

PORTLAND AREA WORK GROUP

Meeting Notes, November 30, 2011

Attending: Tom Gallant, MSRC; Tim Hendrix, PMPL; Greg O'Brien, ME DEP, Dan Wehr, USCG, Brian Notestine, USCG, Matt Strickland, USCG, Steve Lehmann, NOAA, Stephen Wing, Buckeye Pipeline; Rolf Westphal, Sprague; Pete Frye, Sprague, Howard Ootten, Boom Tech, Garrett Fox, Boom Tech, Sheryl Bernard, ME DEP, Stephen Flannery, ME DEP, Ginger McMullin, ME DEP, Wyman Briggs, USCG

Wyman Briggs told the group about a new work group formed in Portsmouth, NH to carry on the work done by the Piscataqua River Cooperative, which has disbanded. The PRC equipment has reverted to the ownership of the State of New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, and individual facilities have moved to individual contracts with OSROs. The work group will continue to meet regularly and maintain the cooperative relationships that have been established under the PRC. NH DES will continue to maintain its facility at their offices in Portsmouth.

Wyman also gave a presentation on lessons learned from an exercise held at the NH DES facility in September. One of the major strengths identified was the utility of the facility itself, which has a very large central meeting room along with smaller meeting spaces, well designed signage, and a dedicated server and computers for use within the Command Post. State EOC personnel and local fire departments participated, which was another positive for the exercise. Players made good use of existing Geographic Response Strategy information. One of the areas for improvement was how to transition to sophisticated electronic tools, particularly in the early hours of the spill. Responders should be prepared to utilize existing or improvised paper charts, lists and maps, until computer tools are on line in sufficient number to supply these materials. More projectors, printers and plotters are always needed than are available. It was recognized that deputy section chief positions need to be filled so that work can better continue while meetings are going on. There is also a need to better incorporate the WebEOC tool, so that there is a solid connection with state Emergency Management centers.

Ginger gave a presentation on the Fore River deployments that were done by Clean Harbors under contract from ME DEP in June. A very successful new strategy was developed that spans the Fore River between Turner's Island and the clay docks, which will be incorporated into the Geographic Response strategies.

The group then reviewed the contents of the Work Group notebook that was first given to members in May of 2010 and the revisions added in November 2011. Ginger will see about getting this information onto a web site so that members can tell if their information is current.

We went through the strategies and their status and discussed where to go from here. All present are in agreement that it makes a lot of sense to have a common strategy for the facilities on the Fore River. Although each facility will have some nuances in their plans when it comes to actions to be taken right at the facilities themselves or to mitigate the actual incident, our goal will be to have everyone in agreement when it comes to what strategies should be implemented beyond facility boundaries. We still have a lot of work to do to make sure that all strategies are tested and workable. Plans in common for the larger area may also help terminals' liability.

We discussed that the group should be mutually aware of exercises, booming tests and lessons learned. A concerted effort to test strategies that have not yet been worked would be very beneficial.

Possibilities for upcoming drills and exercises:

PMPL – probably September, including an equipment deployment

Buckeye - will be doing a full drill in 2012

MSRC – interested in helping with DEP-contracted deployment for Scarborough River this fall

Global – will be having a tabletop in December

Sprague – probably a drill in 2012

Ginger will develop an updated list of oil terminal contacts with 2 contacts per facility. There is also interest in sharing the mailing list.

Next meeting: March 21 at 9:00 AM, Maine DEP, 312 Canco Road