

Regional Response Team RRT 6

PERIOD OF REPORT: January 1 to December 31, 2005

I. MAJOR ACTIVITIES

A. MAJOR/NOTEWORTHY RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

Coastal Production Facility Spill – Breton Sound Block 51

- Product Spilled: Crude Oil (approx. 15 barrels)
- Cause of spill: Tank overflow due to inclement weather.
- Date of Incident: 12 June 2005
- Platform Owner: Amerada Hess
- Key operational activities: The location of the spill caused a significant impact to the Breton Sound National Wildlife Refuge, a Brown Pelican habitat. Over 1000 pelicans, many young, immature birds were oiled. Bird recovery operations took place on the island and a rehabilitation center was temporarily established in Venice, LA. To date 272 birds have been rehabilitated and released.
- Major lessons learned: None to report.

Chocolate Bay, TX –Tank Barge MGM 3030

- Product spilled: Sulfuric Acid (Potential Release 10,255 bbls)
- Cause of spill: Barge taking on water
- Date of Incident: 16 August 2005
- Owner:
- Key operational activities: The tank barge was lightered of the sulfuric acid and transported to Galveston, TX for additional temporary repairs
- Major lessons learned: Purposely grounding the barge on soft bottom gave responders time to plan for safe off-load.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita – Response Effort Summary

In addition to the major oil spills listed in this report, the federal, state, and local response agencies across the hurricane affected areas were, and continue to be, engaged in a myriad of operations ranging from vessel recovery/salvage and debris removal to small/large tank, cylinder, and container recovery (hazardous materials). Through the implementation of the NRP and other response plans such as the NCP, unified commands have enlisted the assistance of the Regional Response Team and technical experts in responding to these catastrophic events. For the state of Louisiana alone, 8.1 million gallons of oil was spilled and over 2,000 vessels were stranded and 1.1 million hazardous material containers of various sizes (including household hazardous wastes) were washed ashore.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Major Oil Spill Responses: The six major spills listed below occurred as a result of Hurricane Katrina and were concentrated in Plaquemines Parish, Eastern Louisiana. Details regarding these spills are listed below. The effects of Hurricane Rita were concentrated in Western and Central Louisiana and Eastern Texas. Hurricane Rita caused four potential coastal major spills, two potential coastal medium spills, two potential inland major spills and one potential inland medium spill. Despite the hurricane's wide range of devastation, the total volume of oil spilled due to Hurricane Rita was 1,430 gallons, as compared to the total potential spill volume of 725,055 gallons. Due to this fact, no Hurricane Rita cases are highlighted below.

Bass Enterprises South Cox Bay

- Product Spilled: Louisiana Sweet Crude Oil (90,000 barrels)
- Cause of spill: Failure of two storage tanks
- Date of Incident: August 29, 2005
- Tank Owner: Bass Enterprises
- Key Operational Activities: see below
- Major Lessons Learned: Contaminated vegetation/debris requires separate storage. See below.

Bass Enterprises North

- Product Spilled: Crude oil (10,989 barrels)
- Cause of Spill: Tanks shifted and leaked
- Date of Spill: August 29, 2005
- Tank Owner: Bass Enterprises
- Key Operational Activities: See below
- Major Lessons Learned: See below

Chevron Pipeline; Empire Facility

- Product Spilled: Heavy Louisiana Sweet Crude Oil (23,614 barrels)
- Cause of spill: Ruptured Tank
- Date of Incident: August 29, 2005
- Tank Owner: Chevron Pipeline
- Key operational activities: See below.
- Major Lessons Learned: See below.

Murphy Oil

- Product Spilled: Arabian Medium Crude Oil (25,110 barrels)
- Cause of spill: Ruptured Tank
- Date of Incident: August 29, 2005
- Tank Owner: Murphy Oil Refinery
- Key operational activities: Transitioned from CG FOSC authority to EPA FOSC mid-November once free-floating oil was collected and removed. Spill caused neighborhood contamination.
- Major Lessons Learned: See below.

Shell Pilot Town

- Product Spilled: Heavy Louisiana Sweet Crude Oil (25,435 barrels)
- Cause of spill: Pipeline beach
- Date of Incident: August 29, 2005
- Tank Owner: Shell
- Key operational activities: See below.
- Major Lessons Learned: See below

Shell Nairn

- Product Spilled: Heavy Louisiana Sweet Crude Oil (3,315 barrels)
- Cause of spill: Pipeline ruptured
- Date of Incident: August 29, 2005
- Tank Owner: Shell
- Key operational activities: See below.
- Major Lessons Learned: See below.

