**REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM 10/NORTHWEST AREA COMMITTEE (RRT/NWAC)**

**OPEN SESSION MINUTES**

**0900 – 1700 Thursday 10MAR11**

**Wenatchee Coast Center, Wenatchee, WA**

**Attendance sheets can be viewed** [**here**](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/Public%20Session%20Sign-in%20Sheet%2010MARCH11.pdf)**.**

**Welcome**

Chief Stan Smoke of the Wenatchee Fire Department gave a welcome to all present on behalf of Wenatchee. He stated that he was very proud of the fact that their department works very well with the local industry, and that fortunately, there have been no major local disasters.

Mr. Dale Jensen, manager of Washington State’s Department of Ecology’s (Ecology) Oil Spill Program also welcomed all of the attendees, followed by Calvin Terada, the emergency response plan manager for the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Region 10. Mr. Terada thanked the Steering Committee for organizing the meeting and for doing great work, and emphasized that the meeting was a great opportunity for people to rekindle or renew old relationships, and urged attendees to also create new ones with each other.

This was followed by individual introductions around the room.

**Overview of Ecology Spills Program including RRT, NWAC and NWACP Overview**

Mr. Jensen of Ecology gave a Power Point presentation, which can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/WA%20Presentation%20for%20RRT-NWAC.pptx). During his presentation, Mr. Jensen reiterated the importance of relationships and partnerships within the group. He stated that it’s impossible to plan and respond well without coordination, and that everyone should always be looking at drills and exercises for lessons learned. Mr. Jensen also reminded the group that in our region, industry partners take incredible care in preventing spills. This region is one of the lowest spill volume regions in the country.

**Overview of the Barge Davy Crockett Incident**

Ms. Kelly Thorkilson of the United States Coast Guard (USCG) Sector Columbia River gave a Power Point presentation, which can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/DAVY%20CROCKETT%20RESPONSE%20March%202011.pptx). This presentation was a general overview of the Davy Crockett Incident.

David Byers of Ecology spoke about the problem of derelict vessels in our region. He stated the State of Washington has a robust derelict vessels program, but it is limited to vessels less than 200 feet in length. The larger vessels (like the Davy Crockett) fall outside of the authority and funding of this program. He also stated that these vessels are large, complex problems that overlap state and federal agencies, and went on to give a short list that Ecology and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) of Washington State had put together, of ideas for dealing with this problem in the future. He reminded the group that this was not a formal, worked list, but rather a list of brainstormed ideas. This list included the need for:

1. More seller accountability and requiring sellers to ensure that purchasers have insurance and proper moorage arrangements.
2. More prevention outreach
3. Looking at bankruptcy dumping, and looking at changes to federal bankruptcy laws.
4. Looking at economic cycles and their impacts on shipyards.
5. Exploring feasibility issues for in-water disposal capabilities.
6. Working with federal congressional people for funding for these old military vessels. For example, looking at mechanisms through which a fund is created at the point that a vessel becomes derelict, to accommodate disposal.
7. Giving attention to old state ferries and working with department of transportation to look for responsible solutions for disposal.
8. Looking at incentives for legal moorage or disincentives for illegal moorage.
9. Getting all agencies together to talk about derelict vessels.

Captain Douglas Kaup of USCG Sector Columbia River stated that prevention is key, and can be achieved through constant surveillance and looking for things that just don’t look “right”. He stated that he liked the summit or work group idea brought up by Mr. Byers, and reminded the group that this is not just a regional problem; it’s a national problem.

Jeff Christensen of Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ORDEQ) added to this, saying that this is not a new problem and that one of the few good things that can come out of it is that it brings attention to these issues and forces people to think about how to better prepare for these problems. He reported around same time as Davy Crockett, another large vessel had swung out into the Columbia River, but a response partner pulled the vessel out of the river. The point was that this issue is not a singular issue; there are many like it. He stated that preventive work at state and federal levels are money well spent.

