

# Regional Response Team Job Aid

May 15, 2012



### Acknowledgement

The National Response Team (NRT) acknowledges the NRT member agencies, and state and federal agencies participating on the Regional Response Teams (RRTs), for their contributions in preparing this document. We invite comments or concerns on the usefulness of this document in all-hazard planning for responses. Please send comments to:

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U.S. Department of Commerce	U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Department of Defense	U.S. Department of Labor
U.S. Department of Energy	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency	U.S. Department of State
U.S. General Services Administration	U.S. Department of Transportation
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	

For more information on the NRT, please visit [www.nrt.org](http://www.nrt.org).

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Note: The terms OSC (On-Scene Coordinator) and FOSC (Federal On-Scene Coordinator) are often used interchangeably in the field. The Coast Guard uses FOSC and EPA uses OSC. In this document we will also use the terms interchangeably.

## BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

### Document Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide RRT Co-Chairs, Coordinators, and their staff with guidance for the performance of their roles and responsibilities. This document is intended to supplement existing RRT policies and procedures (available from the Regional Contingency Plan (RCP) and/or RRT Website). Since this guide contains a broad range of core information, it can be used as an orientation guide for individuals unfamiliar with the RRT Co-Chair and Coordinator responsibilities. Experienced Co-Chairs and Coordinators will find this document useful as a reference manual.

### Overview of the National Response System

The National Response System (NRS) is composed of the NRT, RRTs, OSC/Remedial Project Manager (RPM), Area Committees, and Special Teams and related support entities. The NRT as an organization does not physically respond to an incident scene; rather, it provides federal resources, technical assistance and policy guidance for pollution incidents in support of FOSCs. The following federal entities are members of the NRT and RRTs; they are either stakeholders, provide support, or have responsibilities during oil and hazardous substance emergencies, including chemical, biological, nuclear, and radiological releases.

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) *Chair*
- U.S. Coast Guard (USCG-DHS) *Vice Chair*
- Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- Department of Commerce/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- Department of Defense (DoD)
- Department of Energy (DOE)
- Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- Department of the Interior (DOI)
- Department of Justice (DOJ)
- Department of Labor/Occupational Safety and Health Administration (DOL/OSHA)
- Department of State
- Department of Transportation (DOT)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA/DHS)
- General Services Administration (GSA)
- U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (USNRC)

In addition to these agencies, other federal agencies with jurisdiction and expertise may support the response efforts. The 13 RRTs are responsible for developing regional planning and policy and coordinating bodies to provide advice and assistance to the FOSC<sup>1</sup>. The FOSC is the federal official pre-designated by EPA or the USCG to coordinate and direct responses under subpart D, or the government official designated by the lead agency to coordinate and direct removal actions under subpart E of the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP) (40 CFR § 300.5). The OSC and the RPM are primarily responsible for directing response efforts and coordinating all other efforts at the scene of a discharge or release, consistent with the NCP (§ 300.120 and § 300.125). The other responsibilities of OSCs and RPMs are described in § 300.135.<sup>2</sup> Communications activities for the NRT, RRTs, and FOSCs

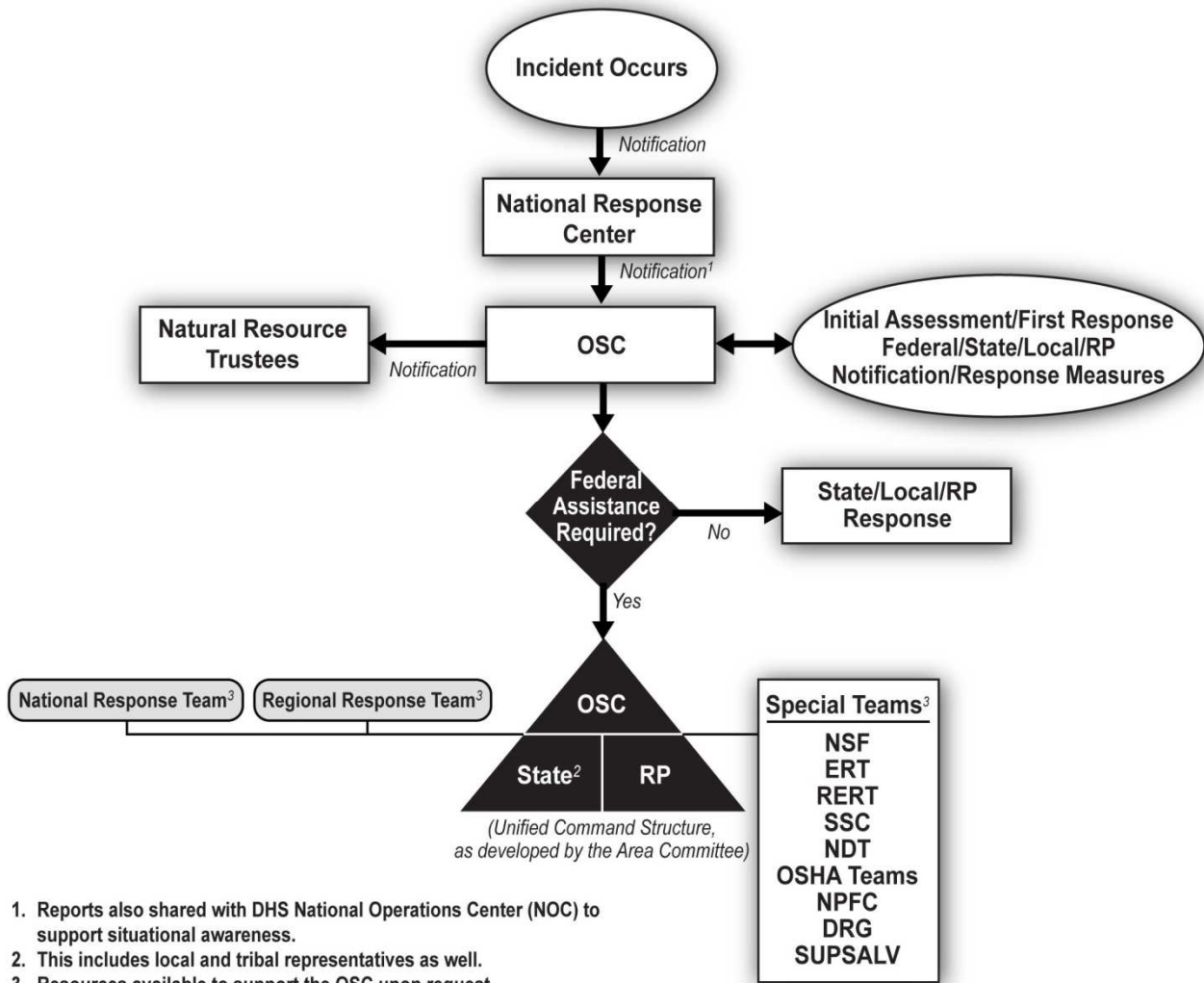
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<sup>1</sup> More information about the role of the RRT can be found in the NCP, 40 CFR § 300.115.

