

# South Texas Coastal Zone Area Contingency Plan (STCZACP)



**2024.0**

U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security

United States  
Coast Guard



Commander  
United States Coast Guard  
Sector Corpus Christi

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16471  
2 July 2024

## MEMORANDUM

  
From: Torrey H. Bertheau, CAPT  
CG SECTOR Corpus Christi

Reply to Sector CC EMFR (sx)  
Attn Of: MSTCS Eric Rocklage  
Phone: (361) 939-0416

To: Distribution

Subj: PROMULGATION OF THE SOUTH TEXAS COASTAL ZONE AREA  
CONTINGENCY PLAN

1. This memo promulgates the revised South Texas Coastal Zone Area Contingency Plan (ACP). This plan is effective immediately and supersedes previous editions of the ACP.
2. The ACP is designed to meet the requirements and intent of the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan and is aligned with the National Response Framework. It is designed to be used in conjunction with national, regional, and state plans, and provides guidance for a coordinated response by local, state, and federal government agencies as well as nongovernment partners to respond to discharges of oil and hazardous substances.
3. This ACP is electronic, enabling users to rapidly access a wide range of supporting documents that are linked to the ACP. For the ACP to provide maximum support, responders and members of the Area Committee, along with other port partners, must continuously update and revise the ACP based on lessons learned and/or best practices through exercises and actual responses. Response personnel should make themselves familiar with this plan.
4. This ACP highlights the national importance of the South Texas Coastal Zone area, both environmentally and economically, and is the culmination of excellent cooperation and teamwork from the members of the Area Committee.
5. If you have any questions, please contact MSTCS Eric Rocklage the South Texas Coastal Zone ACP Coordinator at (361) 939-0416 or via email at [Eric.P.Rocklage@uscg.mil](mailto:Eric.P.Rocklage@uscg.mil).

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Dist: South Texas Coastal Zone Area Committee Members  
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16471  
21 JUN 2024

## MEMORANDUM

From: David C. Barata, RADM  
CGD EIGHT (d)

To: CG SECTOR Corpus Christi

Subj: APPROVAL OF 2024 SOUTH TEXAS COASTAL ZONE AREA CONTINGENCY  
PLAN (ACP)

Ref: (a) U.S. Coast Guard Marine Environmental Response and Preparedness Manual,  
COMDTINST M16000.14A  
(b) D8 FY24 Operation Planning Direction (OPD)

1. Congratulations to you and your staff! Your subject plan, as updated, has been reviewed by my staff and is determined to be in substantial compliance with references (a) and (b).
2. Please pass along my thanks to your Area Committee (AC) for the effort that went into this update. As you are aware, your ACP will be reviewed by the Coast Guard National Review Panel (CGNRP) in August 2024. The CGNRP convenes annually to assess the adequacy of ACPs from around the country to identify best practices and areas for improvement. You should expect to receive the CGNRP feedback before the end of calendar year 2024. My staff looks forward to assisting in the development of a five-year "improvement plan" that identifies the short to long-term update strategy based on CGNRP recommendations. Continuous improvement, and maintaining the current momentum, will ensure that we are always prepared to effectively respond to oil discharges and hazardous substance releases in the coastal zone.
3. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Ms. Damara "Dee" Oos at (571) 607-4593 or email: [damara.a.oos@uscg.mil](mailto:damara.a.oos@uscg.mil)

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**Record of Changes**

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## 1000 General and Administrative Items

### 1100 Introduction

The South Texas Coastal Zone Area Contingency Plan (STCZACP) describes the strategy for a coordinated federal, state, tribal, and local response to a discharge or substantial threat of discharge of oil, or a release or substantial threat of release of hazardous substance(s), within the boundaries of the South Texas Coastal Zone.

This Area Contingency Plan (ACP) shall be used as a framework to evaluate shortfalls and weaknesses in the response structure before an incident and as a guide for reviewing Vessel Response Plans (VRPs) and Facility Response Plans (FRPs) required by the [Oil Pollution Act \(OPA\) of 1990, 33 U.S.C § 2701 et seq.](#) VRPs and FRPs should be consistent with this ACP and address, among other things, the economically and environmentally sensitive areas within the geographic area, the response equipment (quantity and type) available within the area (this includes federal, state, and local government and industry owned equipment); response personnel available; equipment and personnel needs compared to those available, and protection strategies. This ACP is written in conjunction with OPA, the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan ([NCP, 40 C.F.R. Part 300](#)) and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 ([CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. § 9601 et seq.](#)). As such, when implemented in conjunction with other provisions of the NCP, this ACP should be adequate to remove a worst case discharge under [§ 300.324](#), and to mitigate or prevent a substantial threat of such a discharge, from a vessel, offshore facility, or onshore facility operating in or near the area.

***\* Note: All specific contacts applicable to this ACP have been combined into one "all inclusive" contact spreadsheet located in [Annex A](#).***

### 1110 Authority

ACPs are required by OPA, 33 U.S.C.1321 (j), to address the development of a national planning and response system. Area Committees have been established for each area of the United States that has been designated by the President. The Area Committees are comprised of personnel from federal and state agencies that coordinate response actions with tribal and local governments and with the private sector. Area Committees, under the coordinated direction of the Federal On-Scene Coordinator (FOSC), are responsible for developing ACPs for their respective designated areas. Area Committees are also required to work with the response community to develop procedures to expedite decisions for the use of alternative response technologies.

### 1120 Purpose

The purpose of this ACP is:

- To provide effective implementation of response actions to protect people, natural resources, and property of the coastal zone covered by this plan from the impacts of an oil discharge, substantial threat of discharge of oil, a release of hazardous substance, or substantial threat of a release of a hazardous substance, including Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).

- To promote coordination and strategy for a unified and coordinated federal, state, tribal, local, potential responsible party, response contractor, response cooperative, and community response.
- To provide guidance to all VRP and FRP reviewers and plan holders to ensure consistency with the STCZACP.
- To provide guidance for responders.

Historically, the users of the ACP have been confronted with incidents that were caused by nature (hurricanes, floods, etc.) or from the unintentional actions of individuals (grounding, collision, etc.). In today's world where terrorism is a greater reality, the intentional discharge of oil, release of a hazardous substance, biological agent or radiation poses unique challenges to those who respond. Federal and state laws and regulations require oil spills, hazardous substance releases or responses to WMDs be managed with a trained and competent response management organization that accommodates a unified command structure in recognition of federal, state, tribal and local jurisdiction.