**OSC Report Outs**

Dave Byers of Ecology gave a Power Point presentation on recent activity in Washington. This presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/RRT%20OSC%20March%202011.pptx). Mr. Byers reported that there hasn’t been an increase or decrease in the number of spills reported. One big change is that there have been less drug lab cleanups, but that they’re becoming more complicated. He also reported that as somebody who manages the Incident Management Team, he has been struggling with limited amount of staff.

Joe DeLauter of USCG Sector Puget Sound gave a power point presentation to report recent activity in the Puget Sound area. The presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/2011%20RRT%20summary%20MAR11_b.ppt). Captain Ferguson of Sector Puget Sound wanted to emphasize preparedness, chain of command, managing social media, information, and response. He suggested that everybody should think about how they’re going to manage all of these items within the Incident Command System (ICS) structure.

Johnna Rosetti of USCG Sector Columbia River gave a Power Point presentation. Her presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/RRTBriefing%20MAR%202011.ppt).

Angie Zavala of USEPA Region 10 gave a Power Point presentation, which can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/RRT%20NW%20OSC%20Report%20(Angie).pptx).

Calvin Terada of USEPA Region 10 gave a Power Point presentation on the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Pump Station 01 Crude Oil Spill. This presentation can be viewed here.

**Pipeline Issues (A) Overview of the pipeline mapping project released by WA Utilities and Transportation Commission and PHMSA’s new incident database (B) Presentation from chair of WA’s Citizens Committee on Pipeline Safety and the two eastern pipeline companies**

David Lykken, the Director of Pipeline Safety for Utilities and Transportation Commission gave a Power Point presentation on the Pipeline Safety Program. He noted that their GIS mapping system was a product of an incident in Bellingham. His presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/WUTC%20Pipeline%20Safety%20NWAC%20March%202011.ppt).

Carl Weimer of the Pipeline Safety Trust gave a Power Point presentation on an overview of the Pipeline Safety Trust. View his presentation [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/Spill%20Presentation.pptx).

Rob Yarbrough, Director of the Transportation Emergency Response Program for ConocoPhillips gave a Power Point presentation that can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/COP%20Transporation%20ER%20Overview.ppt).

Pete Lundgreen of Chevron’s Pasco Facility gave a Power Point presentation on Chevron’s Spill Contingency Plan & Drill Program. His presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/NWACmtg.pptx).

**Update from Ecology on proposed legislation**

Dale Jensen of Ecology began on this topic by saying that he had heard previous presenters refer to the San Bruno pipeline explosion, in California. He stated that he thought it was interesting how things that happen in other parts of the country affect us here. Mr. Jensen spoke about the current Washington legislative session, emphasizing that we have a very active and interested public here in Washington, and very interested legislators.

During Deep Water Horizon (DWH), Mr. Jensen and Linda Pilkey-Jarvis (Ecology) began tracking information and working with the Coast Guard to identify resources deployed out of Washington to assist in the gulf. This information was displayed through a website. Through the Northwest Area Committee (NWAC) and the contingency planning process, this website became a credible source of information. There was a lot of media interest to see what we were doing here in Washington to assist in the Gulf.

Mr. Jensen reported that they had decided not to introduce any legislation out of their agency. He also stated that the way that our state’s legislation was developed was through the proponents from environmental interests. He stated that one difficult thing for him is that he is sometimes requested to respond to non-agency request or non-governor request legislation, which is not yet government supported. This means that he has to provide input, but cannot be in support of the legislation. Mr. Jensen then reviewed the three pieces of legislation currently in process:

1. House Bill 1403, the oil transfer fee. This is held up in the House right now and may or may not be used depending on the revenue projections that come out later this month.
2. Companion Bills that have language the looks the same on Senate side (5439) and House side (1186). As the senate side was moved into the executive session, it was moved to the floor for a vote and was passed off the floor to the House judiciary side and was stripped of all the language except for liability language. There’s a hearing next Thursday on that particular bill. The House bill was passed off the floor very favorably last Monday. This coming Wednesday, that full bill will be heard for the first time. Mr. Jensen noted that many people present in the room have influenced the language in that bill. When it first came out, it was a very thick bill that had a lot of pieces that were captured from lessons learned from spills, drills and exercises. It focuses on contingency planning, tank ships, tugs and barges.

