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

# PUBLIC SESSION MINUTES

**0800 – 1630 Wednesday 23 September, 2015**

**Gus Solomon Courthouse**

**620 Southwest Main Street**

**Portland, Oregon**

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

## Safety Briefing, Introductions, Opening Remarks

Ms. Heather Parker, US Coast Guard (USCG) District 13 (D13), gave a safety briefing and conducted introductions.

## Opening Comment

LCDR John Titchen, USCG Sector Columbia River (SCR), thanked the attendees and gave a brief history of the location for the meeting. Mr. Mike Zollitsch (Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) welcomed the attendees and discussed the recent challenges in all the states with wild fires. Ms. Josie Clark, United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), welcomed attendees. CAPT Joe Raymond USCG Sector Puget Sound (SPS) expressed his appreciation of the recently conducted drills and exercises and briefly introduced the high volume port area. Mr. Dale Jensen, Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) welcomed the attendees and introduced new Washington State new rules that will impact upcoming planning work.

## NWAC Overview and Proposed Updates for 2016 NW Area Contingency Plan

Ms. Parker gave a presentation on how the Northwest Area Committee is organized and the agencies that are involved. She also spoke to the organization and membership of the Regional Response Team (RRT) and the organization and content of the Northwest Area Contingency Plan (NWACP). Additionally, Ms. Parker outlined the changes to the NWACP which will be available for public comment on October 1, 2015. Finally, Ms. Parker introduced the data for the 2015 Annual Summit (4 December 2015) in Seattle, Washington. The presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/01_NWACP%20101_NWAC_Portland_SEP2015.pptx).

## New Response Vessels on the Willamette River

Battalion Chief Scott Heesacker, Portland Fire Department, gave a presentation on the new vessels that are available for firefighting efforts in Portland. Tim Von Seggern discussed the capabilities of Portland Fire Department fireboat capabilities. The presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/02_Portland%20Fire%20and%20Rescue%20Presentation.pptx).

## Lessons Learned from RRT Discussion Concerning Control of Dam Flow

Mr. Ken Duncan, United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Portland District, gave a presentation on dam operations and construction on the mid-Columbia River, the Snake River, and potentially the Upper Columbia River. He spoke to mechanisms within the dam that may be used to influence spilled oil. The presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/03_USACE%20Bonneville%20Dam%20SONS.pptx). Finally, Mr. Duncan outlined lessons learned from the RRT Spills of National Significance (SONS) exercise that was conducted on 22 September.

## High Volume Port Area Changes in Puget Sound

CAPT Joe Loring, USCG Headquarters Office of Marine Environmental Response (MER), discussed the High Volume Port Line proposal for expanding the current line beyond Neah Bay on the Washington coast. CAPT Bill Carter, USCG National Strike Force Coordination Center, gave a presentation on Oil Spill Response Organization (OSRO) classification program. An OSRO classification indicates that organization has met the minimum requirements. The presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/04_D13%20OSRO%20Brief%20PPT%20Sep%202015_CAPT%20Carter_NSFCC.pptx).

## Use of IAP Software through USCG Contract with The Response Group

Mr. Lance Lindgren, The Response Group, gave a presentation on their Incident Management Software System for the Web Incident Action Plan (IAP) software and how it will be utilized by the USCG on a response. The software is not limited to oil spills but is designed for all threats. The presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/05_TRG_CG_Contract_Presentation.pptx).

## OSC Reports

### United States Coast Guard Sector Columbia River

LCDR John Titchen, USCG SCR, gave a presentation on recent drills and exercises that were conducted by SCR and responses in the sector since the last RRT/NWAC meeting in June. The presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/06_Sector%20Columbia%20River%20NWAC-RRT%20OSC%20Report%20September%202015.ppt).

### United States Coast Guard Sector Puget Sound

LCDR Jason Hagen USCG SPS gave a presentation on spills and responses in the sector since the last RRT/NWAC meeting in June. The presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/07_FOSC%20Report_SEP2015_NWAC_mtg%202.pptx).

### Washington State Department of Ecology

Mr. David Byers, Ecology, gave a presentation of responses that have been conducted over the last 12 months and outlines new requirement for ESHB 1449, and provided further details of the Winlock warehouse fire response, and the Sleepy Hollow Fire response, as well as an update on Ecology’s work on the Washington wild fire season. The presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/08_RRT%20OSC%20Sept%202015.pptx).

### United States Environmental Protection Agency

Mr. Dan Heister, EPA On-Scene Coordinator, gave a presentation on the responses in which EPA has been involved including two responses each in Washington and Idaho, and one response in Oregon. The presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/09_Portland%200923.ppt).

### Oregon Department of Environmental Quality

Mr. Bryn Thoms, ODEQ On-Scene Coordinator gave a presentation on the Triangle Oil (also known as John Day Vapor Response) with regards to ODEQ operations, EPA involvement, and transition from EPA operations to ODEQ operations. The presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/10_Triangle%20Oil%20DEQ.pptx).

## Government Initiated Unannounced Exercises

CWO Omar Borges, Sector Columbia River, and CWO Brandon Todd, Sector Puget Sound, gave a presentation on Government-Initiated Unannounced Exercises (GIUE) which included how the facilities are selected, and how the exercise is conducted. The presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/11_GUIE%20-%20RRT.pptx).

