

REGION II REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM

January 28, 2003

Executive Director
National Response Team
USEPA Headquarters - MC 5104A
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear :

As directed by Section 300.115 of the National Contingency Plan, the Region II Regional Response Team Report is submitted for the period of January 1, 2002 through December 31, 2002.

In an effort to adhere to the guidelines provided at this past year's NRT / RRT Co-Chairs meeting, this report is streamlined to cover only incidents and activities of national significance or interest.

I. MAJOR ACTIVITIES

A. NOTEWORTHY RESPONSE ACTIVITIES:

Continuing Building Decontamination following 9/11 Terrorist Attacks. EPA Region II has provided technical assistance to the US Postal Service at both the Morgan Postal Facility in New York City and the Hamilton Township Postal Facility in New Jersey, in response to the anthrax contamination at those facilities. EPA OSCs have provided assistance with issues such as cleanup and decontamination techniques, sampling and monitoring, and disposal of contaminated materials and PPE. For more information contact the EPA RRT Coordinator.

T/V PALERMO SENATOR. Lessons learned were shared with the RRT from the positive radiation reading on the T/V PALERMO SENATOR when it was anchored off NY on September 11, 2002. Issues for RRT action or investigation include security clearance concerns for non-federal civilians, special team equipment and compatibility for radiation assessment and response, and the complex challenges of both tracking and identifying shipping containers and operating traditionally land-based equipment at sea.

B. EXERCISES/WORKSHOPS:

Exercises:

Several industry-led PREP exercises occurred during this report period with various levels of federal participation.

Unannounced Industry PREP Drills:

The Coast Guard routinely conducts unannounced drills according to the PREP guidelines. The purpose of these drills is to improve both industry and Coast Guard response to oil spills. The drills are held in each CG Captain of the Port zone.

EPA Region II did not perform any unannounced exercises at FRP-regulated facilities during the period of this report, due to staff commitments to long-term projects resulting from the World Trade Center attacks.

Workshops/Seminars:

Nothing of national significance to report.

C. RRT MEETINGS:

RRT II held a meeting December 3-4, 2002 at the West Point Military Academy in West Point, NY. The goal of this meeting was to bring the members together for updates since September 11, 2001 as well as refocus the group on common priorities and review lessons learned from recent responses. The meeting was extremely well attended, and featured extensive discussions and exchanges of ideas on various issues facing the response community. Of common agreement from all agencies is that the response environment is rapidly changing, with tasking arriving in advance of resources and support. Weapons of mass destruction (WMD) preparation is currently the highest priority for planning and preparedness, but oil and “traditional” threats cannot be discounted. For a more detailed summary please contact the USCG RRT Coordinator.

II. GENERAL PREPAREDNESS AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING

A. TRAINING:

ICS training continues at the Area Committee / Local Spill Management Team level throughout the Coastal Zone.

EPA Region II continues to provide CAMEO training for state and local responders and planners at locations throughout the Region.

B. FEDERAL/STATE PLANNING EFFORTS /EFFORTS TO IMPROVE STATE AND LOCAL COORDINATION:

WMD response planning and training has been thrust into the forefront of all Federal, State and Local agencies. The response communities within Region II are using the close relationships that have been established throughout the years to work together as much as possible. As an example, EPA, USCG-District 1, NYSDEC, and NJDEP attended the quarterly meeting of the Regional Interagency Steering Committee, held in Newark, NJ on August 6-7. As ESF #10 Co-chairs, EPA and USCG gave presentations on the integration of the National Response System with both natural disaster response under the FRP and terrorism events under the various PDDs.

With multiple agencies at all levels, seeking to redefine response and contingency planning with regard to WMD, policy and guidance from the national/federal level is needed to establish consistency and normalcy.

Coastal Area Planning:

Several Coastal Area Committees are actively updating their plans to the new ICS-format prescribed by a September 2000 Commandant Instruction. For more details contact Mr. Scott Lundgren, D1 (mor).

Inland Area Planning:

Building upon its experiences and lessons learned from the World Trade Center response, EPA Region II is rewriting its Regional Disaster Plan to follow the ICS structure.

III. PERSONNEL CHANGES/ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

New contact information is available in the latest RRT II contact list. For further information, contact the USCG RRT Coordinator.

IV. ISSUES REQUIRING RRT ACTION:

RRT members will be called upon to provide additional capability information at future meetings, to improve use of RRT services by OSCs, States, and Tribes.

V. FUTURE PLANS:

NEXT RRT meeting:

The Region II RRT plans to hold a meeting April 29-30, 2002. The agenda and location are TBD. Updates will be sent via email and posted at <http://www.uscg.mil/d1/staff/m/rrt/rrt2.html>.

CONCURRENCE:

_____/_____
(Date)
EPA Co-Chair
U.S. EPA, Region II

_____/_____
(Date)
Captain
U.S. Coast Guard Co-Chair
First Coast Guard District