Mr. Jensen spoke about Vessels of Opportunity, noting that there has been a lot of work on how to improve this program in the northwest, and that how these are used was a big learning lesson from DWH. When this bill was first introduced, the way it was written left the implementers with what could be interpreted as having dedicated equipment in six geographic regions around the state. This is very high-cost and there was uncertainty around whether there’d be consistency and capability in those regional areas. The bill will be heard on Wednesday and will go through changes to make it more implementable. There are Vessels of Opportunity programs already in place, so this is an enhancement for implementation to say what is dedicated equipment and personnel, and what is not.

On the volunteer management piece, Mr. Jensen noted that this is being worked on to make sure it’s more implementable, as the language is currently not ideal. It is a “light” implementation but still directs Ecology to work with local partners and doesn’t give any additional revenue to do this. Regarding the technology pieces, he stated that there has been a lot learned over the years. There is old technology in some areas and there’s a push toward advancing and putting better systems in place, as well as figuring out what the most effective technology is for certain areas. Mr. Jensen also mentioned a big annual drill that would pull all personnel and equipment together. His agency has worked to temper the language on that piece as well. The drill cycle has changed and the expectation out of it is that over a three year period, there would be a drill large enough to integrate equipment and personnel. This would hopefully enhance communication in a spill response.

Mr. Jensen stated that one expectation at the state level is that our citizens expect us to protect the state’s natural resources interests, and he posed the question of how do we get better at notifying people so that there are conversations early-on and that resources are in place to aggressively and rapidly respond. He added that there were penalty increases on implementing the contingency plans. Mr. Jensen stated that we feel we have good plans in Washington, but there are some penalty provisions in the bill that triple the penalties for different failures of contingency plan implementation. Regarding natural resource damage assessments, Mr. Jensen mentioned that this changes the assessment on those spills that are 25 gallons or more for the state level. He went on to describe the Liability Piece of the bill, which clarifies liability expectation. Everything was originally supposed to be implemented by January 2012, but it will need to be moved out.

**Update on USCG Policy for Marine Firefighting and Salvage Regulation Requirements**

Tim Lupher of USCG District Puget Sound presented a Power Point that can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/NWAC%20Salvage%20&%20Marine%20Fire%20Fighting.ppt). He stated that in the future, we could have a situation and there’s a multitude of plans that need to go into effect and that everybody needs to be aware that the more we work together, the better off we’ll be in the long run, the better the vessels will be and the better the environment will be.

**Operational Commanders Roundtable**

EPA

Calvin Terada of USEPA Region 10 announced that the concept of this topic is to develop more engagement and discussion and to talk about what’s on the horizon in each operational commander’s own specific areas. He proceeded to give the update for the EPA, noting that on the inland side, EPA is also concerned with hazmat, counter-terrorism and weapons of mass destruction with small subprograms for each of these things. In regards to bio-response Mr. Terada stated that EPA is participating in a bio-response program called BOAT which is a research project that’ll take place in April and May to test how decontamination is conducted in buildings. For region 10, one On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) will lead a team of contractors to use bleach to decontaminate surfaces. This is considered a low-tech process, but there are also other medium and high-tech processes.

Another piece that Mr. Terada spoke about was an exercise in September, simulating the process of local notification. On the radiation side, Mr. Terada noted that a radiation workgroup has been formed and is represented by local, state and federal agencies. This group has already held meetings, and the coordination with radiation response is working well. One of the things they have been talking about is how to be able to respond to an orphan source. The group’s next meeting is scheduled for June 28 in Seattle, and will be hosted by the EPA.

Mr. Terada thanked Sector Columbia River, Dale Jensen and Ecology, Jeff Christensen, Locals and Industry for participating in the subarea planning for the lock closures on the Columbia River. He emphasized that this is the type of work we want to continue to do. The last thing that Mr. Terada mentioned was that the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) cut funding to their meth lab program nationwide. He had a call recently about how this will affect the EPA, and one piece of information that came out of this was that if locals decide to their cleanup, there is a program called Local Government Reimbursement that will reimburse their cleanup costs if they are under $25,000 and meet certain criteria.