<sup>2</sup> 40 CFR § (§ 300.105)

are handled by the National Response Center (NRC). The NRC operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year to receive from and communicate to the appropriate FOSC reports of hazardous substance releases and oil spills.<sup>3</sup>

**Figure 1 – NRS Response Structure**



**Authorities**

The NRS and its components are authorized by:

- *NCP, 40 CFR Part 300* – Creates the framework for the NRS by outlining background theories, organizational structure, objectives and operational guidelines of the NRS.
- *Clean Water Act (CWA), 33 U.S.C. §1251 et seq. as amended by OPA 90* – Requires EPA to set water quality standards and implement pollution control programs.

<sup>3</sup> More information concerning the NRC is available from [www.nrc.uscg.mil](http://www.nrc.uscg.mil).

- *Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), 42 U.S.C. §6901 et seq.* – Includes guidelines on generation, transportation, treatment, storage and disposal of hazardous and non-hazardous wastes.
- *Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), 42 U.S.C. §9601 et seq.* – Also known as Superfund, gives authority for direct responses (both short-term removals and long-term remedial response actions) to releases or threatened releases of hazardous substances that may endanger public health or the environment; establishes a trust fund to pay for cleanup when no Responsible Party (RP) can be identified.
- *Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), 42 U.S.C. §11001 et seq., or Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) Title III* – Establishes requirements for federal, state and local governments, tribes, tribal nations, native villages and industry regarding emergency planning and community right-to-know reporting on hazardous and toxic chemicals.

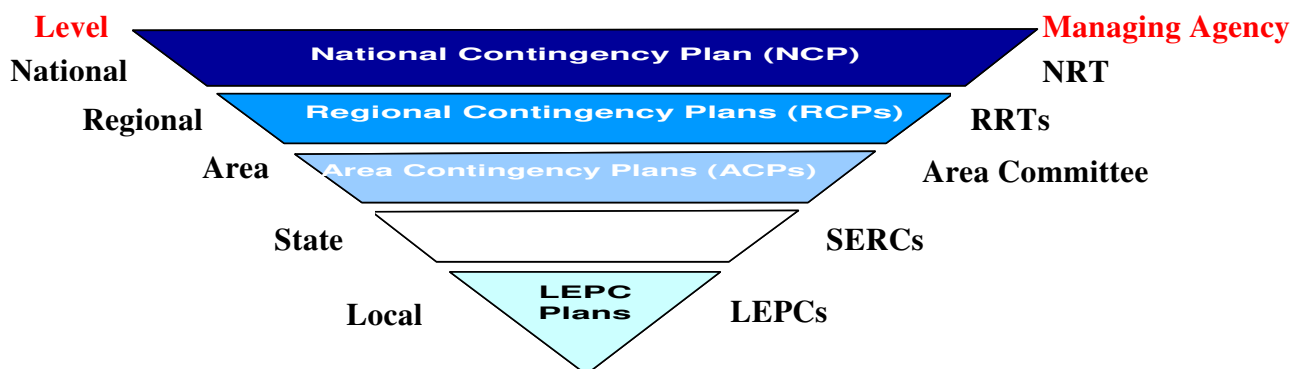
### Cleanup and Response Funding

Funding for cleanup and response operations is the responsibility of the RP. The Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund (OSLTF)—which is administered by the National Pollution Funds Center (NPFCC)—or CERCLA provides additional funding as appropriate for response operations and provides compensation for claimants who demonstrate damages resulting from hazardous substances or oil pollution. These funds can be accessed by the FOSC, a state funding request, and by submission of a claim. Certain federal agencies serving as trustees for Natural Resource Damage Assessments (NRDA) can access funds from the OSLTF.

### Preparedness

All levels of government are assigned preparedness responsibilities under EPCRA. EPCRA is responsible for the integration of federal, state, and local governments into the NRS, creating 50 State Emergency Response Commissions (SERCs) and more than 2,000 Local Emergency Planning Commissions (LEPCs). RRTs, SERCs, and LEPCs are responsible for maintaining more specific response plans that focus on providing an effective and coordinated response. RRTs develop RCPs that identify government, commercial, and academic resources in specific geographic areas and define their respective roles and responsibilities. These plans follow the NCP format and are coordinated with Area Contingency Plans (ACPs) and LEPC plans. ACPs and LEPC plans are written in greater detail, but have a limited geographic scope. ACPs include: the geographic areas covered by the plan, responsibilities, equipment and procedures for obtaining resources, and information on how the plan integrates with other plans.

*Figure 2 – Plans Supporting the NCP*



More detailed information is available in the NRT Outreach PowerPoint presentation, which can be found on the NRT Website at [www.nrt.org](http://www.nrt.org).

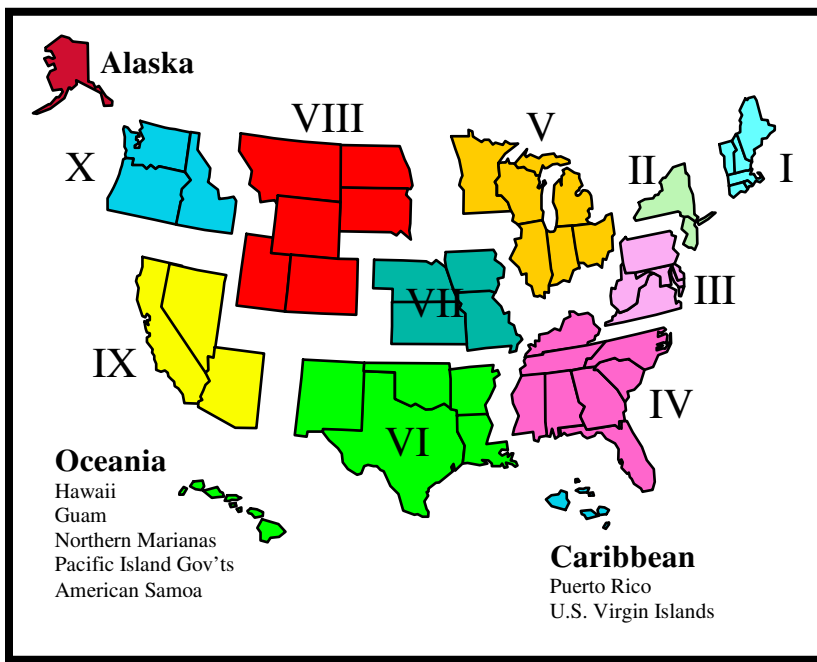
### **FOSC's Responsibilities to the RRT**

- Before the spill, provide draft revisions of the ACP to the RRT for review and comment.
- Request an incident-specific RRT as soon as you expect you will seek approval to use dispersants, surface-washing agents, in-situ burning, or other chemical countermeasures or alternate technologies.
- May seek support from the RRT consistent with their expertise when needed and including countering threats to the environment, mobilizing resources from RRT member agencies, identifying technical experts, and preparation and dissemination of accurate response information to the media and elected officials.
- Submit pollution reports to the RRT and other appropriate agencies as significant developments occur. (*40CFR300.135(m)*)
- Submit a complete report on the removal operation and the actions taken, as requested by the NRT or RRT. (*40CFR300.165(a)*)

## REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM

The RRT is a key component of the US Federal Government's commitment to ensure effective preparedness and response to oil and chemical incidents affecting human health and safety, as well as the environment. As described in the NCP, RRTs are responsible for planning and coordinating regional preparedness, as well as planning and coordinating response actions in support of the FOOSC. RRT membership consists of designated representatives from each federal agency participating in the NRT together with state and local government representatives (as agreed upon by the states). There are 13 RRTs: one for each of ten EPA regions, plus one each for Alaska, the Caribbean and Oceania.