The STCZACP is designed to ensure that the initial actions taken in response to a hazardous substance release, oil spill, radiological, or biological incident that occurs within or threatening the designated coastal zone, are effectively managed from the start and incorporate other agency plans and operating procedures as those agencies arrive on-scene. However, incidents are never identical and once initial actions have been taken, responders will assess the incident and tailor their strategies and tactics to match the reality of the situation. ***As such, notwithstanding any statutory or regulatory requirements, this ACP outlines general response protocols for a notional incident (unknown date, time, location, and variables). This ACP is not intended to be a definitive step-by-step guide on all potential items necessary to mitigate any particular incident.***

### **1130 Document Organization**

The STCZACP provides guidance for the Area Committee, defines authorities and applicability, outlines plan maintenance and exercise requirements, and describes the overarching strategy for a coordinated multi-agency response to an oil discharge or hazardous substance release. Additionally, the STCZACP contains an overview of the geographic response strategies (GRSs)/geographic response plans (GRPs) in [Section 4600](#), and overview of the Fish and Wildlife and Sensitive Environments Plan in [Annex C](#), which encompasses the Environmental Annex information required by the [NCP](#). Additionally, the STCZACP Annexes are described in the next section.

### **1200 Annexes**

The STCZACP Annexes contain Quick Response Cards (QRCs) checklists, and other necessary job aids and documents to assist emergency management preparedness specialists and response personnel; all items are “grab and go” for ease of use. Tables 1 & 2 listed below provide centralized lists of annexes to support personnel in planning for or responding to an oil discharge or hazardous substance release within the STCZACP planning area. To maximize efficiency, all annexes are hyperlinked and incorporated by reference into this ACP.

## 1210 Scope

In the accompanying tables, you will find annexes developed and maintained by the South Texas Coastal Zone Area Committee (STCZAC). This list can expand or contract as necessary to meet the needs of local planners and responders.

Each annex in the table is hyperlinked to the Sector Corpus Christi Homeport site where they are housed. If you encounter trouble using the links provided, it is recommended that you right click on the link, edit hyperlink and copy and paste the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) into your browser to access the website.

Table 1: List of Standard Annexes	
Annex	Title
<a href="#">Annex A</a>	Contact Spreadsheet
<a href="#">Annex B</a>	Risk Analysis: Risk Profiles
<a href="#">Annex C</a>	Fish and Wildlife and Sensitive Environments Plan
<a href="#">Annex D</a>	Hazardous Substance Response
<a href="#">Annex E</a>	Marine Fire Fighting Plan (Salvage Plan incorporated by reference in <a href="#">Sec 1800</a> )
<a href="#">Annex F</a>	Planning and Response Tools
<a href="#">Annex G</a>	Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD)
<a href="#">Annex H</a>	ESF-10 Protocols: Natural Disaster Response Plan-TX, Additional guidance (referenced in <a href="#">Sec 1600</a> ) R6 RCP <a href="#">Annex 13</a> Natural Disaster Pollution Response
Annex I	Ice Operations (N/A for D8 Coastal ACPs)
Annex J	Space Operations (TBD as applicable)
Annex K	Air Operations and Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Support (TBD)
<a href="#">Annex L</a>	Unconventional Oil Response
<a href="#">Annex M</a>	State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) Protocols (Tribal: TBD)
Annex N	Swift Water Operations (N/A for D8, incorporated into <a href="#">Sub-section 5533</a> )
Annex O	International Coordination (N/A for D8, link MEXUS Plan and MEXUSGULF Annex in <a href="#">Sub-Section 1513.1</a> )

Table 2: List of Area and Regional Annexes	
Annex	Title
<a href="#">Annex AA</a>	Shoreline Cleanup Methods
<a href="#">Annex BB</a>	Places of Refuge Policy
<a href="#">Annex CC</a>	Health and Safety Plan
<a href="#">Annex DD</a>	Environmental Health Support Guidance
<a href="#">Annex EE</a>	Community Air Monitoring Protocols
<a href="#">Annex FF</a>	Water Sampling Protocols
<a href="#">Annex GG</a>	Disposal Plan
<a href="#">Annex HH</a>	Decanting Plan
<a href="#">Annex II</a>	South Texas Tar Ball Response Plan
<a href="#">Annex JJ</a>	Consultations: Surface Washing Agent Preauthorization

## **1300 Area Committee**

The South Texas Coastal Zone Area Committee (STCZAC) is a spill preparedness and planning body made up of federal, state, tribal, and local agency members, and with industry, and non-governmental organization representation. The STCZAC, under the direction of the USCG Corpus Christi Captain of the Port (COTP), is responsible for developing an ACP. The STCZAC is also responsible for working with state and local officials to plan for joint response efforts, including appropriate procedures for mechanical recovery, dispersant use, shoreline cleanup, protection of sensitive environmental areas, and protection, rescue, and rehabilitation of fisheries and wildlife. The STCZAC is also required to work with state and local officials to expedite decisions for the use of dispersants and other alternative response technologies.

The geographical boundaries of this plan are defined in [Part 2000](#) of this document.

### **1310 Mission Statement / Charter:**

The mission of the STCZAC is to ensure the highest state of readiness of the spill response community. The STCZAC will strive to accomplish this by developing a comprehensive and useful ACP, preparing the response community through training and exercises, developing coordination mechanisms to facilitate effective responses, and educating our stakeholders and the public. The STCZAC will function as an efficient organization for ensuring effective response to environmental threats in our area. The STCZAC will collaborate, sharing information and resources to produce the best possible plans and creative solutions to problems. The STCZAC will employ best available research and technology in both problem solving and decision-making. The STCZAC will learn from responses and activities, improve processes, and develop as individuals and as an organization.

### **1320 Organization**

The STCZAC is comprised of representatives from federal, state, and local governments as *appointed members* and *members-at-large* from non-governmental agencies such as the maritime industry, wildlife rehabilitation organizations, and academia, as advisors.

### **1321 Committee Chair and Vice-Chair**

The USCG Sector Corpus Christi COTP, as predesignated Federal On-Scene Coordinator (FOSC), shall Chair the Area Committee (AC). There are three lead agencies for oil and hazardous substance incidents in Texas. A representative from the Texas General Land Office (TGLO) is the lead state agency representative for oil spills that enter or threaten to enter the coastal waters of Texas. A representative from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) is the lead agency representative for hazardous materials, refined petroleum that does not threaten the coastal waters, and incidents involving radioactive materials in Texas. A representative from the Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC) is the lead agency representative for incidents involving crude petroleum (or unrefined petroleum) in Texas. A representative from TGLO shall serve as the Vice-Chair.

### **1322 Executive Steering Group (ESG)**

The Executive Steering Group (ESG) is the strategic decision-making body of the Area Committee and consists of both Federal and State On-Scene Coordinators with statutory, decision-making authority and jurisdictional obligations during pollution preparedness and response cleanup efforts in Texas. The ESG will provide goals and expectations to the Sub-committees and Working

Groups, wherein it will be upon them to work with their counterparts to produce results and brief their status to the ESG as necessary.

The list of ESG members can be found in Table 3 located in Section 1800 of this document.