USCG Sector Puget Sound

Captain Ferguson of USCG Sector Puget Sounded reminded everybody about the big National Preparedness for Response Exercise Program (NPREP) exercise June 21-23, 2011 which will be an orphan-type response. Captain Ferguson spoke about a very significant drill out at Whidbey Island’s Oak Harbor that involves a test of the Area Contingency Plan (ACP) and the CANUS plan with Canada. He noted that this drill has gotten a lot of international interest for people to come and observe, and stated that he feels this is great opportunity to think about response in a maritime environment.

Captain Ferguson also stated that he is very pleased with where the Coast Guard operations are, and their relationships with state. Whenever there’s a response, one of the Coast Guard’s first calls is to Ecology, and they’re very comfortable with how that has been working. Similarly, if there’s a hazmat issue, they look to the EPA. He noted that the Bremerton spill was great example of how we can get ahead of events.

Captain Ferguson recapped several big concerns that he had mentioned earlier. One of these was the paradigm shift in pollution response that is happening, related to the Joint Information Center (JIC) and social media. Captain Ferguson stated that he feels that this process needs to be managed better, and that there is a need to find ways to visit our ACP and change our approach to figure out how to master that. He also noted that historically, we’d be left alone to deal with responses alone, but this is not the case today. You can expect very senior level people to be showing up to an incident within a few days and we all have to expect that reality and figure out the best way to use these people when they come. They need to get the right information to manage the politics of the situation. Captain Ferguson admitted that he is convinced that from an ICS standpoint, that we’re not ready. He stated that we need to look for ways to make sure that people get the training and proficiency that they need. It’s going to take extra work. The last thing that Captain Ferguson emphasized was the importance of HAZWOPER training.

Chip Humphrey of USEPA Region 10 pointed out that related to the JIC, all the agencies and people involved have to be managed. Captain Ferguson responded that volunteers are putting together “go-teams” to populate a JIC, help setup rooms and provide general support. He also noted that there’s inaccurate social media that comes up that needs to be addressed, and the information corralled so that people get the right information.

USCG Sector Columbia River

The question came up of whether there were any significant issues during the Columbia River lock closures. Captain Kaup reported that there weren’t any issues, and offed that his only big piece of news was that Sector Portland and Group Astoria had merged for form Sector Columbia River.

Mr. Rob Yarborough stated that one thing that wasn’t mentioned in the industry presentations were the larger scale exercises that they do. He added that all of the companies are represented at the various exercises, where there’s also a group doing evaluations on the exercise using the Ecology checklist, so that the same standards are met, providing for more consistency.

Bill Powell of Shell mentioned that they will be having a drill in Seattle, noting that they are driven by compliance but also the desire for constantly improving.

Ecology

Mr. Dale Jensen reminded the group that many years ago we didn’t have a strong drill program here in Washington. Investments were made in that program because the relationships were the important piece. He stated that the difficulty has been restrictions around us, including money and travel, as well as hiring restrictions, adding that sometimes it’s challenging to be as transparent as possible during a response, and that communication can always be improved.

Mr. Jensen noted that Ecology has goals with the CG of getting a notice out to the public within 30 minutes of an incident, which has gone well thus far. The other piece that he mentioned was how we integrate our local partners, emphasizing the importance of the liaison role. He stated that there’s a lot of work that has been done at the state and area planning level, but that those investments need to continue to be made.

USCG District 13

Scott Knudsen of USCG District 13 announced that their upcoming drill that involves the United States and Canada is looking very large and ambitious. He noted that they are looking at it as a regional event, all being done with ICS, and without any industry partners. Mr. Dale Jensen added that at NPREP, the industry partners are the evaluators.