*Figure 3: RRT Map*



RRTs function in two ways: as a standing team and as an incident-specific team. The roles and responsibilities of the RRTs are described in more detail below and outlined in § 300.115 of the NCP.



## **The Standing RRT**

Standing RRTs are planning, policy, and preparedness coordinating bodies. They provide a regional mechanism for the development and coordination of preparedness activities before a response action is taken. Standing RRTs meet regularly at varying locations within their respective regions to develop working relationships, exchange information, and develop regional policies and procedures for responses. Meetings provide a forum for adopting policies, considering whether to request and review FOSC reports on incidents in the region, and discussing lessons learned from responses. RRTs also typically maintain workgroups in which representatives focus on specific priority tasks.

Representatives from EPA and USCG co-chair each standing RRT. States are represented by state environmental agencies or emergency management officials. In addition, representatives from industry, environmental organizations, and civic groups may also make important contributions to RRTs, although they are non-voting members.

The activities of the standing RRT (§ 300.115 (i)) include:

- Recommend changes in the regional response organization as needed, and revise the RCP as needed;
- Evaluate the preparedness of the participating agencies and the effectiveness of ACPs for the federal response to discharges and releases;
- Provide technical assistance to the response community for preparedness;
- Review and comment, to the extent practicable, on LEPC plans or other issues related to the preparation, implementation, or exercise of such plans upon request of a LEPC;
- Evaluate regional and local responses to discharges or releases on a continuing basis, considering available legal remedies, equipment readiness, and coordination among responsible public agencies and private organizations, and recommend improvements;
- Recommend revisions of the NCP to the NRT based on observations of response operations;
- Review OSC actions to ensure that RCPs and ACPs are effective;
- Encourage the state and local response communities to improve their preparedness for response;
- In coordination with Area Committees and in accordance with any applicable laws, regulations, or requirements, conduct advance planning for use of dispersants, surface washing agents, surface collecting agents, burning agents, bioremediation agents, or other chemical agents in accordance with subpart J of the NCP;
- Be prepared to provide response resources to major discharges or releases outside the region;
- Conduct or participate in training and exercises, as necessary, to encourage preparedness activities of the response community within the region;
- Meet at least semiannually to review response actions carried out during the preceding period, consider changes in RCPs, and recommend changes in ACPs;
- Provide letter reports on RRT activities to the NRT twice a year, no later than January 31 and July 31. At a minimum, reports should summarize recent activities, organizational changes, operational concerns and efforts to improve state and local coordination;

- Ensure maximum participation in the national exercise program for announced and unannounced exercises; and
- Encourage outreach to private industry for cooperative joint training exercises and educational opportunities.

Under the NCP, planning is divided into several levels: national, regional, area, state, local, vessel, and facility. Each level requires the development of a plan, all of which must be consistent with the NCP and other higher-level plans. Each standing RRT is responsible for developing and maintaining an RCP. The purpose of the RCP is to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of federal, state, local, and other responders at an incident site are clearly defined in advance of the incident.

In the same way that RRTs develop RCPs, Area Committees—composed of federal, state, and local agency representatives, as well as tribal and industry representatives—develop and maintain ACPs. The appropriate FOSC responsible for the area (USCG for coastal ACPs and EPA for inland ACPs) oversees the process of development and revision of the ACPs by the Area Committees. The FOSC is also the link to the standing RRT to ensure they have the opportunity to review and provide comments on the ACPs and each revision. The FOSC responsible for the area oversees the process and works with the standing RRT and state, local, and tribal representatives throughout the ACP's development. The standing RRT should review the ACP to provide feedback and guidance to Area Committees to ensure: (1) RRT member agencies' resources and issues are addressed appropriately; and (2) inter-area consistency of individual ACPs with the RCP and NCP.

As part of their planning process, RRTs and Area Committees identify resources at risk that need to be considered in the event of an incident. In addition, RRTs and Area Committees address the use of appropriate dispersants, surface washing agents, surface collecting agents, bioremediation agents, miscellaneous oil spill control agents listed on the NCP Product Schedule, and the use of burning agents. Each RRT has its own dispersant checklist, methods to address dispersants, and use of alternative technologies. The RCP and/or RRT Websites should be referenced to obtain the RRT-specific information.

RCPs and ACPs address the specific contexts in which such products should and should not be used. RCPs also outline when an incident-specific RRT should be activated and describe the role of the RRT in supporting the FOSC.

### **The Incident-Specific RRT**

While the standing RRT serves to provide the appropriate regional mechanism for development and coordination of preparedness activities before a response action is taken, the incident-specific RRT mechanism is available for coordination of assistance and advice to the FOSC during incident response.

The role of the incident-specific RRT is determined by the specifics of the response. Some RRTs activate an incident-specific RRT for unusual or hard-to-manage incidents. Other RRTs activate an incident-specific RRT only if there is a problem that cannot be resolved by the Incident or Unified Command or to ensure accurate dissemination of response information to its

membership. For the most part, RRTs will generally agree to activate an incident-specific RRT if it is evident that the FOSC needs additional consultation, resources, or support.

Key responsibilities of the incident-specific RRT generally include:

- Supporting the FOSC;
- Monitoring the response;
- Coordinating on issues of concern that cannot be resolved within the response organization;
- Providing communications support;
- Making recommendations to the FOSC consistent with the RRT's expertise and/or specific agency authorities, responsibilities, and/or expertise;
- Providing advice to the FOSC on the use of chemical countermeasures (e.g., dispersants and in situ burning (ISB)) that have not been preapproved for use in the response area;
- Assisting the FOSC in mobilizing resources available from RRT members in the region; and
- Providing timely consultation/concurrence to the OSC's authorization for the use of dispersants, ISB, or other chemical treatment agents for areas not preapproved.

If the assistance requested by a FOSC exceeds an RRT's capability, the RRT may request assistance from the NRT. With incident-specific RRTs, participation by the RRT member agencies will relate to the specific nature of the incident, including its location.

To coordinate an effective response, the Unified Command is a structure that integrates the "Incident Commanders" (ICs) from the federal authority, state authority, and RP-designated to manage the incident. Ideally, consensus on response decisions will be achieved within the Unified Command. The incident-specific RRT can be used in accordance with the NCP (300.115) as a mechanism to obtain technical assistance, support, and guidance from the leadership of his or her own agency, other federal agencies, and local, state, and tribal governments. While the RRT can assist the efforts of the Unified Command in reaching a consensus, the FOSC retains ultimate decision-making authority.