### **1323 Executive Secretary / Coordinator**

The AC Coordinator from USCG Sector Corpus Christi will coordinate with the Executive Steering Group to prepare meeting agendas, schedules, and meeting notifications. The USCG will record, draft, and publish meeting summaries and attendance roster and coordinate remote participation access for meeting attendance.

### **1324 Members and Members-at-Large**

A list of STCZAC members can be found on [Table 4](#), and members-at-large on [Table 5](#) in Section 1800 of this document. These lists will be maintained by the AC Coordinator.

### **1325 Subcommittees**

Subcommittees are established to work on functional items pertaining to the AC. They are specifically tasked to complete assigned projects, tasks, and goals that are developed by the ESG. Working Groups may be assigned under a functional subcommittee to complete tasks or large projects as necessary. The four functional subcommittees, under which tasks are assigned, are:

- Preparedness
- Response
- Science and Technology
- Training and Exercises

**Note:** Specific subcommittee tasks/priorities and projects will be maintained by the AC Coordinator.

### **1330 Meetings**

AC meetings are open meetings. The USCG FOSC Chair shall attend/lead each meeting and provide an opportunity for participation by each regulatory member, each non-regulatory participant, and any public attendees; ensuring adherence to the agenda; maintaining order; and reviewing recommendations submitted to the ESG. In the absence of the FOSC, these duties shall be performed by the Sector Corpus Christi Deputy Sector Commander, who serves as the Alternate FOSC.

### **1331 Meeting Frequency**

AC meetings shall be held at least semi-annually. STCZAC strives to hold one meeting in each of the major ports within the AOR annually: Brownsville, Corpus Christi, and Port Lavaca/Victoria.

### **1332 Texas Area Committee Executive Steering Group (TACESG)**

The TACESG, comprised of members from the State of Texas and USCG personnel, provides input to all three Area Committees that cover the coastal zone in Texas, including the SCTCZAC. The TACESG does not intend to conflict with, or supersede, the authorities and responsibilities of each AC. The TACESG endeavors to provide efficiencies across the three Area Committees, working to develop and coordinate planning and preparedness activities and to ensure a higher probability of consistency and effectiveness during pollution preparedness and response actions.

Meetings of the TACESG typically occur semi-annually, ideally closely associated with one of the regularly scheduled Area Committee Meetings in Texas. Additional periodic teleconferences may be held throughout the year.

### **1333 Remote Access Attendance**

The USCG will provide remote access availability to AC members, and participants who are unable to attend meetings in person to maximize stakeholder participation and communication. USCG Sector Corpus Christi currently utilizes Microsoft Teams to provide remote access. Additionally, USCG Eighth District (D8) Incident Management Branch (drm) has established Adobe Connect sites for each COTP in All Partners Access Network (APAN) and is available to assist with set-up and maintenance for Adobe Connect and other virtual attendance technology.

### **1340 FOSC Annual Report**

Sector Corpus Christi shall submit an FOSC Annual Report emphasizing activities and best practices for the previous calendar year NLT 1 May of the following year to USCG D8 (drm) for review and endorsement. USCG D8 will review and route AC Annual Reports through USCG Atlantic Area to USCG Headquarters Office of Marine Environmental Response Policy (CG-MER) for final approval and compilation of nation-wide lessons learned and best practices.

### **1400 Validation and Testing**

The STCZACP shall be updated annually. The STCZACP shall be reviewed and approved by the STCZAC and USCG D8 every five years.

### **1410 Annual Updates**

The STCZAC will review the ACP and document any changes or updates in the Record of Changes page. Additionally, and at a minimum, the AC will update the ACP version number and contact information; confirm phone numbers, addresses, links, and notification procedures; and incorporate lessons learned as a result of real-world events and/or exercises. Annual updates will continue to be managed locally between USCG Sector Corpus Christi, Vice-Chair, and AC and be completed by 1 May.

### **1420 Plan Approval and Coast Guard National Review Panel Review**

In coordination with the Chair, Vice-Chair, and other members of the AC, USCG D8 formally reviews and approves coastal ACPs every five years. After approval, USCG D8 submits the ACP for national review by the CGNRP. The CGNRP, comprised of CG-MER, USCG Atlantic and Pacific Areas, National Strike Force Coordination Center, and District representatives, convene annually to review selected ACPs nation-wide. Nationwide, each coastal ACP is on a 5-year CGNRP review schedule.

Additional CGNRP information and requirements, including specific scheduling and expectations will be coordinated from USCG D8 to USCG field units.

### **1430 Geographic Response Strategies/Geographic Response Plans (GRS/GRPs) Validation**

GRS/GRPs found in [Section 4600](#) contain a set of planned site-specific response strategies that are designed to give responders information to minimize damage to sensitive resources in the first few hours following a spill. Design and information included within GRSs/GRPs are typically developed using neutral weather conditions and mean-average tidal data and assume a specific location and equipment use.



Once adopted and implemented into the STCZACP, the minimum level of GRS/GRP validation has been met, however, it is recommended that the STCZAC determine additional validation methodologies as appropriate, to determine GRS/GRP accuracy and applicability over time.

A tiered methodology for GRS/GRP validation from the lowest level to the highest include: desktop evaluation by Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), on-site visual inspection by SMEs, computer simulations, equipment deployment, Full-Scale Exercises (FSE), and Real-World Events (RWEs).

#### **1440 Area PREP Exercises**

Per the [National Preparedness for Response Exercise Program \(PREP\) Guidelines](#), which provides the framework for an effective oil spill and hazardous substance response exercise program, the STCZAC shall hold three annual Incident Management Team (IMT) Tabletop Exercises (TTXs) and one Full-Scale Exercise (FSE) per 4-year period.

#### **1441 Exercise Schedule**

USCG D8 (drm) will maintain the Area Exercise schedule and ensure visibility by the STCZAC and PREP Compliance, Coordination and Consistency Committee (PREP 4C). The STCZAC will validate the proposed timeframe and identify the industry plan holder who will participate in each PREP exercise. Any schedule change requests shall be routed to USCG D8 (drm).

#### **1442 Documentation**

Additional PREP-related exercise requirements, including development of Concept of Exercise (COE), After Action Report (AAR), Corrective Actions (CAs), and Real-World Event (RWE) credit requests will be coordinated from USCG D8 to USCG field units.

### **1500 The National Response System (NRS)**

The National Response System (NRS) is a three-tiered response and preparedness mechanism that supports the predesignated FOSC in coordinating national, regional, and local government agencies, industry, and the responsible party during response operations. The NRS was developed to coordinate all government agencies with the responsibility for environmental protection, in a focused response strategy for the immediate and effective clean-up of an oil discharge or a hazardous substance release.

