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:  April 4, 2019
Time:  9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.
Location:  Maine Air National Guard, 50 Western Ave, South Portland, ME 04106

1.  Welcome and Introductions:  Wyman Briggs, ME/NH Area Committee Coordinator opened the meeting and welcomed participants. Roundtable introductions were conducted.

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 Squire of ME DEP provided a personnel update for the department.  The Co-Chair also noted how Maine Maritime Academy’s integration into the Committee will provide additional collaboration and resources for the Committee.  He additionally was looking for a solution to qualify students as Ship’s Tankerman; such as having students work directly with industry.  This along with an Oil Spill Response course will give future Mariners the tools needed to actively prevent and respond to an oil spill.

   Bob Bishop of NH DES provided a personnel update for the department.  The Co-Chair also gave an overview of NH DES hosting an oiled wildlife class.  In addition to mentioning how responders will participate in the Fire HazMat Response at the Penobscot River Exercise; and how NH DES personnel have helped with planning.

   Captain Brian LeFebvre of USCG SNNE made comments on the Granite Pines Exercise and noted that responders will be seeing new USCG Federal On-Scene Coordinator Representatives (FOSCR) as personnel transfer in and out and become qualified.

3.  Coastal Flooding in Maine:  Peter Slovinsky, Maine Geological Survey, provided an overview of the synergistic effect of weather and sea-level rise on Maine’s coastline.  Peter noted
the flood stage for Portland is 12 feet MMLW, with Frequency of Inundations; or going over 12 feet, increasing over the years from 1912 to present. He then showed an example with the number of inundation significantly increasing with a one foot sea level rise. With a one foot sea level rise the frequency of flooding would increase ten times in Portland, based on historical data. The increase in sea level along with a corresponding high tide and storm surge will increase the probability and magnitude of flood events. The difference between 10% annual chance of 12.9 foot storm tide, and 1% annual chance of 13.7 foot storm tide is less than one foot. Predicted short term sea level rise is between one and half feet and two feet by 2050, and long term is three to six feet but potentially more by 2100. Sea level rise increases both the frequency and duration of annual tidal and storm-driven flood events. Mr. Slovinsky then displayed various maps and charts depicting sea level rise and storm surge impacts on critical infrastructure near the coast, using the Sea, Lake, and Overland Surges from Hurricane models (SLOSH) from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA).

4. **Highlights and Lessons Learned from the Granite Pines Exercise:** Whitney McKay of the Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) provided an overview of the Granite Pines Exercise. The exercise was divided into two segments a Table Top Exercise and a Functional Exercise. The goal of this functional exercise was to examine and validate capabilities and associated plans, polices, and procedures relevant to a multi-jurisdictional incident requiring a response from Federal, State, County, Local, Private-Sector, and NGO (Non-Government Organization) stakeholders. The Objectives of the Exercise included: Distributing Public Information through the correct channels, proper internal communication, sharing common resources through the Incident Command System (ICS) structure, evaluating current plans in place, and exercising the ICS process. The Table Top Exercise was held in December 2018 starting at day one of the incident. The incident scenario consisted of an earthquake that caused a ship to break free of its moorings, striking the Piscataqua River Bridge that connects Maine and New Hampshire, with a subsequent release of radioactive material. The functional exercise was in March 2019 and broken up into two parts. The first part started on day two of the event involving an entire cycle of the ICS operational period, including submitting an Incident Action Plan (IAP). The second part started on day six of the event and also included an entire cycle of the ICS operational period, including submitting an IAP. Lessons Learned during the exercise included: Need for more advanced training within ICS, greater use of Geographic Information System (GIS), properly following the laid out ICS structure, and more integration between the individual plans.

5. **New candidate Major Incident ICP locations in Augusta and Bangor:** Wyman Briggs, of USCG SNNE provided an overview of two potential locations to stand up an Incident Command Post (ICP). The first location is Camp Chamberlain, the Maine National Guard Joint Force Headquarters at 23 Blue Star, Augusta, ME 04330. This location is in the process of being designated as an ICP. The second location is the 240th Regional Training Institute Maine Army National Guard, located at 289 Hildreth Street, Bangor, ME 04401.

6. **Keepers House Inn Spill Case Study:** Justin Leavitt of ME DEP provided an overview of a #2 heating oil spill on a remote island in Maine. Keeper’s House Inn is located on Isle au Haut, Maine and is home to Robinson Point Light. The light was built in 1907, and automated in 1934, located on the Eastern limit of Penobscot Bay, and listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. 250 gallons of kerosene was discharged from a heating oil tank on the grounds
of the hotel due to a failed copper fuel line due to frost action. The potential risks included: discharge to the ocean through the sump pump, a desalinization system/cistern in the basement, and three wells on site that have been previously salted. The challenges associated with the response included; rough seas and weather, the leak beneath the building, and fractures in the bedrock heading towards the sea. The Initial response included using the local fire truck to begin water flushing and herding the oil to a collection site from April 17, 2018 to April 18, 2018. Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) was used to locate the area effected by the oil, samples were taken and two drums and several bags of used oil sorbent pads were recovered on April 27, 2018. From May 2, 2018 to May 3, 2018 the area was flooded with water to flush the oil out, and a vapor mitigation system was installed. From May 10, 2018 to May 12, 2018 forty cubic yards of contaminated soil and rock were removed from the site. By August 29, 2018 vapor levels were undetectable in the basement and in the effluent.

7. **NOAA Scientific Coordinator Updates:** Steve Lehmann, the Region 1 Scientific Coordinator (SSC) with NOAA, provided an activities update. Between April 29, 2019 and May 20, 2019 the M/V COIMBRA is scheduled to be de-oiled. The vessel is in 175 feet of water and the lead contractor performing the oil recovery is Resolve Marine Salvage. Steve also provided a quick overview on limited pre-authorization for surface washing agents, including operational protocols, Area Committee approved application areas, Area Committee approved products, monitoring requirements, and reporting requirements.

8. **Recent/Upcoming Events, Announcements, Exercises & Training:** Wyman Briggs discussed upcoming events listed on the Meeting agenda and other announcements. The next Area Committee Meeting is October 3, 2019 in Portsmouth, NH, followed by December 5, 2019 in South Portland, ME. The CANUSLANT 2019 FSE, is in Portland, ME from June 12-13, 2019. And the Piscataqua River Exercise Series (PRES 2019 FSE) is from September 17-18, 2019.

9. **D1 Updates and CANUSLANT 2019 Full Scale Exercise Planning:** An update was provided on the MSRC vessel M/V MAINE RESPONDER.

10. **Closing Comments/Adjourn:** Each of the three co-chairs thanked presenters for sharing their local knowledge and participants for taking time out of their busy schedules to attend.