The RRT may be activated by the RRT Chair as an incident-specific response team when a discharge or release:

- Exceeds the response capability available to the OSC/RPM in the place where it occurs;
- Transects state boundaries;
- May pose a substantial threat to the public health or welfare of the United States or the environment, or to regionally significant amounts of property; or
- Is a worst case discharge, as described in the NCP at § 300.324.

RCPs shall specify detailed criteria for activation of RRTs.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> 40 CFR § 300.115 (j) (1) (iv)

The RRT will be activated during any discharge or release upon a request to the chair of the RRT from the OSC/RPM or from any RRT representative. Requests for RRT activation shall later be confirmed in writing.<sup>5</sup> Each representative, or an appropriate alternate, should be notified immediately when the RRT is activated.

Whenever the RRT is activated for an incident, the RRT Coordinator should notify the NRT Executive Director of the activation. The purpose of the notification will be to keep the NRT member agencies informed in the event that the incident escalates to a national response level. To ensure timely notification, please confirm that the Executive Director's contact information is added to the email/phone lists of the RRTs.

During prolonged removal or remedial actions, the RRT may not need to be activated, may need to be activated only in a limited sense, or may need to have available only those member agencies of the RRT that are directly affected or that can provide direct response assistance.

When the RRT is activated for a discharge or release, agency representatives shall meet at the call of the chair and may:<sup>6</sup>

- Monitor and evaluate reports from the OSC/RPM, advise the OSC/RPM on the duration and extent of response, and recommend to the OSC/RPM specific actions to respond to the discharge or release;
- Request other federal, state, or local governments, or private agencies, to provide resources under their existing authorities to respond to a discharge or release or to monitor response operations;
- Help the OSC/RPM prepare information releases for the public and for communication with the NRT;
- Make recommendations to the regional or district head of the agency providing the OSC/RPM that a different OSC/RPM should be designated, if circumstances warrant; and
- In coordination with the FOOSC, submit pollution reports to the NRC as significant developments occur.

At the regional level, a Regional Response Center (RRC) may provide facilities and personnel for communications, information storage, and other requirements for coordinating the response. The location of each RRC should be provided in the RCP.

When the RRT is activated, the RRT Coordinator should encourage affected states to participate in all RRT deliberations through their designated RRT representative. State government representatives participating in the RRT have the same status as any federal member of the RRT.

To increase and enhance cross-regional coordination, impacted RRTs and/or the NRT should consider holding joint conference calls when an incident transects or has the potential to transect regional boundaries. Consideration should be given to whether the joint conference calls should include un-impacted RRTs for information sharing or coordination purposes. Meeting

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<sup>5</sup> 40 CFR § 300.115 (j) (2)

<sup>6</sup> 40 CFR § 300.115 (j) (4)

summaries for individual and joint incident-specific meetings should be exchanged as appropriate.

The RRT can be deactivated when the incident-specific RRT chair determines that the OSC/RPM no longer requires RRT assistance.

The RRT should be notified of certain information even when full activation is not necessary. Systematic communication of pollution reports or other means will keep RRT members informed regarding actions of potential concern to a particular agency or to assist in later RRT evaluation of region-wide response effectiveness.

Issues that cannot be resolved at the regional level may be referred to the NRT for advice (NCP, 40 CFR § 300.110). This scenario may occur when there is insufficient national policy guidance on a matter before the RRT, a technical matter requiring solution, a question concerning interpretation of the NCP, or a disagreement on discretionary actions among RRT members.

The RRT serves as a useful and timely forum at times, via the incident-specific RRT, whereby the Co-Chairs (EPA and USCG) can leverage their environmental enforcement authorities to assist or guide RPs into taking preferred or specific response actions or countermeasures to mitigate potential or actual pollution threats. While the RRT may be assisting the OSC in his or her response actions, the individual agencies that make up the RRT may use their own individual authorities to support the response effort.

### **The RRT as a Multiagency Coordination Group (MAC Group)**

In addition to their obligations under the NCP, the RRTs may serve as MAC Groups or be a resource to MAC Groups within the National Incident Management System (NIMS) framework. A MAC Group is a group of administrators or executives, or their appointed representatives, who are typically authorized to commit agency resources and funds. A MAC Group can provide coordinated decision-making and resource allocation among cooperating agencies, and may establish the priorities among incidents, harmonize agency policies, and provide strategic guidance and direction to support incident management activities.

### **Role of the RRT during an Emergency Support Function (ESF) #10 Response**

When ESF #10 is activated under the National Response Framework (NRF), the regional lead is responsible for developing a plan for providing the support requested under the appropriate ESF #10 mission assignment, including organizing support from ESF #10 support agencies as needed. In some cases, one or more RRT members may participate or stand watch at FEMA's Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC) or Joint Field Office (JFO) for a particular incident. In other cases, it may be appropriate to activate an incident-specific RRT to coordinate and communicate among ESF #10 partner agencies. The RRT can provide the following unique features in support of ESF #10 response activities:

- RRTs build and maintain pre-incident partnerships with other federal agencies, states, tribes, tribal nations, native villages, and some industry and local agencies.

- Incident-specific RRTs can be convened with little advance notice to provide coordination, communication, or technical support.
- RRTs can provide environmental policy and coordination support for the ICs and OSCs.
- In general, RRTs can provide all of the other types of support described above for incident-specific RRTs.

When an RRT is activated for an ESF #10 response, it is the responsibility of the regional ESF lead to ensure appropriate coordination between the RRT and JFO, if needed.

While a JFO is not stood up for every ESF #10 activation (sometimes only the FEMA RRCC is activated) the RRT can act as an advisory unit to the Debris Workgroup and/or to the Interagency Health and Safety Committee, both of which may be established at the JFO or RRCC. Members of an RRT have strong regional knowledge, broad ranges of experience and expertise, and large professional working networks. Thus, in addition to an RRT's traditional role in support of FOSCs who are responding to oil and hazardous substances incidents, they should also be considered as a source for interagency liaison, anticipation of future issues, technical assistance, advice, and identification of potential resources that pertain to the various environmental and public health missions that may be addressed under ESF #10.

The RRT can serve as a forum through the FEMA Liaison to leverage action and discussion regarding the use or intended use of Stafford Act funding for ESF #10 activities. There is precedent for this in a dated memorandum of understanding (MOU) or memorandum of agreement (MOA) for the use of Stafford Act funding to support ESF #10 activity.<sup>7,8</sup> During a Stafford Act incident, Stafford Act funding will be used to address oil and hazardous materials incidents that are not at preexisting sites under CERCLA or Federal Water Pollution Control Act (FWPCA), for which Federal assistance is requested.<sup>9</sup>

### **RRT Membership**

Each participating agency should designate one member and at least one alternate member to the RRT. Agencies whose regional subdivisions do not correspond to the standard federal regions may designate additional representatives to the standing RRT to ensure appropriate coverage of the standard federal region. Participating states may also designate one member and at least one alternate member to the RRT. Tribal, tribal nation, and native village governments may arrange for representation with the RRT appropriate to their geographic location. All agencies and states may also provide additional representatives as observers at RRT meetings.

