal were shipped offsite for recycling, with the widow receiving the proceeds. EPA agreed to allow the Municipality of Guaynabo to use 16 junk vehicles for “jaws of life” training prior to shipment for recycling. As of mid-December, approximately 950 drums, 169 one-cubic yard boxes, and 36 roll-offs and dumpsters of materials had been collected and prepared for shipment. Complete stabilization of all containers is expected by late January early February. Additional site information can be found at: www.epaosc.org/barriovietnam

B. CRRT Meetings

- May 10-12, 2011, St Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands.
- November 8-10, 2011, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

C. Committee and Working Group Updates

- NSTR

II. GENERAL PREPAREDNESS AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING

A. Training:

- Provided funding for three prospective FOSC-R trainees to visit with Sectors New Orleans and Mobile for on the job training and experience in different response settings throughout the calendar year.
- Provided funding for fourteen prospective FOSC-R trainees to attend the Coast Guard Atlantic Strike Team FOSC-R seminar in Fort Dix, NJ on May 20th, 2011.
- Provided funding for four Pollution Responders to attend Science of Oil Spills (SOS) seminars to enhance readiness.

- A training session on the stand-alone ERMA system was conducted during the May 2011 CRRT Meeting.

B. Exercises and Workshops:

- *Vessel of Opportunity Skimming System Drill*: Exercise held by Sector San Juan in the Port of San Juan on November 7-10, 2011, observed by the CRRT in conjunction with the semi-annual meeting.
- *Clean Gulf Conference*: Provided funding for eight FOOSC-R's and Pollution Responders to attend the annual Clean Gulf Conference in San Antonio, TX on November 30th, 2011.

C. Federal, State, and Local Planning and Coordination Issues Efforts

- *International Offshore Drilling Response Plan (IODRP) Participation*: Sector Miami and District Seven continue to work closely with port partners concerning offshore oil spill response.

D. Major Best Practices from Responses, Trainings, Exercises/Workshops and other RRT Activities:


- NSTR

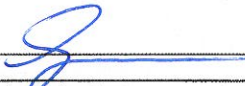
III. PERSONNEL CHANGES/ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

Captain Todd W. Lutes assumed duties as U. S. Coast Co-Chair Seventh Coast Guard District, replacing Captain Drew W. Pearson.

IV. ISSUES OR OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS REQUIRING NRT ATTENTION

- Funding for Federal and Commonwealth/Territorial agencies for travel to attend CRRT meetings, workshops and training continues to be problematic.

 3/2/12
 T. W. Lutes, Capt, USCG (Date)
 U.S. Coast Guard Co-Chair
 Seventh Coast Guard District

 3/6/12
 Eric Mosher (Date)
 EPA Co-Chair
 US EPA, Region 2