The NRS is designed to support the FOSC and facilitate responses to a discharge or substantial threat of discharge of oil or a release or substantial threat of release of a hazardous substance. The NRS supports the responsibilities of the FOSC, under the direction of the Clean Water Act ([CWA](#)) as amended by OPA. When appropriate, the NRS is designed to incorporate a “unified command and control support mechanism” (Unified Command) consisting of the FOSC, the State On-Scene Coordinator (SOSC), and the Responsible Party’s Incident Commander (IC). The UC structure is further described under [Sub-section 5410](#) of this ACP. Within an established UC, the FOSC plans and coordinates response strategy on scene, using the support of the National Response Team (NRT), Regional Response Team (RRT), Area Committees, and responsible parties, as necessary, to supply trained personnel, equipment, and scientific support to complete an effective response to any oil discharge or hazardous substance release.

### 1510 Contingency Plans

Contingency plans serve to formalize and document activities to be undertaken to plan for incidents and in the event of an incident. The following diagram depicts the relationship of many of the response plans discussed below.

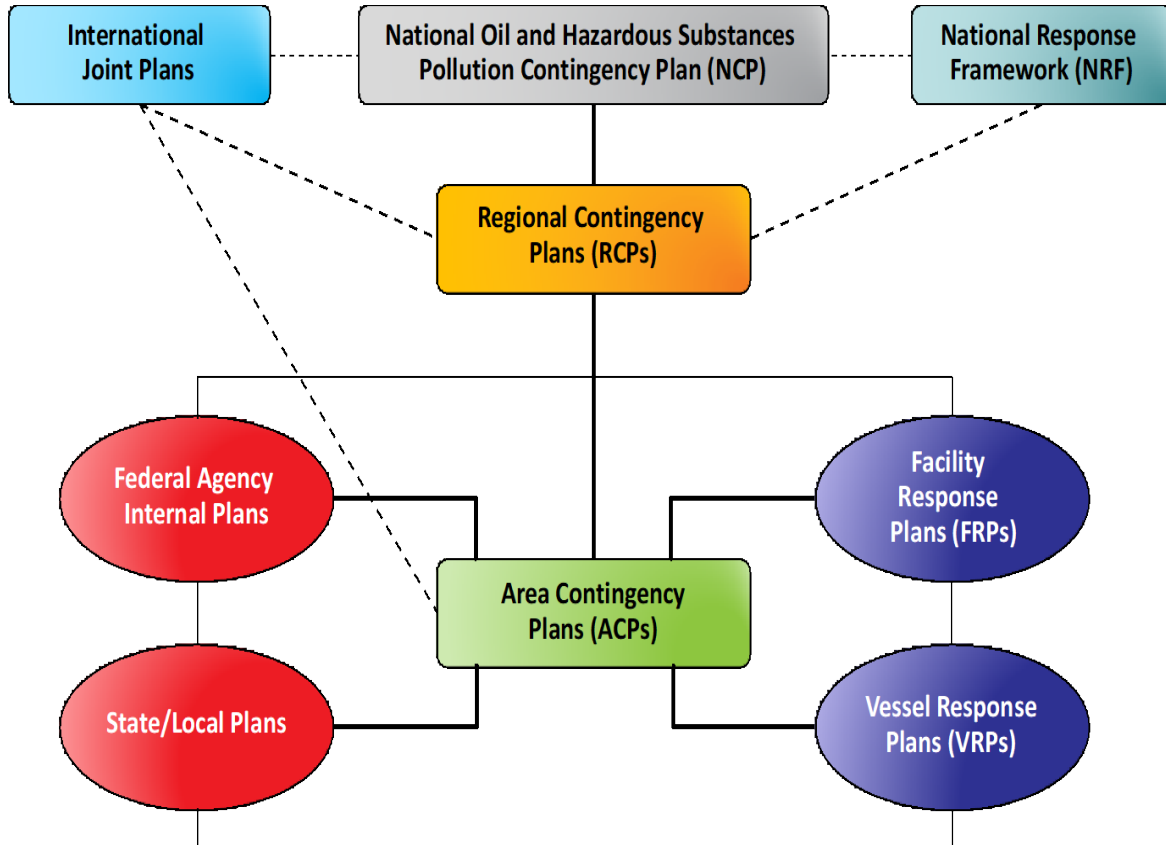


Figure 1: Relationship of Plans

### 1511 National, Regional, and Area Contingency Plans

There are three levels of contingency plans under the NRS: The National Contingency Plan (NCP), Regional Contingency Plans (RCP), and Area Contingency Plans (ACPs). The [NCP](#) addresses the national response structure and identifies requirements for regional and area preparedness development. RCPs provide the organizational structure and procedures for preparing for and responding to discharges of oil and releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants by the Regional Response Team (RRT). Coastal ACPs are developed under the leadership of the USCG FOSC, following guidelines within the [NCP](#) and RCP, as applicable. Composed of federal, state, and local governmental representatives, the Area Committee develops an ACP for responses to oil discharges and hazardous substance releases within their geographic area.

### 1512 Local Plans

Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs) are responsible for the development and maintenance of local emergency response plans in accordance with the [Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act \(EPCRA\), Sections 301 to 303](#). LEPC membership includes various representatives from local governmental agencies, emergency responders, environmental



groups, and local industry. These emergency plans include, among other things, the identity and location of hazardous materials, procedures for immediate response to a chemical accident, ways to notify members of the public of actions to take in the event of a discharge or release, names of coordinators at plants, and schedules for testing the plan. The local emergency response plan is reviewed by the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC). RRTs may review these plans and provide assistance if the SERC or LEPC makes such a request. Federal contingency plans provide for coordination with local governments.

## **1513 International Plans**

### **1513.1 MEXUS Plan and MEXUSGULF Annex**

In the event an incident could affect or threaten the marine environment of Mexico, the USCG FOSC or designated representative will immediately notify the USCG Eighth District to discuss protocols with the MEXUSGULF Joint Response Team Regional Chair. The USCG Eighth District Incident Management and Preparedness Advisor serves as the Regional Chair. The following links provide access to the [MEXUS Plan](#) and the [MEXUSGULF Annex](#). This Plan and Annex provide communication and coordination protocols (not tactical). USCG FOSC and staff are encouraged to review and be familiar with the Plan and Annex contents; however, the Eighth District is responsible for international engagement under MEXUS.

## **1514 Responsible Party Plans**

Facility and tank vessel response and non-tank vessel plan regulations, including plan requirements for the Coastal Zone, are located in [33 C.F.R. 154](#) and [33 C.F.R. 155](#) respectively, [30 C.F.R. 254](#) for off-shore facilities, [49 C.F.R. 194](#) for pipelines, and [49 C.F.R. 1304](#) for motor vehicles and rail cars transporting oil in bulk. Facility response plan regulations for the inland zone are located in [40 C.F.R. 112](#). Complex facilities are facilities that are regulated by two or more federal agencies; e.g., the USCG, the EPA, and possibly also U.S. Department of Transportation, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (DOT PHMSA). Therefore, they would have a facility response plan meeting the requirements of 33 C.F.R. 154, 40 C.F.R. 112, and 49 CFR 194 or an Integrated Contingency Plan (ICP), capturing multiple federal agency requirements in one plan.

