Area Committee Meeting Minutes

Date:  September 20, 2018  
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:** Area Committee Co-Chairs or their representatives 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. Ginger McMullin, ME DEP, provided a staffing update along with an ongoing review of the Geographic Response Plan (GRP) and updating the corresponding Geographic Information System (GIS). Jason Domke, NH DES, also provided a staffing update, and noted the upcoming GRP exercise. CAPT Brian LeFebvre USCG SNNE, noted how the Coast Guard would provide staffing during a real world incident within the confines of the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

3. **SAFETY IN DRUG LAB SEIZURES – Trends in illicit drug abuse and production:** Mathew Cashman, Supervisor Agent, Maine Drug Enforcement Agency (ME DEA) provided an overview of trends regarding production and distribution. Overall trends of Heroin and Fentanyl use are increasing overall; while Methamphetamine use is expected to go up west of the Mississippi River, and east of Mississippi River Heroin use is expected to go up. This overall increase in consumption has led to an increase in drug poisoning deaths, even with Narcan actively suppressing opioid deaths. Nationwide, opioid deaths are highest in the Northeast. This can be attributed to the profit that can be made from resale. Opioid dealers can purchase pills for $10 each in New York State which then are resold for $45 in Maine. Heroin is replacing Marijuana as the product of choice for Mexican drug cartels, due to the trend of decriminalization and legalization within the United States. Death trends are also increasing due to higher purity coming from a shorter supply chain resulting in less overall dilution or “cutting”. Fentanyl is being used to extend Heroin, with Fentanyl being approximately 20 times stronger than Heroin.
Highlights include:
- Fentanyl has very high use within the fishing industry.
- There is a growing trend of Fentanyl being mixed with Methamphetamine.
- The majority of Heroin in Maine is the “White China” variety.
- Ohio is the distribution hub for Carfentanyl.
- Agents are carrying Narcan for personal use if exposed to an opioid.
- Maine expecting deaths from Fentanyl to rise, then to fall due to increased sentencing.
- A very common practice is to use body packing to transport Fentanyl.
- Products are being manufactured in China and transported to Mexico via shipping container, then muled to the United States.
- Pill clinic shutdown in Florida caused an increase in Heroin demand, causing the supply to run out, resulting in Fentanyl’s prominence.
- The majority of Methamphetamine is coming from Mexico, being transported via common carriers, such as USPS, FedEx, and UPS.

4. Cruise Ship Trends – Expanding Port Calls: Sarah Flink, Cruise Maine, provided an overview of increasing trends of cruise ship port calls in Maine and new, untapped markets. Industry trends are showing that cruise ships are moving towards larger ships, with the new larger ships pushing up towards 7,000 passengers and 2,200 crew. These new larger ships have been pushing older, smaller ships into new emerging markets after a ship “refresh”. These larger ships have also opened up opportunities for smaller cruise ships for individuals that are looking for a more intimate cruise into new locations. These smaller ships often have less than 200 passengers. In addition to these smaller ships, a new class of “Adventure” ships, such as ice breakers, are coming to market. A new class of luxury yacht style cruising is also coming to market intended for destination cruising in Maine.

Highlights include:
- There are 106 cruise ships on order with 34 ships with a capacity greater than 4,000 passengers, 25 with a capacity between 4,000 and 1,000 passengers, and 47 with a capacity less than 1,000 passengers.
- There are eleven cruise ship ports in Maine.
- In 2018 there were about 450 port calls with a capacity of about 477,000 passengers and 179,000 crew.
- The cruise ship season in Maine runs from April 20th to November 7th.
- The overall trend is increasing the number of port calls for Maine.
- The passenger breakdown for port calls in Maine are 4% mid-coast, 45% down-east, 36% Portland, and 15% other.

5. Mount Washington Fuel Oil Spill Cleanup: Bob Bishop, NH DES provided a synopsis of the Mount Washington Hotel #6 fuel oil discharge in Bretton Woods, NH. This boiler facility provides heated steam to a large hotel resort. The initial report was a discharge of 100 gallons of #6 fuel oil. Upon getting on scene multiple brooks and stream were already contaminated. The facility had a capacity of 25,000 gallons of #6 fuel oil, although an unknown amount of fuel oil was discharged. This was compounded due to the age and design of the facility, which included a steam discharge onto the concrete; increasing subsurface oil mobility. One of the oil boiler rooms
had had a void in the ground that had filled with oil that contributed to the oil spill. Responders used vegetative cutting and heavy equipment to respond to discharge, and by day three about 25 workers were responding to the site. Responders also used underflow dams, containment boom and oil snares (pom-poms), to remove the oil, with oil snares observed to be highly effective. Clean up efforts had removed 900 tons of material by day 35. Long term remediation included placing a polyethylene liner below the waterline to reduce the impact of oil into the environment. Currently there has been approximately 50,000 gallons of oil and water mixture recovered. The furthest migration of oil observed was a dime sized oil drop found approximately 5 miles downstream from the spill site. Remedial recovery includes snare boom backed by sorbent boom to stop residual oil. It is not known how much oil was discharged, but estimated to be in the thousands of gallons. The hotel has an individual assigned to the spill site responsible for maintaining the sorbent boom and to change sorbent pads, and to monitor the condition of the trench. Contributing causes include slow leak of #6 fuel oil happening over many years, and was not noticed due to the relative small quantity lost compared to the high usage rate. A total of 24 birds and a few rodents died due to the spill. The effect on NH DES’ budget was minimal due to the RP paying for the cleanup. The RP did not disclose the cost of cleanup but it was estimated to be around $500,000. The degree of public interest in the project was low due to low public visibility of the spill. The Hotel did give a press release with consultation of NH DES.

6. Environmental Sensitivity Indexes and In-Situ Burning Lessons Learned: Steve Lehmann, Scientific Support Coordinator (SSC), National Oceanic Atmospheric Association (NOAA) provided a history of the Environmental Sensitivity Indexes (ESI) and future outlooks for the program. The ESI has a strong coordination with the academic field to ensure the most accurate information to responders. NOAA is currently gearing up Arctic response preparations with three to four SSCs working on the plan and equipment requirements for developing the plan. Hurricane Sandy changed the shoreline requiring reassessment of the ESI. The reassessment due to Hurricane Sandy was completed in a few years verses the ten years that is normally required to complete an ESI. The new ESI included a larger scope inland and expanded offshore survey. Visual data was collected via a swinging offset camera attached to an aircraft that is capable of a 30 degree swing. The ESIs are primarily a GIS project, but has physical copies available for quick reference. Initial ESI charts were completed by hand at a cost of about $25,000 each. Maine currently has 72 shoreline types listed, and project leaders are trying to reduce this number to 12. The current goal is to reduce the potential for data overload for initial first responders and only presenting the most pertinent data for the current actions. When the CG calls for scientific support, ESIs are checked immediately after spill trajectories. There are two different ESI scales with biological data being at a smaller scale with higher resolution, and human use at a larger scale with lower resolution. Shoreline resources are at a much higher detail with electronic charts via GIS. Each ESI chart has individual “seasons” for each species pertinent to the area

7. D1 Updates: Joe Boudrow, First Coast Guard District noted that the Joint Response Team meeting is scheduled for November 6th though November 8th at the Saint John Hilton. The next RRT meeting will occur October 30th, through November 1st.

8. Recent/Upcoming Events, Announcements, Exercises & Training: Wyman Briggs discussed upcoming events listed on the Meeting agenda and other announcements.
9. **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.