



Maine and New Hampshire Area Committee

Mailing Address: USCG Sector Northern New England, 259 High Street, South Portland,
Maine 04106

Phone: (207) 741-5437 Fax: (207) 741-5403

Area Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: December 3, 2020

Time: 9:00 A.M. - 11:00 P.M.

Location: Via Zoom for Government

1. **Welcome and Introductions:** Wyman Briggs, ME/NH Area Committee Coordinator opened the meeting and welcomed participants. New members introduced themselves, including:
 - LT John Ramos MST2 James Robinson, MST2 Michael Rollins, CWO Sydney Glass – Marine Safety Detachment Belfast, ME
 - LT James McDonough – Sector Command Center, So. Portland, ME (introduced by Mr. Briggs)
 - LTJG Hayley Betker – NOAA Northwest Regional Response Officer, Seattle, WA
 - Wayne Lalicon – PHMSA, based in New Jersey
 - Benita Pothier – US Senator Angus King’s office
 - Gail Kezer – US Senator Angus King’s office
 - Alex Pelczar – US Senator Susan Collins’ office
 - Tom Hardison, President Portland Pipeline - expressed thanks to Area Committee members, recognized Ginger McMullin’s good work and bid farewell to the group in preparation for his retirement.
2. **On-Scene Coordinator’s Comments:** The Area Committee Co-Chairs from USCG Sector Northern New England (SNNE), Maine Department of Environmental Protection (ME DEP), and New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NH DES) provided introductory remarks.
 - Jeff Squires of ME DEP welcomed new members aboard, thanked everyone for their participation and the continued inter-agency coordination through the COVID-19

pandemic. He also thanked Tom Hardison for his years of active participation and support of the Maine and New Hampshire Area Committee. Jeff noted that DEP responders will be at 100% staffing, with only one vacancy currently unfilled. He mentioned that DEP will be seeking a replacement for Ginger. McMullin (scheduled to retire soon). The DEP response barge is back to its mooring in Bucksport and fully operations capable.

- Gardner Warr (SOSC, NH DES) acknowledged the interagency response teams for their great response work over the year and reinforced his/NH DES's support for the Area Committee.
- CDR Neeland (standing in for CAPT LeFebvre, FOSC) introduced himself and mentioned that the Captain would be joining the meeting shortly. He highlighted the value of the recent Penobscot Bay TTX, and the preparatory efforts for the FSE scheduled for September 2021.

3. Vessel Response Plan Overview: CDR Mark Neeland, SNNE

- Brief recap of historical events leading to the VRP regulations
- Reviewed applicability, contents, and approval procedures of VRPs
- Noted that standards are planning vice performance
- Detailed specific sections of the VRP
- Discussed National Planning Criteria (NPC)
- Addressed "On Water Recovery" components, highlighted how much more is involved/required than skimmers and boom, including storage, transportation, personnel, etc.
- Provided a scenario modeled from a tank vessel similar to those regularly entering the COTP zone, discussed recovery equipment requirements. Mentioned that temporary storage may be a primary limiting factor in the event of a large spill, with requirements exceeding 100,000 bbls.

4. Penobscot Bay Spill Response TTX Lessons Learned : Wyman Briggs, SNNE

- Reinforced differences in this year's TTX due to COVID-19 pandemic, expressed appreciation for Port Partners in the exercise and thanked PROPAC, Kirby and Irving for their support.
- Recapped scenario for TTX (WCD from a tankship which ran aground at the entrance of Penobscot Bay).
- Broke down modules I-IV of the TTX to discuss pros and deltas.
 - Initial Response (Module I) Pros:
 - Effective initial response plans/checklists for each agency,
 - Each GRS used was comprehensive and appropriate,
 - Equipment was available,
 - Initial Response (Module I) Deltas:
 - Training required for the effective use of Survey 123,

- Limitations on availability of tugs in the Belfast area.
- First Day (Module II) Pros:
 - ICS principles seemed to be uniformly understood and implemented, the group showed a strong working knowledge,
 - An Incident Command Post location is likely identified (U Maine Hutchison Center),
 - Kirby and Irving staff all were confident in abilities to acquire adequate response personnel and resources
- First Day (Module II) Deltas:
 - Liaisons to local fisherman, recreational traffic, etc. will be required to mitigate the large impact to the waterway,
 - Offshore boom is limited in the area,
 - U Maine Hutchison center needs to be tested as an ICP location.
- Public Affairs (Module III) Pros:
 - Emergency Management Agencies engaged,
 - Public Information Plan and informal stakeholder awareness plans were effective
- Module III Deltas:
 - Additional communication tools needed e.g. expanded WiFi
- Winter Weather and COVID-19 challenges/notes:
 - Limited winter weather gear, industry partners have developed/implemented COVID-19 plans,
 - Proposed ICP location would allow for social distancing procedures.