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<sup>7</sup> More information about the use of Stafford Act funding to support ESF #10 activities can be found in the FEMA Response and Recovery Directorate Policy Number 9523.8.

<sup>8</sup> More information about the use of Stafford Act funding to support ESF #10 activities can be found in the Policy Guidance on ESF #10 Mission Assignments Memorandum (Suiter-Makris Memo) at [http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/pa/9523\\_8b.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/pa/9523_8b.shtm).

<sup>9</sup> NRF ESF #10 – Oil and Hazardous Materials Response Annex

## **Federal Agencies**

RRT members should designate representatives and alternates from their agencies as resource personnel for RRT activities, including RRT work planning and membership on incident-specific teams in support of the OSCs/RPMs. Issues regarding regional agency representation that cannot be resolved regionally may be brought to the agency NRT representative for resolution.

## **State**

Affected states are encouraged to participate actively in all RRT activities. Each state governor is requested to assign an office or agency to represent the state on the appropriate RRT; to designate representatives to work with the RRT in developing RCPs; to plan for, make available, and coordinate state resources; and to serve as the contact point for coordination of response with local government agencies, whether or not represented on the RRT. The state's RRT representative should keep the SERC, described in 40 CFR § 300.205(d), apprised of RRT activities and coordinate RRT activities with the SERC.

## **Local**

Local governments may participate in activities of the appropriate RRT, as provided by state law or as arranged by the state's representative.

## **Tribes**

Tribes, tribal nations, and native villages are also invited to participate in RRT activities.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **RRT Coordinators**

#### **General Responsibilities:**

- Provides general support to the RRT leadership to ensure that the RRT functions effectively;
- Provides the coordination link between the RRT Co-Chairs and the RRT membership necessary to make the RRT a successful organization;
- Provides a link to the NRT Executive Secretariat;
- Coordinates with the membership of the RRT to encourage participation in meetings;
- Ensures that Committee activities are pursued to completion;
- Follows NRT activities to ensure that the RRT is made aware of relevant issues—there are two RRT Coordinators, one assigned to each EPA and USCG Co-Chair, and each RRT has its own process for sharing work between the two Coordinators;
- Serves as a staff member who does not have voting rights on the RRT; and
- Serves as a link with other RRTs to enhance cross-regional coordination and information sharing.

### **Role of the RRT Coordinator during a Large or Trans-Regional Event:**

During a large event, such as a Spill of National Significance (SONS), or natural disaster response, many support functions may fall to the RRT Coordinator to conduct directly, or to ensure that they are addressed by other entities. The following is a list (not inclusive) of those functions:

- Coordinate and facilitate RRT activation calls during the incident, including developing and distributing minutes of calls;
- Provide guidance or policy to the Unified Area Command or other governing body during an incident on roles and procedures of the incident-specific RRT;
- Coordinate SONS discussions between USCG Districts and/or EPA Regions where the incident crosses USCG District or EPA Region boundaries;
- Coordinate SONS discussions where the incident crosses international boundaries;
- Coordinate discussions with USCG Sectors within a USCG District, or EPA Regions, on areas of responsibility where the incident transects USCG Sectors or EPA Regions;
- Provide copies of the RCP, ACPs, pre-authorizations, and preapprovals (for dispersants, solidifiers, etc.) to requestors (e.g., NRT, HQ, other agencies);
- Assist in coordinating agency discussions for issues that require RRT input, such as the use of ISB, surface washing agents (SWA), and other similar discussions at the request of the FOSC;
- Maintain the RRT Website, ensuring that all relevant and needed documents are posted, such as factsheets and RRT membership lists;
- Facilitate the review of alternate technologies being considered by the Unified Area Command or Unified Command;
- Assist Logistics Section Chief in identifying specific technical specialists needed by the Unified Command, by request;
- Support the Liaison Officer by conducting liaison activities where requested, including identifying subject matter experts (e.g., policy compliance, liaison to the NRT, NIC);
- Identify subject matter experts with communication and media skills for use in the Joint Information Center (JIC) for interviews and development of public education materials, and respond to technical questions at press conferences or via social media, by request;
- Assist the FOSC in staffing interagency liaison positions in a timely manner, for example: Historic Properties Officer, Government Affairs Technical Specialist, Environmental Policy & Compliance Technical Specialist, and Tribal Affairs Technical Specialist (the last three reporting to the Liaison Officer); and
- Communicate with the NRT Executive Director and other impacted RRTs to facilitate information sharing (e.g., joint meetings and sharing of meeting summaries) between the NRT and RRTs.

The RRT Coordinator may use his/her RRT and stakeholder contacts to facilitate support. In particular, the RRT Coordinator can greatly assist the Liaison Officer since the Coordinator already knows many of the stakeholders concerned. The RRT Coordinator may deploy to the Unified Command either as an autonomous Agency Representative representing the RRT and reporting to the Co-Chair, or as an Assistant Liaison Officer in which case s/he takes direction from the Liaison Officer for the duration of the assignment. RRT Coordinators from other



regions, although unfamiliar with the stakeholders in the impacted area, still have the knowledge and skills either to backfill the local RRT Coordinator, or to serve effectively on the Liaison staff in the Unified Command.

### **Core Responsibilities:**

#### **Pre-Meeting Support:**

- Establish time and location of RRT meetings;
- Ensure adequate parking and transportation;
- Arrange for necessary audiovisual equipment;
- Draft and ensure approval of agenda;
- Issue meeting announcements with current information and a draft agenda;
- Poll the membership for timely new topics of general interest and secure speakers for these topics;
- Update the RRT Website with meeting information and agenda;
- Provide training opportunities for members during the RRT meetings;
- Solicit speakers for training and presentation opportunities (voluntary or by invitation);
- Coordinate with workgroup chairs for speakers or training during workgroups; and
- Update the proposed training schedule for future RRT meetings and e-mail to members.

#### **Meeting Support:**

- Attend meetings;
- Work with the Co-Chair/facilitator to maintain adherence to the agenda and timeframe;
- Ensure that notes are taken at meeting;
- Ensure that sign-in sheets are complete;
- Act as a liaison between guest speakers and RRT;
- Ensure that audio-visual equipment is available when needed and is functioning properly;
- Participate in Training Workgroup to solicit and coordinate training opportunities for the next RRT meeting for approval by Executive Committee; and
- Ensure copies or handouts are made for presentations during the meeting.

#### **Post-Meeting Support:**

- Write the draft minutes/summary of the meeting and send out for review (or contract such support);
- Revise minutes/summary as needed (or contract such support);
- E-mail revised minutes/summary and other documents from meeting to attendees and other parties;
- Post revised minutes/summary and other documents from meetings to attendees and other parties on RRT Website; and
- Coordinate follow-up on action items.