Hurricanes Katrina Responses, summary of key operational activities and major lessons learned

A challenging aspect of all oil spill response operational activities occurring after the storms was logistics. All six major oil spill response sites are remote and require the daily air lifting of contract personnel to the site and back. Heavy lift equipment and oil or oily waste storage equipment was not easily obtained due to high demand in the hurricane ravaged areas. Delivery and staging of this equipment to each site was also difficult. All affected companies established response organizations and the CG sent a representative to each command post in addition to establishing a forward operating base in Baton Rouge to maintain situational awareness and monitor response activities. The daily delivery of water and other personnel supplies to response sites was essential to maintaining ongoing cleanup efforts.

M/V REBEL pushing T/B DBL 152, 30 miles offshore from the Calcasieu River

- Product Spilled: #6 Oil (Total amount unknown, approx. 31,000 barrels)
- Cause of spill: Allision with submerged object (investigation ongoing)
- Date of Incident: November 10, 2005
- Barge Owner: K-Sea Transportation
- Key operational activities: Due to the heavy specific gravity of the oil spilled (oil sank), the process of recovery has been difficult and is expected to last for several weeks into the new year. The Unified Command, in consultation with RRT VI, has incorporated the use of underwater recovery technologies in an effort to mitigate the spill. The use of snares, side scanning sonar, a diver assisted recovery system, and decanting at sea have assisted in the response. Operational challenges included lightering an inverted barge, staging response equipment 25 miles from shore, and significant/frequent weather changes. Weather conditions and deeper under water currents have also made the tracking and recovery of the submerged oil difficult.
- Major lessons learned: A formal review of all aspects of the response/recovery operation will be conducted at the conclusion of the incident.

Formosa Plastics Explosion

- Date: October 6, 2005
- Location: Formosa Plastics facility in Point Comfort, Calhoun County, Texas
- Product(s) involved: ethylene, propylene, 1-3-butadiene
- Explosion and fire at the olefins unit of the plant. EPA and Start responders was dispatched to the scene, as well as the ASPECT aircraft to perform air monitoring and determination of any hazardous substances leaving the facility.
- Additional information available on EPA OSC webpage:
http://www.epaosc.net/site_profile.asp?site_id=1905

Krum Mercury Spill

- Date: April 11, 2005
- Location: Krum City Hall, Krum, Denton County, Texas
- Product involved: Mercury
- A small bottle of suspected nitroglycerin had been detonated in Krum, Texas by the Denton County Bomb Squad. The material was later determined to be mercury. The detonation occurred in the parking lot of Krum City Hall. Bales of hay were stacked around the bottle to dampen the explosion. Upon realization of the identity of the contents, the City of Krum Fire Department was contacted to collect the explosion containment debris. Six bales of hay were placed in plastic bags and approximately 70 pounds of mercury contaminated asphalt aggregate was collected and placed in a drum. The items were then stored in the Krum Fire Department fire engine bay. EPA and contractors monitored parking lot and fire department and removed mercury as well as asphalt for disposal.
- Additional information available on EPA OSC webpage:
http://www.epaosc.net/site_profile.asp?site_id=1512

BP Amoco Refinery Explosion and Fire

- Date: March 23, 2005
- Location: BP Amoco, Texas City, Galveston County, Texas
- Product(s) involved: Naptha, benzene
- Explosion from a process unit, which resulted in 15 fatalities and approximately 77 injuries. EPA and START contractors responded, provided air monitoring, as well as participating in the Unified Command for the response.
- Additional information available on EPA OSC webpage:
http://www.epaosc.net/site_profile.asp?site_id=1445

Valley Solvent Explosion and Fire

- Date: July 28, 2005
- Location: Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas
- Product(s) involved: Various solvents
- EPA mobilized OSC, START contractor, and the ASPECT aircraft to the incident to conduct air monitoring and participate in the Unified Command.
- Additional information available on EPA OSC webpage:
http://www.epaosc.net/site_profile.asp?site_id=1767

Superior Packaging Explosion

- Date: April 17, 2005
- Location: Houston, Harris County, Texas
- Product(s) involved: Various solvents
- EPA and START contractors mobilized to the site to participate in Unified Command, as well as monitoring of the air and water for potential contamination.
- Additional information available on EPA OSC webpage:
http://www.epaosc.net/polrep_profile.asp?site_id=1560

Teris Explosion and Fire

- Date: January 2, 2005
- Location: El Dorado, Union County, Arkansas
- Product(s) involved: Various hazardous wastes
- EPA, START, and ASPECT dispatched to scene to conduct air monitoring. EPA participated in Unified Command as part of the response.
- Additional information available on EPA OSC webpage:
http://www.epaosc.net/site_profile.asp?site_id=NRC745957

B. RRT MEETINGS

The RRT 6 winter meeting (USCG) will be held at Marriott Hotel, 555 Canal Street, New Orleans, LA, on 10-11 January 2006.