## Oregon Department of Environmental Quality’s updated Emergency Response Databases (Multi-hazard) and Recent Work on other Geographic Response Plans

Mr. Don Pettit, ODEQ, gave a presentation on Oregon’s all hazards geographic response system database. Oregon Incident Response Information System (OR-ISIS) is designed for responders to use on a small to medium sized response. The presentation outlined the new layers of Geographic Information System (GIS) data and layers that have been incorporated and how this information can be used to update GRPs. The presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/12_2015%20NWAC%20Presentation%20-%20ORDEQ.pptx).

## Winning the First 96 Hours

Ms. Linda Pilkey-Jarvis presented the concept of thriving in the first 96 hours of a response not just surviving. The concept originated in California during their last Area Plan update. Ms. Pilkey-Jarvis will send a white paper that was generated by LT Holly Bergman. The concept is to outline steps to take during the first 96 hours to ensure forward momentum in Operations and how to interact with other agencies to ensure success. Ms Pilkey Jarvis recommends that the NWAC gather key leaders together to focus on lessons learned wrt this concept and generate a list of work items to adapt this concept to this region, and present them at the Annual Summit for consideration.

## Spill Notifications: Do we have Room for Improvement?

Ms. Josie Clark, EPA, gave a presentation on notifications. Required notification at the beginning of the plan are designed to dictate who the spiller needs to notify. She then requested information from other agencies on how notifications proceed for their agency. The presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/13_Notifications%20in%20the%20NWACP.pptx).

### Oregon Notifications

Mr. Don Pettit stated the duty officer will utilize the Oregon Emergency Response System (OERS) to make additional notifications. The responsibility is on the Duty Officer to determine what downstream notifications need to be made (e.g. tribal). Ms. Clark inquired if counties are being notified. Mr. Pettit replied that down river water users are notified. Mr. Zollitsch would not notify local governments unless it is a large-scale response as determined by DEQ management. Normal notifications go to agencies that need assistance or drinking water users. Mr. McFarland inquired what triggers downstream notification to water resources. Mr. Pettit replied there is an automated message that generates e-mail notifications by county. Mr. Pettit noted there is Standard Operating Guidance (SOGs) for DEQ Duty Officers for notifications. Ms. Maghini, USCG MER, inquired if there was a spill in the Klamath Basin would ODEQ contact the state of California? Mr. Pettit responded they probably would not because they would not know whom to contact.

### USCG

USCG has upstream notification procedures. The USCG Captain of the Port has five minutes to report up to Headquarters if a certain threshold is met (this threshold was not further defined). They have quick response guides that determine notification procedures. If there was a spill in water near Canada, they would notify the Canadian Coast Guard.

### Ecology

Mr. Jensen does have detailed notification procedures. A Liaison function is established after spills, and that person or group notifies Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) staff, local officials and the Governor’s office. Notification includes government and elected officials. Ecology would also ensure notification with British Columbia and surrounding states if the situation warranted it. Ecology has been challenged in the past with the tribes and making notifications because they do not necessarily have 24 hour points of contact. WA Emergency Management Division (EMD) sends each notification to the impacted county emergency manager.

### IDEQ

ID only receives National Response Center (NRC) reports for their state. In Idaho there is a bridge call on every spill. The bridge calls begin with the Incident Commander at the scene, the duty officer, and Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security (IBHS). They discuss who else should be notified of the response. An e-mail is sent to every emergency manager which are contacted through state communications office. There is a checklist for the state communications office and if they do not hear of an agency they will suggest additional agencies that may need to be notified of the response.

### NOAA

Ms. Yender indicated they identify appropriate NOAA partner offices. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and Damage Assessment team and sanctuaries are notified.

### DOI

Mr. Milchak stated he maintains a contact list of agencies DOI is responsible for making notification to and will reach across regional lines if it appears it will impact another region.

## What are the gaps in our notifications systems?

There is a gap in communicating outside of our three state region.

Initial notification is good but does not provide information that assists them in making decisions and what they need to do (e.g. when and where to sample).

Tribal drinking water sources do not appear in Oregon databases.

There is no automatic trigger for RRT notification.

CAPT Raymond encouraged us all to over-notify when in doubt. If an agency has the potential to be involved, it is important to keep them updated. That agency can determine if they want to continue their involvement.

Mr. Byers supported adding the notification procedures to the NWACP in a brief paragraph form.

## Closing Comments

Mr. Zollitsch stated he appreciated the Task Force updates and the improvement to updating the NWACP. He noted the great participation with all three of the states and the federal agencies that are involved in Region 10.

LCDR John Titchen expressed the appreciation for all the people involved and their dedication to doing a good job and doing it correctly.

CAPTJoe Raymond noted there is also a new fire boat stationed in Bellingham, Washington. He thanked CAPT Loring and CAPT Carter for their presentation and information on the change in the High Volume Port Line.

Mr. Dale Jensen thanked Ms. Parker and Ms. Clark for their work on the SONS exercise and the outcomes that were generated from the meeting especially the constant communication that needs to be conducted to ensure that all levels, including top officials, understand the system or response that we are utilizing.

The meeting was then adjourned.