**Ammonia Releases**

Mark Layman of Ecology opened this topic by presenting general information about Ammonia since in Eastern Washington, county hazard assessments show that it’s the top chemical because of its uses in refrigeration and fertilizers. A few facts about Ammonia:

* It’s the fifth highest volume chemical produced in the United States.
* DOT 1005 4-digit code for Ammonia.
* It’s a colorless gas, but it can look like a cloud if it’s a vapor.
* It has a sharp and intense odor.
* As a gas, it is lighter than air.
* It’s soluble in water, which is good in fertilizer but bad if it gets into a river.
* It’s hard to get it to burn, but it can.
* It is attracted to water, and made from partial natural gas combustion, or synthesis gas, in huge quantities.
* It is an explosive compound.

Chief Stan Smoke stated that the city of Wenatchee has been fortunate. Last year, 75,000 pounds of Ammonia moved through the region with no major incidents. He reviewed several minor incidents that occurred. In 2004, on Miller Street, there was a compression valve seal leak, but it was a minor incident. In 2008, there was a broken site tube that caused a small leak.

Chief Smoke stated that he wanted to expand on the topic of ICS. Locally, he said that he feels that they do a good job with ICS. People are trained on it, and are good at it. He informed the group that building and maintaining partnerships is what he works on continuously. He mentioned that an initial response to an ammonia leak could start with just one or two engines and a duty chief, but initial response is done safely in cooperation with local industry, following ICS. He stated that they first identify the problem, expand things safely, and make notifications to the appropriate entities. If the fire service needs extra people and help isn’t available locally, they call on mutual aid.

Monty Leavitt, a local refrigeration manger informed everybody that they had established an ammonia team back in 2001 because Wenatchee has the largest amount of ammonia in the area. He stated that they have 40 members on the team, made up of managers and supervisors of their various plants. They train once a year and involve themselves with local fire departments. He noted that Mark Layman of Ecology had helped them to train their people with ICS. They also had a trainer named Pat Johnson come up from Shreveport Louisiana, to show them how to handle anhydrous ammonia.

Calvin Terada spoke about a Risk Management Program, co-regulated by OSHA, Washington Labor and Industries and EPA. The idea behind this program is that by protecting workers in a facility, this will prevent dangers from going outside the fence boundary. He stated that in eastern Washington there have been 21 facility inspections over the past three years, with 16 enforcement cases, most of which have been operationally based or because of failure to document equipment changes. Of those 16 cases, five supplemental environmental projects have been created. In lieu of paying a monetary penalty, those people have been able to take part of that money they would pay and create a project that benefits the community. In Wenatchee specifically, there have been six inspections with only one enforcement case.

**Radiation Response Issues (A) Overview of the Hanford remediation project (B) Maritime/Terrestrial/Rail – Characterization of Risks (C) Response Coordination, Policy, and Authorities with NRF and NCP (D) Facilitated discussion focused on radiation scenario in Wenatchee**

Jodie Ryan of the Department of Homeland Security gave a Power Point presentation on the Homeland Security Information Network. This presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/HSIN%20Briefing%20for%20USCG%20RRT%20Area%20Command%20.ppt).

Clay Reed of BNSF Railway gave a Power Point presentation on the BNSF Response Process, which can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/BNSF%20Presentation%20NWAC%20Wenatchee.pdf).

There was some concern from the meeting attendees that in the initial hours of train wrecks, the needs of the States are not being met because information is not moving fast enough. Mr. Reed stated that is difficult to give advice on what should be done about this because each incident is responded to at a local level, by somebody from a local rail yard. He urged States to let BNSF know if they’re not getting the information that they need to get.

Doug Hildebrand of the Department of Energy gave a Power Point presentation, which can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/1-%20RAP%20Capabilities%20for%20Diane%20Clark%202010%20Nov.pptx).

To close this topic, Wade Gough also gave a Power Point to reiterate the purpose of covering the radiation topic. This presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/Rad%20Case%20Studies%20Wgough.pdf).

**Closing Remarks**

Mr. Calvin Terada and Captain Ferguson thanked everyone for participating. Captain Kaup thanked Wenatchee for hosting the meeting, and thanked the organizers.