#### **RRT Co-Chairs Support:**

- Support Co-Chairs on special projects;
- Serve as administrative support to Co-Chairs; and
- Conduct other activities as requested by Co-Chairs.

**RRT Planning/Organizational Support:**

- Maintain RRT files: keep track of correspondence, work plans, activity reports, actions, RCPs, and other items;
- Build and maintain RRT membership lists;
- Draft semiannual RRT reports;
- Draft annual work plans;
- Maintain RRT Operations Manual; and
- Coordinate preparation, updates, and revisions of RRT's plans (e.g., RCP).

**RRT Committee Participation:**

- Participate in standing and ad hoc RRT committees and working groups, as requested by RRT Co-Chair;
- Attend seminars and conferences related to RRT areas of concern; and
- Attend the NRT-RRT Co-Chairs annual meeting.

**Incident-Specific RRT Team Responsibilities:**

- Provide information to RRT members and, as appropriate, other RRTs and the NRT on incidents;
- Cooperate with the incident Liaison Officer as the Agency Representative for the RRT and ensure the Liaison Officer knows that the Coordinator and the RRT are available as a resource and source of information;
- Coordinate incident-specific RRT meetings and/or conference calls (e.g., coordinate RRT activation via NRC teleconference); and
- Request that information be posted at the incident website (i.e., EPAOSC.org, IncidentNews.gov, or USCG Public Information Emergency Response site).

**Communications and Information Management:**

- Maintain knowledge of and monitor NRT activities and NRT Committee/Subcommittee work;
- Distribute NRT minutes;
- Ensure that the RRT receives updates on the status of ACPs in the region, including status of pre-authorization plans for chemical countermeasures and ISB;
- Maintain communications and information exchange with NRT and neighboring RRTs;
- Respond to information requests about the RRT from agencies and public;
- Act as a liaison between the RRT and state and local government, special interest groups, and industry;
- Develop and maintain RRT Website, as appropriate;
- Participate in the RRT Coordinators' conference calls with the NRT Executive Secretariat; and
- Provide feedback to surveys and requests for information, reports and PowerPoint presentations by the NRT for the annual NRT-RRT Co-Chairs Meeting.

**Other Responsibilities (as needed):**

**Pre-Meeting Support:**

- Arrange field trips and facility visits;

- Augment the RRT meeting invitation list with interested observers and public outreach; and
- Assist in coordinating details for RRT Subcommittee or Area Committee meetings that are held before the RRT meeting, as requested.

Meeting Support:

- Secure any documents needed for the meeting records package; and
- Assist with flow of the meeting.

Post-Meeting Support:

- Account for expenses incurred for meetings using CERCLA funds;
- Send thank-you letters to speakers as appropriate;
- Send thank-you letters to members retiring or leaving the region;
- Maintain file packages for past meetings; and
- Maintain files about RRT meetings for information requests.

Miscellaneous (optional and on an as-needed basis):

- Encourage use of software tools to meet mapping needs of contingency planning;
- Contract Government Printing Office (GPO) printing of RRT letterhead; and
- USCG only: Issue travel order numbers to USCG FOSCs.

## **RRT Co-Chair and Alternate Co-Chair**

### **General Responsibilities:**

- Provide management and leadership to ensure that the RRT functions effectively;
- Ensure that the RRT is recognized as a quality organization committed to adding value to federal, regional, state, local, and industry efforts to mitigate the effects of oil, chemical, and other incidents covered by the NCP;
- Ensure that the RRT works as an efficient and effective team, pooling talents and experience to provide the best possible assistance to pollution responders, including assigning EPA and USCG Co-chairs to each region and providing a linkage to the NRT Co-Chairs; and
- Manage the standing meeting and also the Executive Committee to provide direction for the RRT and its committees, and to identify and resolve possible overlap of committee efforts.

### **Core Responsibilities:**

Pre-Meeting Support:

- Approve the time and location of RRT meetings;
- Approve the final agenda; and
- Moderate the RRT meetings and individual sessions with the assistance of Alternate Co-chairs and Coordinators.

Meeting Support:

- Chair meetings;
- Chair the Standing and Executive Committee meetings;
- Introduce speakers;
- Work with Coordinator/Facilitator to maintain adherence to the agenda and timeframe;
- Determine appropriate time for breaks and adjusting the agenda to fit last minute changes;
- Make final decisions on pending issues and potential work items for the RRT;
- Assign work items to workgroups to accomplish and support goals and objectives identified in the RRT's annual plan;
- Create ad hoc workgroups as situations or issues arise;
- Ensure the development and adherence to the RRT's annual plan; and
- Deliver opening and closing remarks.

Post-Meeting Support:

- Review and approve the minutes or summary of the meetings; and
- Review and authorize correspondence and ensure that responses are accomplished on action items.

RRT Co-Chairs Work with Respect to the NRT:

- Support the NRT on special projects by assigning agency staff to work on NRT Committee projects;
- Ensure that the RRT is represented on committees, subcommittees and workgroups; and
- Address issues that need decision or involvement of the NRT.

RRT Planning and Organizational Support:

- Review and approve correspondence, work plans, activity reports, actions, RCPs, and other items;
- Manage priorities of the RRT based on the administrative and operational resources available to the RRT;
- Ensure the RRT's progress toward the goals of the RRT's annual work plan;
- Ensure the "Best Response" concept by establishing goals and objectives for members in the organization;
- Review and approve the semiannual RRT reports;
- Review and approve the annual work plan;
- Maintain the RRT Operations Manual;
- Approve the training implementation plan outlining potential training opportunities for future RRT meetings; and
- Ensure the preparation of updates and revisions to the RRT's plans (e.g., RCP).

RRT Committee Participation:

- Participate in standing and ad hoc committees and workgroups, as necessary;
- Attend and participate in the annual NRT-RRT Co-Chairs meeting;
- Identify and present RRT best practices and lessons learned at the meeting;
- Attend seminars and conferences related to RRT areas of concern; and

- Monitor and support Area Committees and planning efforts.

**Incident-Specific RRT Responsibilities:**

- Ensure information is provided to RRT members on incidents;
- Activate the RRT incident-specific team verbally, by fax, or by e-mail (e.g., coordinate with RRT Coordinator on RRT incident-specific activation via NRC or EPA teleconference);
- Ensure notification of appropriate RRT members;
- Assume the lead as incident-specific Co-Chair for appropriate incidents;
- Determine the time or location of the meeting or teleconference;
- Monitor and evaluate reports from the FOSC, and make recommendations to the FOSC for specific actions in responding to the discharge or release;
- Convene and conduct the incident-specific RRT meetings and/or conference calls;
- Ensure the recording and distribution of summaries of meeting or teleconferences, which should also include the dates and times for activation and deactivation; and
- Deactivate the incident-specific team and ensure deactivation notification is provided to RRT members.