5. USCG D1 Updates: Joe Boudrow, First Coast Guard District, Boston MA

- Notified group that Oil Map software is available to assist with validating GRSs
- Mentioned that RRT1 is updating the RCP, and is seeking more participation from State reps for the Executive Steering Committee
- Joint Response Team - will be updating contact information
- Updates on the NRT Area Contingency Plan workgroup/task forces (specific goals are listed in the presentation)
- Introduced each task force within the ACP workgroup: (accessibility/mobility, architecture, validation & quality assurance, marketing, GRS, NRT ACP handbook, RCP policy, WCD and Risk Analysis)

6. NOAA Updates – Hayley Betker, NOAA, Seattle, WA

- NOAA Agency Report Out:
 - Agency travel is prohibited thru 31JAN2021
 - SCAT training *tentatively* scheduled for 27-29 APR, after a successful trial run of a previous online course this fall
 - SOS Training team is working on details for more courses, one course scheduled for June 2021, in Seattle.
 - SOCR training currently scheduled for August 2021
 - Monthly lecture series is ongoing, the next webinar scheduled for 17DEC20. Link provided on presentation.

○

7. EPA and other Agency/Organization Updates

- Mike Nalipinski, US EPA:
 - RCP updates are still ongoing, EPA will work with RRT1
 - Document reviews of SPCC and FRPs will begin, he may reach out to members for updates. Site visits will occur as operations and COVID-19 guidance allows.
 - R1 EPA IMT Training the week of March 8th geared to implement lessons learned from the wildfires on the West Coast, including COVID-19 procedures in the midst of a large response, successful use of Survey 123 and Collector programs, and the challenges of access agreements and entering private property during a response.
 - Mentioned that these lessons learned can be explored more in depth at the next RRT meeting
 - Introduced two new hires: Zach Taylor, and Andy Robles

8. Update on CRRC/UNH Ongoing Marine Spill Response Projects: Nancy Kinner

- CRRC is working with NOAA on using drones to measure oil thickness and that CRRC may now only fly US made drones (vice any with Chinese components)
- Slides will be available on their website and ME/NH AC Website
- Presentation:
 - Reviewed CRRC objectives (research, transforming results into practice, environmental spill R&D hub for stakeholders, all-hazard application, education).
 - ICCOPR science and technology plan: serves as a coordinator for ongoing oil pollution research across multiple agencies
 - Discussed Science and Technology Plan, which identifies knowledge gaps and recommends research priorities – report due December 2021.
 - Discussed the Oil Assay, scheduled to be near completion in 2021. It is a new database for physical and chemical properties of oil products broken into four working groups:
 - Contents
 - Lab methods
 - Responder Data Sheets
 - Data Modelling
 - Marine Mammal NRDA Exercise, a series of 4 TTXs designed to build a template for a quick marine mammal evaluation for each region.
 - Recapped the three planned Hurricane Summits over the season.
 - Oil spill modeling for arctic/ice maritime spills. Referred to her website for additional information.
 - Discussed UNH Lab Projects: sunken oil transport and use of snare research.

9. Recent/Upcoming Events, Announcements, Exercises & Training: Wyman Briggs (SNNE):

- ME/NH Area Committee Meeting, 0900-1100 April 6, 2021, via Zoom or at ME Air Natl Guard, 50 Western Ave., South Portland, ME
- Penobscot Bay, Full Scale Exercise, Hutchinson Center, Belfast, September 22, 2021

- ME.NH Area Committee Meeting, 0900-1130 Oct 21, 2021 via Zoom or at NH DES, Portsmouth, NH
- Vacancy in the SNNE EMFR department for a USCG Contingency Planner (GS12).

10. Closing Comments/Adjourn

- Jeff Squires, (ME DEP): Expressed thanks to the group, encouraged sharing lessons learned within the committee pertaining to COVID-19 procedures, best practices, and technical capabilities. Extended congratulations to Ginger McMullin and Tom Hardison.
- Gardner Warr (NH DES): Reinforced the challenges of COVID-19, reminded the group to stay healthy and capable, and to maintain response capabilities. Offered parting words and gratitude to Ginger McMullin. Introduced Amanda Bridge, a new DES responder. Stated that a new responder position will be posted online shortly. Expressed appreciation for the USCG's contributions/ efforts on some "problem vessels" within the state.
- Mr. Briggs opened floor for questions/announcements:
 - Steve Lehmann congratulated Ginger McMullin, mentioned that she is known throughout the nation for her work, not just locally.
 - Andy Raddant, DOI, also extended his congratulations and gratitude to Ginger McMullin.
- CAPT LeFebvre: congratulated Mr. Hardison on his upcoming retirement and mentioned that the ALGOMA VERITY case will likely be included in the COMDT's State of the Coast Guard speech, congratulated the group on the work completed during that event. He also congratulated Ginger McMullin on her retirement and highlighted the work she has done on the local, national and international level.
- Mr. Briggs: solicited for any final comments, and also highlighted the profound contributions Ginger McMullin has made supporting ME/NH AC initiatives over the years.

11. ME DEP Contingency Planner – Award Ceremony

- CAPT LeFebvre and Wyman Briggs presented Meritorious Public Service Award to Ginger McMullin on behalf of the Coast Guard
- Ginger McMullin offered some departing words and thanked each of the members.

Meeting adjourned – Next meeting scheduled for April 6, 2021.

Presentations will be posted to: https://www.maine.gov/dep/spills/area_committee/index.html