

REGION II REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM 2004 ANNUAL REPORT
Period of Report: January 1, 2004 – December 31, 2004

I. MAJOR ACTIVITIES

A. MAJOR/NOTEWORTHY RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

ATHOS I Spill: The T/V ATHOS I discharged up to 473,500 gallons of heavy crude oil on 25 November in the Delaware River near Paulsboro, NJ, resulting in initial surface and subsurface oil impacts in the states of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, with subsequent tarball impacts expected south to Chesapeake Bay and north of Cape May, NJ. Due to the location of the spill, both Regional Response Teams II and III were impacted and engaged. With MSO/Group Philadelphia serving as the Federal On-Scene Coordinator, the Coast Guard Co-Chair of RRT III assumed the lead role in RRT information sharing, consultations, and solicitation of RRT resource and expert support. Joint RRT II/III conference calls were held daily through 10 December, and three per week for an additional week. When RRT policies differed, separate RRT II conference calls were organized to build consensus and provide a consolidated answer to the Unified Command. The strong cross-boundary support and coordination provided by RRT II and III to the ATHOS I spill was seamless and generally transparent to the Unified Command.

M/V RIO PUELO: The Coast Guard was alerted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture on July 29 that they received a report that one of five containers carrying lemons aboard the M/V CSAV RIO PUELO contained an unknown "harmful biological substance." Before the vessel arrived, the Coast Guard's Captain of the Port of New York formed a Unified Command to manage any hazards in careful coordination with the States of New York and New Jersey, and with a wide array of federal, state and local agencies and port partners. The Coast Guard escorted the container ship CSAV RIO PUELO to the Maher Terminal at the Port of Newark, N.J., on August 6, 2004, after holding the ship at Ambrose Anchorage starting on August 4th due to the biological threat. In coordination with federal, state and local authorities, the containers' contents were examined, fumigated, and destroyed. A detailed after-action report will be released by CG Activities New York in the near future.

REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION: The 2004 Republican National Convention (RNC) was held at Madison Square Garden in Manhattan, New York from Monday, August 30th to Thursday, September 2nd. Approximately 35,000 people attended the convention, including 2,500 delegates, 15,000 members of the media, area dignitaries, diplomats, and foreign honored guests. This event was designated as a National Special Security Event (NSSE). The United States Secret Service (USSS) had the overall responsibility for the security, planning and implementation of the event. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was responsible for consequence management and the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) for crisis management.

The USSS created an Executive Steering Committee for the planning of the event with the following representation:

- Commissioner, New York City Police Department
- Commissioner, New York City Fire Department
- Commissioner, New York City Office of Emergency Management

- Director, New York State Office of Homeland Security (renamed from Office of Public Security)
- U.S. Attorney, Southern District of New York
- Assistant Director and Special Agent in Charge, FBI New York Field Office
- Regional Director, FEMA Region 2
- Special Agent in Charge, US Secret Service New York Field Office
- Port Authority of New York and New Jersey
- Commander, Coast Guard Activities New York

Eighteen subcommittees were established to plan for the different aspects of the event. Command and Control of the overall security operations for the convention was established by the U.S. Secret Service in accordance with Presidential Decision Directive-62. The Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC), located at One Police Plaza was designated the primary command and control post for the RNC. Senior decision making level personnel from participating agencies were assigned to the MACC. Several Federal, State and New York City command posts were established to support and take direction from the MACC. Per Department of Homeland Security (DHS) directive, the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN) was to be the primary command and control link; however, the requisite technological infrastructure was not in place at the MACC to maximize this capability. By default, telephone (both hard line & cellular) became the most effective means of communicating real-time intelligence and tactical information.

External coordination activities were accomplished through liaisons located at key forward and contingency command posts throughout the Port of New York/New Jersey. The following locations were staffed for the duration of the event:

- Multi-Agency Coordination Center, Manhattan, NY
- Tactical Operations Center, Madison Square Garden, NY
- Joint Information Center, Brooklyn, NY
- NYC Emergency Operations Center, Brooklyn, NY
- Principal Federal Official Cell, Manhattan, NY
- NORTHCOM ICP, Manhattan, NY
- FEMA RRIC, Fort Monmouth, NJ
- Interagency Intelligence Fusion Center, Manhattan, NY
- USSS ICP, Manhattan, NY
- JTTF Newark, NJ

The Coast Guard established a Maritime Security Incident Command Post (ICP) at ACTNY, with representation from New York City Police Department Harbors Unit, New York State Naval Militia, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, New Jersey State Marine Police, U.S. Park Police, EPA Region II and the NOAA Scientific Support Coordinator. All waterside security command and control operations were managed using the Incident Command System (ICS). The US Coast Guard RNC operation was named VIGILANT GUARD.