## **1600 National Response Framework (NRF)**

The National Response Framework ([NRF](#)) is a guide which provides foundational emergency management doctrine for how the nation responds to many types of incidents, including pollution incidents. The NRF is often activated in anticipation of, or following, a storm event (tropical storm or hurricane) or other natural disaster (flooding event, tornados, etc.). The structures, roles, and responsibilities described in the NRF can be partially or fully implemented in the context of a threat or hazard, in anticipation of a significant event, or in response to an incident. Implementation of NRF structure and procedures allows for a scaled response, delivery of specific resources and capabilities, and a level of coordination appropriate to each incident. Pollution response, under the umbrella of the NRF is possible using plans, capabilities, and partnerships forged in accordance with the NCP, combined with the effective use of the ICS.

Other useful natural disaster response resources include the [National Response Team Abandoned Vessel Authorities and Best Practices Guidance](#) and the NRF's [Emergency Support Function \(ESF\) #10 – Oil and Hazardous Materials Response Annex](#). For information and guidance pertaining specifically to the D8 coastal zone, please refer to the Eighth Coast Guard District Natural Disaster Pollution Response guidance document located in [Annex 13](#) of the RRT-6 RCP.

## 1610 Nuclear/Radiological Incident Annex

The Nuclear/Radiological Incident Annex ([NRIA](#)) to the NRF describes the policies, situations, concepts of operations, and responsibilities of the federal departments and agencies governing immediate response and short-term recovery activities for releases of radioactive materials. These incidents may occur on federally-owned or -licensed facilities, privately owned property, urban centers, or other areas and may vary in severity from the small to the catastrophic. The incidents may result from inadvertent or deliberate acts. The NRIA applies to incidents where the nature and scope of the incident requires federal response to supplement the state, tribal, and/or local incident response.

**Note:** The [South Texas Project Electric Generating Station](#) is a nuclear power station on the west side of the Colorado River, southwest of Bay City, Texas in Matagorda County. Any releases from this facility would impact the South Texas Coastal Zone, within the MSU Victoria area of responsibility.

## 1700 National Incident Management System (NIMS)

The National Incident Management System ([NIMS](#)) guides all levels of government, nongovernmental organizations and the private sector to work together to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to and recover from incidents.

NIMS provides stakeholders across the whole community with the shared vocabulary, systems and processes to successfully deliver the capabilities described in the [National Preparedness System](#).

NIMS defines operational systems that guide how personnel work together during incidents. More specifics on using NIMS ICS for command and coordination in an oil spill or hazardous substance release will be discussed in [Section 5400](#).

## 1800 Relationship to other Marine Transportation System (MTS) Focused Response Plans

Depending on the size and complexity of an oil spill discharge or hazardous substance release, the following contingency plans developed for the Corpus Christi Captain of the Port (COTP) Zone may be activated to minimize disruption of the Marine Transportation System (MTS):

- The [MTS Recovery Plan](#) provides planning and coordination to facilitate the recovery of the MTS following any man-made or natural disaster.
- The [Salvage Response Plan](#) provides planning and coordination to facilitate salvage operations in conjunction with [Annex E](#), the Marine Fire Fighting Plan (MFF).

Table 3: Executive Steering Group (ESG)

Personnel from the following entities serve on the ESG:		
1.	Federal	USCG Sector Corpus Christi
2.	State	Texas General Land Office (TGLO)
		Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
		Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC)
3.	Executive Secretary	USCG Sector Corpus Christi Emergency Management and Force Readiness (EMFR)

Table 4: Area Committee Members		
<b>Below is list of <i>appointed</i> Area Committee Members:</b>		
1.	Federal	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
		U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) - Scientific Support Coordinator (SSC)
		U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE)
		U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
		U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region 6
		National Weather Service (NWS)
		U.S. Coast Guard
2.	State	Texas General Land Office (TGLO)
		Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
		Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC)
		Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)
		Texas Historical Commission (THC), State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
		Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)
		Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM)
Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)		
3.	Local	Calhoun County LEPC
		Calhoun Port Authority
		Cameron County LEPC
		City of Aransas Pass
		City of Brownsville
		City of Corpus Christi
		City of Port Aransas
		City of Port O'Connor
		City of Portland
		City of Rockport
		Coastal Bend Council of Government
		Coastal Plain LEPC (Aransas, Refugio, San Patricio Counties)
		Corpus Christi Fire Department (CCFD)
		Kleberg County LEPC
		Lavaca County LEPC
		Matagorda County
Nueces County LEPC		
Port of Brownsville		
Port of Corpus Christi		
Port Lavaca		
Port of Palacios		
Port of Point Comfort		
Port of Victoria		
Kenedy County LEPC		
Jackson County		
Victoria County LEPC		
Willacy County LEPC		

Table 5: Area Committee Members-at-Large		
Below is a list of Area Committee <i>Members-at-Large</i> :		
1.	Consulting	Center for Toxicology and Environmental Health (CTEH)
		Gallagher Marine Systems
		Witt O'Brien's
2.	Academia	Conrad Blucher Institute at Texas A&M
		Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies
		National Oil Spill Control School at Texas A&M
		Texas A&M Corpus Christi
3.	Co-Op	Clean Gulf Associates (CGA)
		Marine Well Containment Company (MWCC)
		HWCG, LLC
4.	Maritime	Orion Marine Group/Construction
		Signet Maritime Corp
		Valls Group (Vessel Agents)
5.	Wildlife Care Organization	Texas State Aquarium
		Wildlife Response Services, LLC
6.	Salvage Companies	T&T Marine
7.	OSROs	Clean Harbors
		Corpus Christi Area Oil Spill Control Associates
		Marine Spill Response Corporation (MSRC)
		National Response Corporation (NRC)
		US Ecology

## 2000 Geographic Jurisdiction and Boundaries

### 2100 Geographic Area Covered

The Sector Corpus Christi COTP Zone is defined in [33 C.F.R. 3.40-35](#) and depicted in [Figure 4](#) below. Within this COTP Zone, the USCG COTP/FOSC area of responsibility for the STCZACP planning area is the Coastal Zone (see sub-section 2120 below). The precise inland zone and coastal zone response boundary is agreed upon between the U.S. Coast Guard Eighth District and EPA Region 6 and is documented in the [Memorandum of Agreement \(MOA\) dated 14 Apr 2010](#). [Figure 2](#) below depicts the 13 Regional Response Teams and [Figure 3](#) depicts the U.S. Coast Guard Areas and Districts.