**Communications and Information Management:**

- Stay informed of NRT activities and NRT Committee/Subcommittee work through RRT Coordinator;
- Coordinate with your RRT Coordinator to ensure unified objectives and consistent messaging from your agency;
- Ensure that the RRT receives updates on the status of ACPs in the region, including the status of pre-authorization plans for chemical countermeasures and ISB;
- Ensure communications and information exchange with NRT and neighboring RRTs;
- Respond to information requests about the RRT from agencies and the public;
- Act as liaison between the RRT and state and local government, special interest groups, and industry; and
- Ensure the development of the RRT Website, as appropriate.

**RRT Representatives:**

- Attend and participate in RRT activities;
- Review ACPs for agency interests and trustee responsibilities;
- Coordinate and represent the interests of other agencies with their State/Federal Agency/ or Tribe;
- Ensure basic understanding of the NCP and Incident Command System (ICS);
- Consult with Natural Resource Trustees as appropriate; and
- Respond to requests for assistance.

**APPENDIX 1: CHECKLIST FOR THE RRT MEETING COORDINATION ACTIVITY**

<b>RRT MEETING COORDINATION ACTIVITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	
	<b>EPA</b>	<b>USCG</b>
<b>Save-the-date email and request for agenda items</b>		
<b>Obtain conference room space (60 people) and coordinate room logistics</b>		
- Signage directing attendees to the meeting room		
- Podium		
- Cordless mikes (2) + spare batteries (2 sets) + at least 2 speakers (one on either side of the room)		
- Projector screen w/RRT slide		
- Laptop (with live internet capability) and projector, with table, chair and extension cords		
- Laser pointer		
- Two (2) flip charts with markers		
- Check-in table		
- Pads and pencils		
- Tables with water stations, water at table, coffee and tea		
- Seating for 100 in a U-shape, if possible		
- Agency name plates		
- Two (2) sign-in sheets for RRT members: one should say "Exempt from disclosure under FOIA" and the other should say "May be disclosed under FOIA"		
- Adequate copies of agenda and accompanying documents and other handouts		
<b>Email out draft agenda, location, meeting details/instructions, RSVP, etc.</b>		
<b>Designate a point of contact for questions and RSVPs</b>		
<b>Call speakers, confirm attendance and ensure logistical support</b>		
- Ensure speakers are aware of software version being used		
- Communicate to speakers which file format to use for presentations		
- Recommend to speakers with audiovisual presentations to bring a tested, projector-compatible laptop		
- Ensure periodic coordination before meeting		
<b>To facilitate participation, forward the RSVP list to the RRT email list</b>		
<b>Decide who will moderate (Co-Chair or Coordinator)</b>		
<b>Pre-brief moderator on agenda</b>		

RRT MEETING COORDINATION ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	
	EPA	USCG
<b>Decide/assign note taker</b>		
<b>Assure logistical support</b> (e.g., upload the PowerPoint Presentations to the laptop and manage the projector)		
<b>Call speakers and confirm attendance</b>		
<b>Finalize agenda and pre-brief moderator</b>		
<b>Coordinate opening remarks with host state environmental agency</b>		
<b>Administrative reminders:</b>		
- Use microphones when speaking; say your name before speaking		
- Turn cell phones/pagers off		
- RRT coordinators will record the meeting minutes, finalize and send out following the meeting		
- Presentations and meeting minutes will be uploaded to the Web site and sent out to the RRT following the meeting		
- Sign one of the two sign-in sheets and verify that information is correct		
- Items of interest, upcoming events and training opportunities will be written down on the flip charts and included in the meeting minutes		
- Location of bathrooms, emergency exits and emergency meeting location		
- Schedule of breaks and lunches		
- Location of vending machines, coffee and tea		
- Location of business center, copying machines, printers and faxes		
<b>OSC reports</b>		
- EPA		
- USCG (break out by sector)		
- State(s), tribal and local		
- Other federal (DOI, DOD, etc.)		
<b>Agency and participating organization reports</b>		
- EPA		
- USCG		
- State(s), tribal and local		
- Other federal:		

RRT MEETING COORDINATION ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	
	EPA	USCG
- USDA		
- Department of Commerce (DOC)/ NOAA		
- DOD		
- DOE		
- HHS		
- DHS		
- DOI		
- DOJ		
- DOL/OSHA		
- Department of State		
- DOT		
- FEMA		
- GSA		
- USNRC		
- Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)		
- Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)		
- Department of Treasury		
- Food and Drug Administration (FDA)		
- US Geologic Service (USGS)		
- National Pollution Funds Center (NPFC)		
- NRC		
- Transportation Security Administration (TSA)		
- International entities (if applicable, Mexico, Canada)		
<b>Meeting wrap-up</b>		
- Action item recap		
- Decide on date and location of the next meeting or establish a meeting schedule		
<b>After the meeting</b>		
- Meeting minutes reviewed by the RRT Co-Chairs		
- Final meeting minutes and attendance sheet emailed out to the RRT		
- Upload presentations and meeting minutes and next meeting date to the RRT Web site		
- Update the RRT contact list based on the sign-in sheet and email a copy of the updated RRT member list to the RRT		
- Share email update with Co-Chair (EPA or USCG)		
<b>Other responsibilities</b>		
- Annual RRT report to the NRT		



<b>RRT MEETING COORDINATION ACTIVITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	
	<b>EPA</b>	<b>USCG</b>
- Attend annual NRT-RRT Co-Chairs meeting		
- Develop Slides for Co-Chairs meeting		
- RRT coordinator conference calls		
- Respond to NRT or other RRT requests		
- Assure any FOSC reports are forwarded to NRT Response Committee		

## APPENDIX 2: RRT MEMBERSHIP FORM LETTERS

This appendix contains sample letters that RRTs can use in drafting messages to RRT members concerning RRT participation and contact information. It is expected that RRTs will modify the letters based on their specific need and practices, and are not in any way required to use the language, outline, or design of the samples.

Notes:

- NRT assistance for Federal agencies
  - If an RRT needs assistance in contacting a regional representative from a federal agency, the RRT should contact the NRT Executive Director who will work with the member agency representative at the NRT level.
- Relevant NCP citations for consideration
  - 300.115(a) “Regional planning and coordination of preparedness and response actions is accomplished through the RRT. In the case of a discharge of oil, preparedness activities will be carried out in conjunction with Area Committees, as appropriate. The RRT agency membership parallels that of the NRT, as described in § 300.110, but also includes state and local representation.”
  - 300.115(d) “Each participating agency should designate one member and at least one alternate member to the RRT. Agencies whose regional subdivisions do not correspond to the standard federal regions may designate additional representatives to the standing RRT to ensure appropriate coverage of the standard federal region. Participating states may also designate one member and at least one alternate member to the RRT. Indian tribal governments may arrange for representation with the RRT appropriate to their geographical location. All agencies and states may also provide additional representatives as observers to meetings of the RRT.”
  - 300.115(e) “RRT members should designate representatives and alternates from their agencies as resource personnel for RRT activities, including RRT work planning, and membership on incident-specific teams in support of the OSCs/RPMs.”
  - 300.115(h): “Affected states are encouraged to participate actively in all RRT activities. Each state governor is requested to assign an office or agency to represent the state on the appropriate RRT; to designate representatives to work with the RRT in developing RCPs; to plan for, make available, and coordinate state resources; and to serve as the contact point for coordination of response with local government agencies, whether or not represented on the RRT. The state’s RRT representative should keep the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC), described in § 300.205(d), apprised of RRT activities and coordinate RRT activities with the SERC. Local governments are invited to participate in activities on the appropriate RRT as provided by state law or as arranged by the state’s representative. Indian tribes are also invited to participate in such activities.”