The USCG Atlantic Strike Team (AST) provided a pre-staged Decon Team to provide First Responder Decon at the Staten Island Home Port Pier. The AST also provided a HAZMAT

Rapid Assessment Team and a pollution response boat to support USCG and EPA FOSC responsibilities.

In addition to OSCs and other regional personnel, EPA predeployed national assets from ERT, its Radiological Emergency Response Team (RERT), the National Counter-Terrorism Evidence Response Team (NCERT) and NEIC Counter Terrorism Response Team (CTRRT), and the Airborne Spectral Photometric Environmental Collection Technology (ASPECT).

KINDER MORGAN TANK FAILURE: On October 30, 2004, a tank at Kinder Morgan Industries in Carteret, NJ containing 460,000 gallons of 50% Sodium Hydroxide solution collapsed releasing its contents 100 feet from the Arthur Kill waterway. Unified command was established for the incident response. Amount of product that entered the waterway is unknown. Water clean-up was deemed to be impractical due to the high solubility of the product; however, water monitoring was performed and fish kill was studied, in coordination with USFWS. Minimal impact to environment was noted. The Unified Command worked with federal/state and local response agencies to monitor land-side clean-up and environmental/wildlife impacts.

BURLINGTON COUNTY FLOODING: During the week of July 12-16, 2004, storm events dumped massive amounts of rain on towns within Burlington County, NJ. Four towns with major damage included Southampton Twp (aka Vincentown), Medford Lakes, Lumberton, and Pemberton. The NJDEP and Burlington County requested assistance from EPA, and OSCs were mobilized on July 14, 2004. Based on initial assessments and discussion with state and local stakeholders, EPA developed a deployment and response plan. Primary response functions included spill investigations, assessment and mitigation of oil-flooded basements threatening to discharge into the environment, collection of orphan drums and other oil/hazmat containers, and assistance with Household Hazardous Waste Collection. EPA activated the USCG's Atlantic Strike Team for assistance.

HURRICANE IVAN: In September 2004, Hurricane Ivan caused severe flooding conditions in the Trenton area of Mercer County, NJ. The State of New Jersey requested assistance from EPA Region 2 in conducting surveys and assessments of flood-related oil discharges. EPA OSCs and contractor personnel were mobilized, and removed oil from impacted properties.

THREE-WAY VESSEL COLLISION: On February 15, 2004, 3 vessels collided in the Kill Van Kull waterway off Constable Hook in the vicinity of Staten Island, NY. The three vessels (M/V SIBONATA, M/V YELLOW SEA and M/V PINAR KAPTANOGUL) sustained minor damage, but released no pollution. The Crisis Action Center (CAC) was stood up at USCG Activities New York. Vessel traffic restrictions were in place on the Kill Van Kull until vessels were removed and the investigation completed. Although no oil or hazardous materials were released, this incident emphasizes ongoing risks that pose high potential for environmental and economic damage.

B. RRT MEETINGS

- SPRING: The spring RRT2 meeting was held at the EPA Regional Office in New York City, NY on April 7-8, 2004. The meeting included presentations on the NRP, OSHA's National

and Regional Emergency Management Plans, GSA capabilities brief, RAD Monitoring Workgroup update, RNC planning, DOI capabilities brief, ICS 402 training for executives, and response briefs for the M/V STELLAMARE AND M/V JODREY.

- FALL: Due to the high level of regional activities, and scheduling conflicts, the Fall RRT2 meeting was postponed until February. The meeting will take place at the EPA's new Regional Response Center in Edison, NJ.

C. COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUP UPDATES

BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT WORK GROUP: EPA Region 2, USCG D1, USCG ACT NY, and USCG GRU/MSO LIS are working together to update the boundary roadways and accompanying text that define the inland and coastal zone in Region 2. Determinations to date for the D1 portion of Region 2 are that the boundary will:

- Remain geographically fixed. While there was some discussion of a boundary that would allow a different OSC based on the pollutant, source, or other incident specific situation, feedback indicated that this is too complex for notification purposes. Instead the boundary emphasizes flexibility after initial assessment and communication, but not at the notification phase.
- Remain roadway-based. Because of the above and development in the northeast, roadways remain the easiest mechanism of defining a boundary.
- Generally be closer to the water. Based on changes in agency responsibility since 9/11 and over the years since boundaries were created, most roadway changes that will be made reduce the size of the Coastal Zone. This is intended to reduce the number of non-maritime related responses that currently have the Coast Guard as the predesignated OSC. The most significant adjustment in Region 2 is within New York City, previously all Coastal Zone. Other adjustments will be made based on input of the USCG unit and EPA Region.
- Be amplified with text. Amplifying text to be added to the boundary reinforces the concept of mutual support, defines the flexibility for OSC assignments under NRP-activated responses (disaster response) under ESF#10, and provides a method of documenting OSC exchange between agencies for multiple reasons (workload, expertise, etc.).