### 2110 Inland Zone Boundary Designation

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 6 provides the predesignated FOSC for pollution response in the Inland Zone. All discharges or releases, or substantial threats of such discharges or releases of oil or hazardous substances within or threatening the Inland Zone are the responsibility of the EPA. Included are discharges and releases from unknown sources or those classified as “mystery spills.”

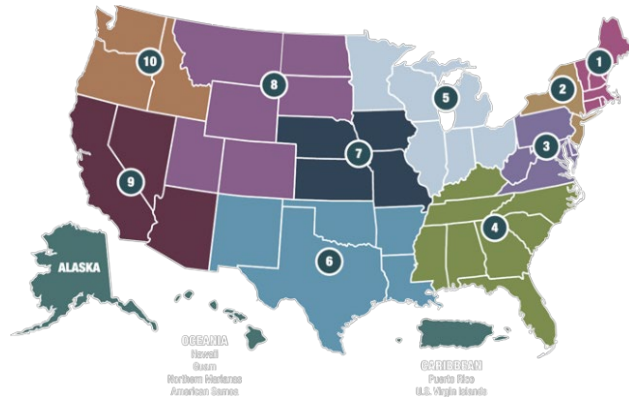


Figure 2: RRT Areas



Figure 3: U.S. Coast Guard Districts

### 2120 Coastal Zone Boundary

The relevant coastal USCG COTP is the predesignated FOSC for pollution response in the Coastal Zone. All discharges or releases, or substantial threats of such discharges or releases of oil or hazardous substances within or threatening the Coastal Zone are the responsibility of the USCG FOSC. Included are discharges and releases from unknown sources or those classified as “mystery spills.” Specifically, a dashed line on a layer within NOAA’s Environmental Response Management Application (ERMA) depicts the [Inland Zone / Coastal Zone boundary](#) within the STCZACP planning area.

Although the Sector Corpus Christi COTP and predesignated coastal zone FOSC is responsible for all pollution planning, preparedness, and response within the defined coastal zone, the two subordinate units (Marine Safety Unit (MSU) Victoria and MSU Brownsville) are assigned responsibility to respond to oil discharges and hazardous substance releases within their defined AORs (depicted in [Figure 5](#)).

MSU Victoria is responsible for responding to all relevant pollution incidents in the northern section of the COTP zone from the north bank of Copano Creek and Copano Bay, including the barrier islands offshore. It includes the city of Lamar and vessels operating out of Lamar, Blackjack Peninsula, the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, the Victoria Barge Canal and Port O’Connor. The coastal zone is divided by a line drawn southwest from the intersection of Matagorda Island and Cedar Bayou to the intersection of 28°00’N latitude to the south.

MSU Brownsville is responsible for responding to all relevant pollution incidents in the southern section of the COTP zone, covering the entire zone south of Port Mansfield and the Mansfield Cut to the southern border with Mexico.



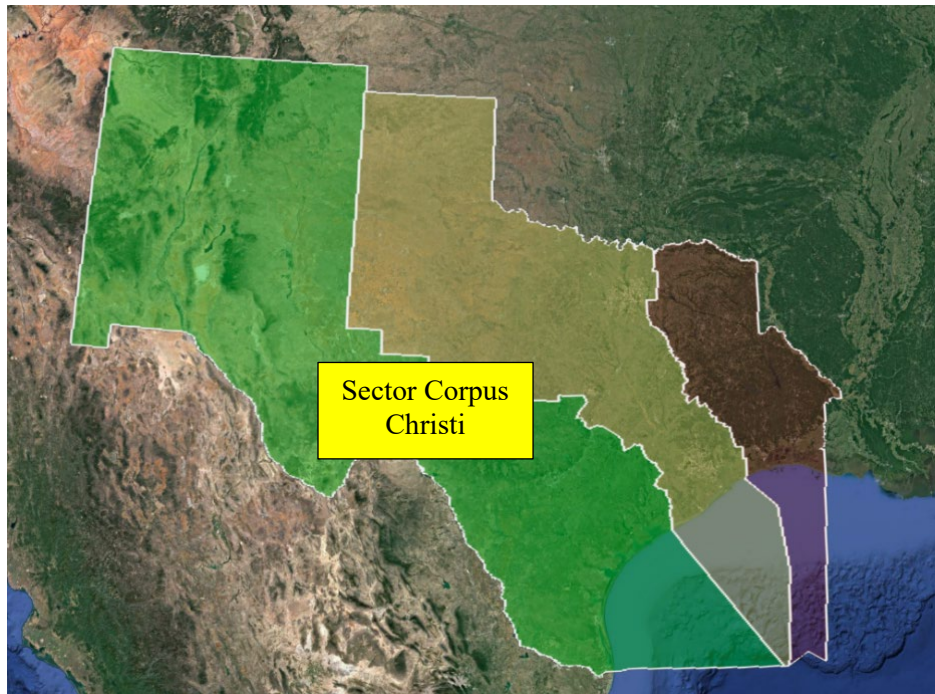


Figure 4: Map of Sector Corpus Christi COTP Zone

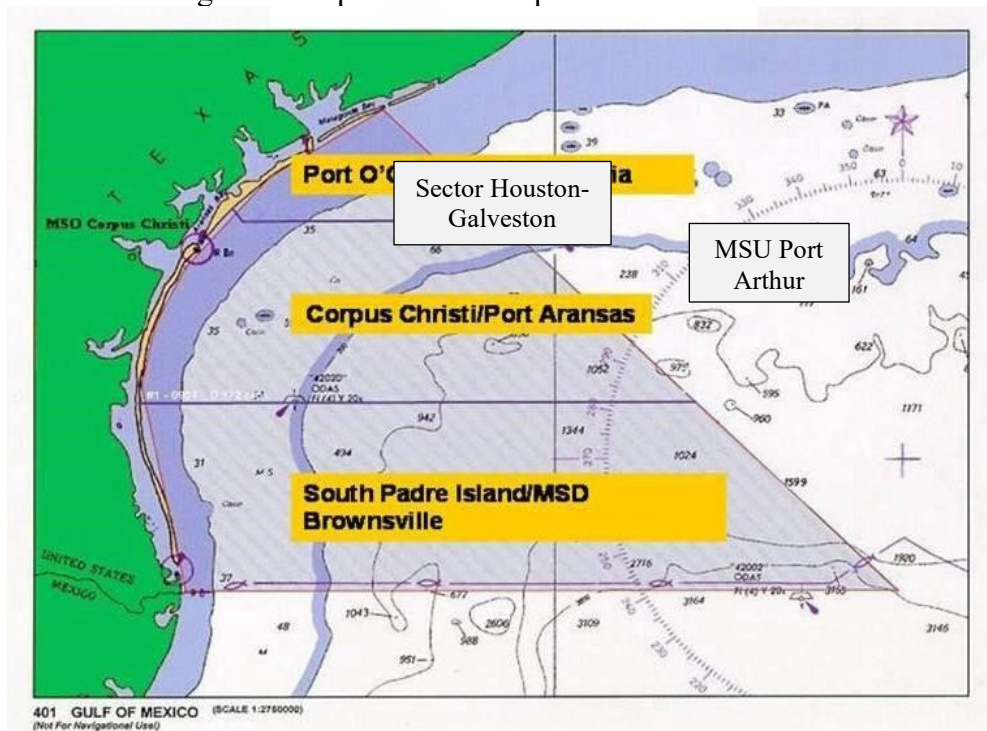


Figure 5: Sector and Marine Safety Units

**2130 Sub-geographic Areas**

The coastal zone counties covered in the STCZACP planning area include:

