

Regional Response Team (RRT) Annual Report										
Region:		CRRT			Calendar Year:		2023			
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A. Annual Meetings										
	Dates		Location		# of Attendees		Website for presentations			
1.	March 14-16, 2023		Bayamon, PR		Aprox. 50		<a href="https://www.nrt.org/CRRTMarch2023">https://www.nrt.org/CRRTMarch2023</a>			
2.										
3.										
B. Activations / Notifications										
1.	Dates:	Feb 2023 to present	Event:	EPA Oversight of Dangerous Chemicals from Refinery on St. Croix				ACT	X	NOT
	Issue / Concern:		On February 9, 2023, EPA approved plans to safely remove anhydrous ammonia from the refinery on St. Croix, under EPA oversight. EPA also conditionally approved plans to remove liquified petroleum gas and amines. Repairs to the ammonia system were scheduled to begin first, followed by the ammonia removal, and finally the removal of liquified petroleum gas and amines.							
	Agencies Involved:		EPA, VI DPNR, VITEMA							
	Decisions Made:		<p>Under EPA oversight, Port Hamilton Refinery and Transportation (PHRT) removed anhydrous ammonia, amines, and liquid petroleum gas (LPG) from the facility as required by the legal action ordered by EPA. PHRT finished removing the anhydrous ammonia on May 14, the liquid amine on June 22, and the LPG on July 21. The majority of these materials have been shipped off island.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Under EPA oversight, specialized contractors transferred 8,400 gallons of liquid industrial grade ammonia into two shipping containers. The shipping containers were shipped off island on May 14. The shipment off island of the liquid ammonia marked significant progress in reducing the threat of a chemical release from the Port Hamilton Refinery.</li> <li>The initial removal of LPG from facility equipment took place through June 10, at which point the work was paused due to the need for additional shipping containers. Off-loading of LPG from facility equipment resumed once additional shipping containers arrived and was completed on July 21, 2023. Approximately 26,700 gallons of LPG were recovered from refinery units. Five shipping containers were shipped off island, with the final shipment on August 10, 2023.</li> <li>Under EPA oversight, specialized contractors removed over 327,000 gallons of rich amine liquid from facility equipment. Amine vapors and cleaning of the amine units resulted in 175,000 gallons of rinsate.</li> </ul> <p>Approximately 175,000 gallons of rinse water containing amines, called amine water rinsate, and 6,750 gallons of rinse water containing ammonia, called ammonia water rinsate also remain at the refinery. EPA and PHRT are discussing the final disposal of these water rinsates.</p>							
2.	Dates:		Event:					ACT		NOT
	Issue / Concern:									
	Agencies Involved:									

	<b>Decisions Made:</b>												
3.	<b>Dates:</b>		<b>Event:</b>							<b>ACT</b>		<b>NOT</b>	
	<b>Issue / Concern:</b>												
	<b>Agencies Involved:</b>												
	<b>Decisions Made:</b>												
4.	<b>Dates:</b>		<b>Event:</b>							<b>ACT</b>		<b>NOT</b>	
	<b>Issue / Concern:</b>												
	<b>Agencies Involved:</b>												
	<b>Decisions Made:</b>												

<b>C. RRT Exercises –Although not formal CRRT exercises, RRT Member Agencies participated in the following exercises within the Caribbean Region:</b>												
1.	<b>Dates:</b>	3/6/2023		<b>Event:</b>	Exercise Operation Thunderstruck, St. Croix, USVI							
	<b>Agencies Involved:</b>	Agencies/organizations attending included VITEMA, DPNR, DOH, DHS, VIFEMS, DOE, DOL, DOJ, VIPD, VIPA, JIC, VING, BMV, VIWMA, JFL Hospital, UVI, EPA, PHRT, and Ocean Point Terminals.										
	<b>Summary of exercise:</b>	This tabletop exercise was hosted by the US Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) to prepare for the de-inventory of chemicals at the Port Hamilton Facility (PHRT) under an EPA order.										
2.	<b>Dates:</b>			<b>Event:</b>								
	<b>Agencies Involved:</b>											
	<b>Summary of exercise:</b>											
3.	<b>Dates:</b>			<b>Event:</b>								
	<b>Agencies Involved:</b>											
	<b>Summary of exercise:</b>											
<b>D. Changes in RRT Leadership</b>												
<b>Agency</b>				<b>Outgoing Personnel</b>					<b>Incoming personnel</b>			
1)												
2)												
3)												
<b>E. Best Practices and Lessons Learned by the RRT (which may help other RRTs)</b>												

Due to limited IT capabilities at the commonwealth and territorial government level, virtual CRRT meetings were determined to be non-practical during the COVID pandemic. As a result of the time gap and the high level of personnel changes since the last in-person CRRT meeting in January 2020, the March 2023 meeting was the first post-pandemic, in-person CRRT meeting. In light of these factors, the agenda included a significant amount of time to reintroduce CRRT members and participants roles, responsibilities, and capabilities; review the location and contents of the Regional Contingency Plan, CRRT policies, procedures and guidance documents, etc.

#### **F. Federal, State, Local, and Tribal Planning and Coordination Efforts**

EPA continued to provide technical assistance and advice to VITEMA, DPNR and other territorial agencies in the reestablishment of the Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs) and their local contingency plans, and participated in exercises with multiple territorial agencies and entities in preparation for the chemical de-inventory operations at the Port Hamilton Facility (PHRT) on St. Croix.

#### **G. Challenges and Issues (and Operational Requirements Which May Require NRT Attention)**