RADIATION MONITORING (SMART-RAD) WORKGROUP OF THE NY/NJ AREA COMMITTEE:

In 2003, a workgroup of radiological scientists and emergency responders from the USCG, NOAA, EPA, DOE, DHS, NYC, NYS and NJ drafted guidelines for generating a radiation monitoring framework to address shortfalls discovered during the PALERMO SENATOR incident in New York in 2002. The workgroup built upon currently available programs and procedures, mainly the Federal Radiological Monitoring and Assessment Center (FRMAC), and lessons learned during response operations and drills. The result of this collaboration is the Special Monitoring of Applied Response Technologies (SMART) Radiological (RAD) Monitoring Module.

The focus of this Module is the radiological environmental monitoring considerations for the first few days (up to 100 hours) of a radiological incident. As a result, the document does not address environmental monitoring of groundwater impacts, nor cleanup standards. Furthermore, the document does not address the monitoring of individual members of the public for radiological contamination nor does it address decontamination protocols. Finally, the document does not address the health and safety protocol for emergency responders, which is the responsibility of the responding organizations.

SMART recommends monitoring methods, equipment, personnel training, and command-and-control procedures that strike a balance between the operational demand for rapid response and the Unified Command's need for feedback from the field in order to make informed decisions. SMART-RAD was designed to adopt aspects of the SMART format (for ISB and dispersant monitoring) for monitoring radiological releases. While written for the New York/New Jersey Area Plan, SMART-RAD was designed to be used in any geographical area. It is intended for use in any radiological response, whether it is a single agency or multi-agency/multijurisdictional event. This effort should be considered for national adoption by the group that maintains the existing SMART protocols.

II. GENERAL PREPAREDNESS AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING

A. TRAINING

ICS 402: ICS 402, Training for Executives, was held on April 8, 2004, at the Spring RRT2 meeting. The training, given by the Coast Guard's Atlantic Strike Team, was designed to give an overview of the roles and responsibilities in the ICS response structure.

B. EXERCISES/WORKSHOPS

EPA UNANNOUNCED FACILITY EXERCISE PROGRAM: EPA Region 2 conducted unannounced exercises at twenty-two (22) FRP-regulated facilities during the period of this report.

TOPOFF 3: Federal, state and local agencies, as well as the private sector have been actively participating in the planning for the NJ venue of the TOPOFF 3 exercise. TOPOFF 3 (T3) is a multi-level, interagency full-scale exercise (FSE) sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security. T3 is the focal point of the National Homeland Security Exercise Program. This exercise will focus on homeland security decision-making at the senior officials' level and will

include participation down to the local agency level. The Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP) is the DHS program lead. The UK and Canada are expected to participate in the T3 FSE. T3 will be linked with USNORTHCOM Exercise Ardent Sentry 05. TOPOFF 3 will occur April 4-10, 2005. Planners have maintained a bi-weekly meeting schedule for the NJ venue. Scenario is 95% complete for NJ.

C. FEDERAL, STATE, and LOCAL PLANNING AND COORDINATION EFFORTS

- LONG ISLAND SOUND ACP: Members of the Long Island Sound Area Committee are currently working on updating their Area Contingency Plan.
- NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY ACP: Members of the New York/New Jersey Area Committee convened in November 2004 to stimulate Area Committee relationships and begin work on an Area Contingency Plan update.
- PORT OF PHILADELPHIA ACP: Members of the Port of Philadelphia Area Committee are currently working on updating their Area Contingency Plan.

III. PERSONNEL CHANGES/ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

A. COORDINATOR CHANGES DURING THE SUMMER OF 2004

USCG Coordinator LTJG Barry Breslin replaced LT Rebecca Drew.

B. COAST GUARD COTP/FOSC CHANGES DURING THE SUMMER OF 2004:

USCG Group/MSO Long Island Sound: CAPT Peter Boynton replaced CAPT Joseph Coccia.
USCG Activities New York: CAPT Glenn Wiltshire replaced CAPT Craig Bone.

C. STATE REPRESENTATIVE CHANGES DURING 2004:

Mr. Andrew English, Acting Director, Bureau of Technical Support for the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, has assumed the role of New York State's representative to the RRT. He replaces Mr. Robert Marino, who recently retired.

IV. ISSUES OR OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS REQUIRING NRT ATTENTION:

A. The need for a common interagency response technology, highlighted during the RNC, needs to be addressed at the national level. Under the new NRP, agencies will respond using the principles of NIMS. There are common paper tools used under NIMS, but no common information technology applications or common protocols to support NIMS.

B. The SMART-RAD effort initiated at the NY/NJ Area Committee level should be considered for national adoption by the group that maintains the existing SMART protocols.

V. FUTURE PLANS.

Next RRT meeting:

The next Region 2 meeting will occur in February 2005 at the EPA Regional Response Center in Edison, NJ. The following Region 2 meeting is planned to be a joint RRT 1 and 2 meeting. Location and date are still to be determined.