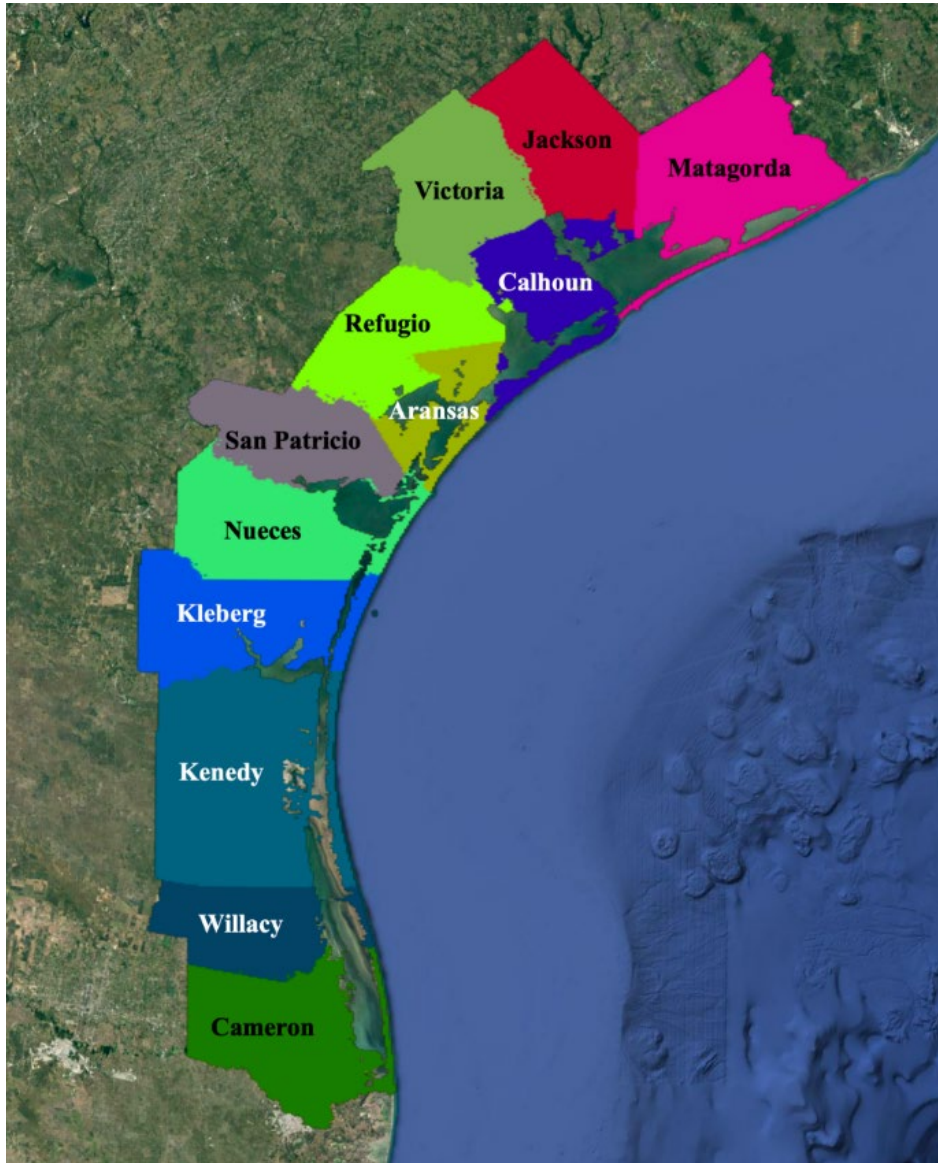


Figure 6: Area Counties

Table 6: Area Counties			
1	Aransas	7	Matagorda
2	Calhoun	8	Nueces
3	Cameron	9	Refugio
4	Jackson	10	San Patricio
5	Kenedy	11	Victoria
6	Kleberg	12	Willacy

## 3000 Roles and Responsibilities

### 3100 Federal Agency Roles and Responsibilities

Nationally, the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) has designated its coastal Captains of the Port (COTP) as the predesignated Federal On-Scene Coordinator (FOSC) within the coastal zone. As such, the USCG FOSC is the Chair of the respective Area Committee (AC) and oversees the development, maintenance, and implementation of the Area Contingency Plan (ACP) for their COTP zone.

#### 3110 Regional Response Team (RRT-6)

The functional role of RRTs in each [federal region](#) has two principal components. One component is the standing team whose duties involve communication systems and procedures, planning, coordination, training, evaluation, preparedness, and related matters within each RRT's respective region. The second component of the RRT is an incident-specific team that may be assembled, as determined by the operational requirements of a response to a specific discharge or release. The RRT has responsibility for developing an RCP and for assisting the FOSC when guidance, coordination, or resources are needed to provide an adequate response to an incident. The RRT includes a representative from each state within the federal region, and representatives from 15 federal agencies and federally recognized tribal representatives available to provide assistance or resources during such a response. EPA and the USCG co-chair the RRT, which does not respond directly to the scene, but instead responds to developments and requests from the FOSC in accordance with the STCZACP. RRT-6 normally holds semiannual meetings in the spring and fall of each year.

Refer to the RRT-6 [Regional Contingency Plan Volume 1](#) and the [NRT website](#) for a list of federal agencies and their roles and responsibilities related to ACP planning, preparedness and response.

### 3200 State Agency Roles and Responsibilities

#### 3210 Texas

##### 3211 Texas General Land Office (TGLO)

TGLO is the lead state agency for response to oil spills that enter or threaten to enter the coastal waters of Texas. TGLO also coordinates the activities of other state agencies and provides scientific support for response and contingency planning in coastal and marine areas, including predictions of movement and dispersion of oil through trajectory and hydrologic modeling and information on the sensitivity of coastal environments to oil and hazardous substances. TGLO maintains the [Oil Spill Toolkit](#), a robust response tool that provides easy access to all Area Contingency Plans (ACPs) within U.S. Coast Guard District 8, maps, Regional Response Team 6 (RRT-6) guidance, documents, and much more.