During 2005, an incident-specific RRT for Region VI was convened for the following reasons: to review an in-situ burn response plan, one hazardous material incident, and, on several occasions, specifically to discuss response options for the DBL-152 incident. Additional information on the DBL-152 incident is available in the FOSC report.

The in-situ burn call was initiated to discuss the burn plan for the Empire Terminal Incident in Louisiana. The Empire Terminal response was a coastal wetland burn of approximately 95 barrels of pooled oil measuring 2mm thick and covering 33 acres of marsh land. This spill occurred during Hurricane Katrina and the intended burn presented no problems to wildlife due to their absence after the hurricane. Local air monitoring was not required due to total evacuation of people from the area. The insitu burn was of major interest to the Incident Specific RRT members and their stakeholders. The burn was closely monitored and considered successful.

The Chocolate Bay incident, tank barge MGM 3030, involved a hazardous material release, sulfuric acid, threatening contamination of a shoreline that is predominately a salt marsh habitat with some areas of coarse grained sand, mixed sand and gravel beaches. This area is a combination of sheltered man-made structures and marshes populated with numerous fish, shellfish and water fowl. The RRT was briefed about the incident and evaluated a proposed move of the barge by the OSC to a repair facility.

USCG, RRT 6 co-chair, hosted two post-hurricane Katrina/Rita conference calls with RRT 6 incident-specific members to discuss ESF # 10 issues. These conference calls allowed for first-hand information sharing between federal, state and local stakeholders.

C. COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUP UPDATES

During the Executive Secretariat session of the Summer RRT 6 meeting, members proposed reorganization of the Industry Work Group (IWG). The reorganization was done to maximize the efforts of the RRT with Industry. The IWG was declared a work group under the RRT preparedness committee. That committee chairperson, in conjunction with the IWG chairperson, can appoint/select individuals that have direct Industry knowledge to issues assigned by the RRT. Mr. John Temperilli, Garner Environmental, was appointed as the IWG chairperson.

II. GENERAL PREPAREDNESS AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING

A. TRAINING

The Eighth Coast Guard District solicited for and sponsored 10 candidates within the District to attend the HAZWOPER Train the Trainer course.

The Eighth Coast Guard District funded numerous ICS 300 courses for District personnel in a variety of locations within the District.

March 2-3, 2005, members of the Eighth Coast Guard District Response Advisory Team (DRAT), in conjunction with the Texas General Land Office (TGLO), sponsored marine pollution response training at Marine Safety Unit Galveston.

June 22-23, 2005, members of the DRAT sponsored a Marine Fire-Fighting and Salvage forum in Corpus Christi, Texas for members of the response community.

B. EXERCISE/WORKSHOPS

MSO HOUSTON/GALVESTON PREP EXERCISE

The Eighth Coast Guard District and Sector Houston/Galveston, TX., PREP exercise was scheduled for December 10, 2005. This exercise was cancelled due to impact of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita to the Gulf Coast. The date of the exercise has been changed to April 24, 2006.

Spill Of Opportunity Update (TGLO)

During the summer 2005, RRT 6 meeting, Texas General Land Office, Ms. Robin Jamail, Director, Research and Development, distributed to the RRT a compact disc (CD) which contains the final report for the Dispersant Spill of Opportunity Project. The CD contains eight Adobe Acrobat files, which together constitute the entire report. This CD incorporated all of the corrections, changes suggested by the RRT 6 steering committee during last review.

C. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL PLANNING AND COORDINATION EFFORTS

MARITIME TRANSPORTATION SAFETY ACT PLANS UPDATE

Within the Eighth Coast Guard District, there are 1380 Maritime Transportation Safety Act (MTSA) regulated facilities. Each facility has submitted Facility Security Plans (FSP) to the Coast Guard. Each of the facilities is operating under their security plans. Each plan is regulated to be exercised at least once a year with no more than 18 months between exercises.

III. PERSONNEL CHANGES

As of July 28, 2005, Mr. Charlie Henry, DOC/SSC, for the Eighth Coast Guard District, was appointed as the Department of Commerce primary member to RRT 6. Ms. Lisa DiPinto, SSC, Silver Spring, MD, was designated as the alternate member. Mr. David Kennedy, Director, DOC/NOAA, Silver Spring, MD, state that his office is simplifying the criteria for trustee spill notification and bringing it into alignment with other trustee agencies. NOAA now requests notification from FOSCs for all spills or potential spills over 1000 gallons that could affect navigable waters in all regions or districts.

IV. ISSUES OR OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS REQUIRING NRT ATTENTION:

- A. Provided a technical paper / guidance on the role of the RRT during a national disaster.
- B. Generic strategic plan for use by the RRTs in developing specific strategic plans.
- C. Publish best practices
- D. Next meeting, provide more time for RRT coordinator exchange, and schedule RRT Co-Chair meeting prior to or during the general NRT meeting.