

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, 2013.

**Executive Summary:** The CRRT does not have any Challenges, Lessons Learned or Best Practices to share at this time from incidents or activities in the region this past year. Several significant issues which arose and were addressed during the response to the M/V JIREH grounding in 2012 were reviewed and discussed during the August 2013 CRRT meeting.

## **I. MAJOR ACTIVITIES**

### **A. Major/Noteworthy Response Activities**

#### **Guayanilla Bay Oil Spill; Guayanilla, PR**

In March and April 2013, EPA Region 2 assisted USCG Sector San Juan with identifying the source of oil entering Guayanilla Bay and the Caribbean Sea through a storm drain system in Guayanilla, Puerto Rico. The storm water sewer lies along the southern side of PR Route 127 and discharges into a mangrove shoreline bordering Guayanilla Bay. The USCG had removed several thousand gallons of oil/water mix from the drain and then plugged the lower end with soil. USCG interviewed representatives from surrounding companies to try and identify the responsible party (RP), but no viable lead was obtained.

EPA's RST contractor conducted geo-probe and sampling activities in the vicinity of the site and analyzed the collected samples of oil and soil. The geo-probe subcontractor, RST and EPA ensured that all efforts were made to locate possible underground utilities. The samples were sent to both the EPA lab in Edison, NJ and the USCG Marine Safety Lab in Connecticut for fingerprint oil analysis to determine a match with oil sources in the storm drain system. EPA also provided technical expertise and laboratory resources through the Environmental Response Team (ERT).

In July 2013, USCG transferred OSC responsibility to EPA. EPA mobilized its ERRS contractor to the site in September 2013. Petroleum odors were still present in the storm drain, and the soil plug was still in place. ERRS developed a work plan and identified contractors to remove the soil plug, collect the oil/water, hydro blast the drain and inspect it using a camera system to identify the break, and repair the drain. These activities were conducted between September and December 2013.

NOAA and FWS were consulted to determine the sensitivity of the Guayanilla Bay ecosystem. They indicated the presence of the following Endangered Species Act (ESA) resources within the area: humpback whales; green and hawksbill sea turtles, and possibly loggerheads; and manatees. Additionally, there is also designated critical habitat for ESA-listed corals in some areas of Guayanilla Bay, both at the entrance and inside the southeastern portion of the bay, and corals currently proposed for listing may also be present at the entrance and on cays inside the southeast portion of the bay

As of December 31<sup>st</sup>, the total quantity of waste shipped offsite was 79,250 gallons within tankers and 7000 pounds of oil contaminated sediment in drums. An additional ten tankers containing an estimated 63,000 gallons of oil/water, and twenty drums containing an estimated 17,500 pounds of oil contaminated sediment, remained staged awaiting disposal. Cleanup operations at the site continued into 2014.

#### **B. CRRT Meetings**

- The April 2013 CRRT meeting was postponed due to the impacts of sequestration, and the uncertainty surrounding the scheduled expiration of the continuing resolution at the end of March.
- August 6-8, 2013; San Juan, Puerto Rico.

#### **C. Committee and Working Group Updates**

- NSTR

## **II. GENERAL PREPAREDNESS AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING**

#### **A. Training:**

- Sector San Juan had a visit from PIAT (held training in USVI & PR/ 14-16 JAN)

- Had a visit from IMAT (held ICS training & assisted w/ AMSTEP TTX/ 21-23 JAN)

**B. Exercises and Workshops:**

- March 26-28<sup>th</sup> Sector San Juan exercised the VOSS annually to maintain a capable and effective preparedness posture for pollution response. The exercise also demonstrates D7 District Response Advisory Teams (DRAT) ability to coordinate and effectively deploy the VOSS gear. a. This also provided training to Sector San Juan response personnel involved in deploying the VOSS. b. Training was conducted with local contractors this provided a more proactive versus reactive response for future responses.

**USCG Exercises Conducted - PREP TTX CY 2013 Sector San Juan**

**Non-USCG Exercises – NSTR**

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

- The Region IV and CRRT Co-Chairs formed a work group meeting that was tentatively planned for February 2014 in St, Petersburg, Florida. The intent was to discuss and establish a path forward in the development of appropriate biological assessments (BAs) and to update, where required, past consultations conducted within our respective areas of responsibility. As we are now completing major rewrites and digitalization of the ACPs in RRT IV and the CRRT, we need to decide, as the core group of the RRT's, the most efficient way to bring our plans and agreements up to date and in regulatory compliance.

Our goal is to establish consensus and specific guidance and job aids for updating the existing BAs and consultations to ensure that the preauthorization of several response methodologies is possible. Current RRT agreements and elements of the existing ACPs that require BAs and consultation include: Dispersant Use, In-Situ Burning, Vessel Decontamination, and Solidifier Use. We invited key personnel from specific agencies in both Region IV and the Caribbean to participate in this work group.

- Sector San Juan conducted an Area Committee meeting (20 FEB) in USVI.

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

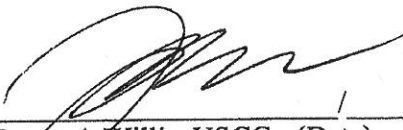
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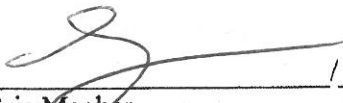
### III. PERSONNEL CHANGES/ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

- Mr. Darrel Wieland, USCG District Seven, has assumed the Coast Guard RRT/CRRT Coordinator position in late July.

### 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.

  
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Forest A. Willis, USCG (Date)  
U.S. Coast Guard Co-Chair  
Seventh Coast Guard District

  
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Eric Mosher (Date) 13/6/14  
EPA Co-Chair  
US EPA, Region 2