## Sample Letter Requesting RRT Member

To: [NAME], [Agency/Department Name]  
From: [NAME], [Agency/Department Name]  
CC: [NAME], [Agency/Department Name]  
Date: [Date]  
Subj: [Agency/Department Name] Representation to the [RRT, or RRT Committee, Subcommittee, or project]

---

Dear [NAME]:

We are writing to ask you to consider the [Agency/Department Name] representation on the Regional Response Team (RRT). The RRT is composed of 15 federal departments/agencies, but also includes state and local representation, with responsibilities and expertise in various aspects of contingency planning and emergency response for oil and hazardous substance pollution incidents.

Each year, our environment and communities are threatened by more than 30,000 hazardous substance releases, oil discharges, and other toxic spills, such as radiological and biological incidents. The National Response System (NRS), coordinated at the regional level by the RRT, ensures that these threats are effectively managed through its network of people, plans, and resources. The NRS is authorized under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, as amended, the Clean Water Act, as amended, and National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (40 CFR Part 300, NCP). The goal of the NRS is to protect worker and public health and safety and the environment from potential and actual pollution incidents in a coordinated, efficient, and effective manner. The RRT is defined at § 300.115.

During an incident, the RRT provides technical advice to the On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) and access to resources and equipment from its member agencies. More than 200 federal and state officials participate in the 13 RRTs, which coordinate regional preparedness and also support over 300 Federal On-Scene Coordinators from the Environmental Protection Agency, the Coast Guard, and other agencies.

[AGENCY] participation will provide opportunities to address interagency issues, foster collaboration, and support your responsibilities required by Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5. We look forward to [Agency/Department Name] participation in the RRT. Please have your staff contact [NAME], [Agency/Department Name] at [contact Information] if you would like additional information, or if you would like to be briefed personally.

Thank you.

[NAME]  
[TITLE]  
[AGENCY]

CC: [NAME, AGENCY/DEPARTMENT NAME]

Sample Letter Requesting Verification of Member and Contact Information

To: [NAME], [Agency/Department Name]  
From: [NAME], [Agency/Department Name]  
CC: [NAME], [Agency/Department Name]  
[NAME], [Agency/Department Name]  
Date: [Date]  
Subj: Request to Verify [Agency/Department Name] Representation to the [RRT, or RRT Committee,  
Subcommittee, or project]

---

On behalf of Regional Response Team [number/name], we ask that you verify the name and contact information for [Agency/Department Name] on the [RRT, or RRT Committee, Subcommittee, or activity]:

Primary Representative:           NAME  
  TITLE  
  OFFICE  
  AGENCY  
  ADDRESS  
  PHONE NUMBER  
  FAX NUMBER  
  CELL/PAGER NUMBER  
  HOME NUMBER  
  PRIMARY DAY CONTACT METHOD  
  PRIMARY NIGHT CONTACT METHOD  
  EMAIL ADDRESS

Alternate Representative:       NAME  
  TITLE  
  OFFICE  
  AGENCY  
  ADDRESS  
  PHONE NUMBER  
  FAX NUMBER  
  CELL/PAGER NUMBER  
  HOME NUMBER  
  PRIMARY DAY CONTACT METHOD  
  PRIMARY NIGHT CONTACT METHOD  
  EMAIL ADDRESS

Please respond by [date] to [NAME], [Agency/Department Name] at [email, phone] to verify the information or provide updates.

Sincerely,  
[NAME]  
[TITLE]  
[AGENCY]

CC: [NAME, AGENCY/DEPARTMENT NAME]

Sample Letter Appointing New RRT Member

To: [NAME], [Agency/Department Name]  
From: [NAME], [Agency/Department Name]  
CC: [NAME], [Agency/Department Name]  
[NAME], [Agency/Department Name]  
Date: [Date]  
Subj: Appointing New [Agency/Department Name] Representation to the [RRT, or RRT Committee,  
Subcommittee, or project]

---

Please note the following changes to the [Agency/Department Name] representation on the [RRT, or RRT Committee, Subcommittee, or activity]:

Primary Representative:           NAME  
  TITLE  
  OFFICE  
  AGENCY  
  ADDRESS  
  PHONE NUMBER  
  FAX NUMBER  
  CELL/PAGER NUMBER  
  HOME NUMBER  
  PRIMARY DAY CONTACT METHOD  
  PRIMARY NIGHT CONTACT METHOD  
  EMAIL ADDRESS

Who will be replacing:           NAME

Alternate Representative:       NAME  
  TITLE  
  OFFICE  
  AGENCY  
  ADDRESS  
  PHONE NUMBER  
  FAX NUMBER  
  CELL/PAGER NUMBER  
  HOME NUMBER  
  PRIMARY DAY CONTACT METHOD  
  PRIMARY NIGHT CONTACT METHOD  
  EMAIL ADDRESS

Who will be replacing:           NAME

These changes are effective [DATE].

Sincerely,  
[NAME]  
[TITLE]  
[AGENCY]

CC: [NAME, AGENCY/DEPARTMENT NAME]

Invitation to participate on an RRT Committee, Subcommittee or project

To: [NAME], [Agency/Department Name]

From: [NAME], [Agency/Department Name]

CC: [NAME], [Agency/Department Name]  
[NAME], [Agency/Department Name]

Date: [Date]

Subj: Invitation to [Agency/Department Name] to Join the [RRT Committee, Subcommittee, or project].

---

On the behalf of the [RRT Committee, Subcommittee, or project chair], I am extending an invitation to you to the join the [RRT Committee, Subcommittee, or project] [insert any special designation or expertise required, (i.e., as an industry representative, SME)]. [Note any enclosures or background documents].

[Describe the RRT Committee, Subcommittee or project: expectations, mission, requirements of members, meeting frequency, etc.] (For example, The Committee usually meets twice a year to prioritize work, and report back on progress to the ARRT. The S&T committee may establish subcommittees to perform specialized tasks or reviews. You may be asked to serve on these subcommittees which may require more frequent meetings and commitments. Currently there is no set time on how long one may service on the committee, but we generally ask that you commit at least two years.)

[Note reply deadline and the steps to accept or decline the invitation]. (For example: If you would like to join please sign below and return to the RRT Coordinator, [name] at [fax] or mail to [address])

[Closing]. (For example: We look forward to working with you.)

I [ ] agree [ ] decline to join the [Committee, Subcommittee, or project]:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
[Name of invited]