##### 3212 Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)

TCEQ is the state's lead agency in spill response to certain inland oil spills (crude oil spills emanating from oil or gas exploration, development, or production facilities are Railroad Commission jurisdiction), all hazardous substance spills (except those from exploration and production facilities), and spills of other substances which may cause pollution or adversely impact air quality in Texas. The TCEQ and the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT), as provided in [25.264 \(f\) of the Texas Water Code](#), have developed a contractual agreement whereby TXDOT personnel, equipment, and materials may be used in state-funded cleanup actions. All



expenses and costs resulting from cleanup activities are subject to reimbursement from the Texas Spill Response Fund.

### **3213 Railroad Commission of Texas ([RRC](#))**

The RRC has jurisdiction over waste generated by oil and gas exploration and production activities, permits the drilling of oil and gas wells in Texas (including bay and offshore wells within state waters), and is responsible for protecting surface and subsurface water from pollution caused by exploration and production activities. Spills or discharges, whether hazardous or non-hazardous, from crude oil or natural gas pipelines, are also within the jurisdiction of the RRC; but spills from refined petroleum product pipelines are not. Products not under the jurisdiction of the RRC include gasoline, diesel, and other fuel oil.

TGLO is the lead agency for all oil spills, including crude oil, into coastal waters or that pose an imminent threat to coastal waters as per amendments to [Texas Natural Resource Code 40.008](#). These amendments will not change the current RRC requirement to report spills in accordance with [Statewide Rule 20](#).

### **3214 Texas Division of Emergency Management ([TDEM](#))**

TDEM will ensure that all state resources are available for use by the lead agency. When required, TDEM will ensure the staffing and activation of the State Operations Center (SOC) in Austin, TX. This operation center will serve as the primary support network for the SOSC. The SOSC, in turn, can provide the support necessary to assist the FOSC and the responsible party. Within the emergency operations center structure, the [Disaster Districts](#) will be utilized as a conduit to and from the local community. Examples of the support that can be provided are: meteorological information provided by the TCEQ, legal and criminal enforcement assistance provided by the Attorney General's office, heavy equipment provided by the Texas Department of Highways, and aerial assistance provided by the Aircraft Pooling Board.

### **3215 Texas Parks and Wildlife Department ([TPWD](#))**

TPWD is the Texas state agency that oversees and protects wildlife and their habitats. In addition, the agency is responsible for managing the state's parks and historical areas. TPWD provides guidance to avoid and lessen impacts to fish and wildlife resources, associated habitats and water quality. TPWD is a governor appointed state trustee of the State of Texas designated under OPA.

### **3216 Texas Historical Commission ([THC](#))**

THC is the designated State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for the State of Texas and is responsible for the protection of antiquities and archeological sites on state public lands and waters, in compliance with the Antiquities Code of Texas ([Natural Resource Code, Title 9, Chapter 191](#)) and the [Texas Administrative Code \(Title 13, Part 2\)](#).

Protocols for notifications and consultations during response activities can be found in [Annex M](#).

### **3217 Texas Department of State Health Services ([DSHS](#))**

DSHS directs and coordinates the state's emergency medical and health services. The purpose of the Center for Health Emergency Preparedness and Response is to provide public health leadership and improve health and well-being in Texas. This is accomplished by promoting health, preventing disease and injury, protecting, and effectively responding to all types of health emergencies including bioterrorism, infectious disease outbreaks, and natural disasters. The Center for Health

Emergency Preparedness and Response does this through networking, coordinating, standardizing, and centralizing resources and planning efforts across the state.

### **3218 Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)**

Texas DPS has adopted rules relating to the reporting of all transportation incidents involving releases of reportable quantities of hazardous materials and on-site coordination of transportation emergencies on public roads and railroads [Texas Government Code Ann. Sec. 411.018](#). These rules specify the DPS's role in on-site coordination and outline a written report requirement for carriers involved in hazardous materials transportation incidents [37 TAC Rule §4.2](#).

During transportation incidents involving hazardous materials, the DPS official, as on-site coordinator, is responsible for on-site coordination of transportation emergencies for all unincorporated areas and may assume the on-site coordination role within cities when requested to do so by local government [37 TAC Rule §4.2\(a\)](#). The DPS law enforcement officer who is the first responder on-site is responsible for the on-site coordination [37 TAC Rule §4.2\(b\)](#). The DPS on-site coordinator is authorized to make emergency rules when normal operating procedures prove inadequate [37 TAC Rule §4.2\(d\)](#). DPS coordination responsibilities will be performed until relieved.

### **3219 Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)**

TxDOT and the TCEQ as provided in [25.264 \(f\) of the Texas Water Code](#), have developed a contractual agreement whereby TxDOT personnel, equipment, and materials may be used in state-funded cleanup actions. All expenses and costs resulting from cleanup activities are subject to reimbursement from the Texas Spill Response Fund.

### **3300 Local Agency Roles and Responsibilities**

The focus of local responders is usually directed toward abating immediate public safety threats. The degree of local response will depend upon the training and capabilities of local responders relative to the needs of the specific emergency.

In some cases, the need may be identifying the nature and scope of the hazard. This information is then passed on to state and federal responders who are activated to address the situation with specific expertise and/or capabilities.

Often, local agencies take mitigating actions of a defensive nature to contain the incident and protect the public. In many instances, responsible parties or local agencies are capable of an aggressive response and quick abatement of immediate hazards. In these cases, local authorities usually rely on state and federal responders to ensure that cleanup is complete, and remediation is sufficient.

A major role of local organizations during all emergency incidents is to provide security for all on-scene forces and equipment. For large incidents, help is often requested through the state emergency management agencies. Activities include establishing local liaison with hospital, emergency services, and police personnel, as well as restricting entrance to hazardous areas to all but essential personnel.

Coordination with the local governmental organizations of counties, cities, or towns is especially important for traffic control, land access, and disposal of oil or hazardous materials removed during response operations.

Landowners are also encouraged to participate in planning and response. Landowners are a valuable resource due to their local knowledge. The landowner, to the extent practical and based on the FOSC's judgment, may be included in the planning and response activities, under direction of the FOSC.

Landowners who provide access to or are affected by a discharge or release have jurisdiction over their lands and warrant special consideration by the responding agency or Unified Command. In the event an incident poses, or has the potential to pose, an imminent threat to human health or the environment, it is in the best interest of the landowner to provide access to an on-scene coordinator.

### **3400 Natural Resource Trustees**

CERCLA and OPA authorize the United States, individual States, and Indian Tribes to act on behalf of the public as Natural Resource Trustees for natural resources (Natural Resource Trustees or Trustees) under their respective trusteeships (CERCLA §107(f)(1); OPA §1006(c)). OPA also authorizes foreign governments to act as Trustees (OPA §1006 [b][5]). Following a hazardous substance release or oil discharge, Natural Resource Trustees have responsibilities for assessing resulting injury to the environment. Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) is the process by which trustees collect, compile, and evaluate data to determine the extent of injury to natural resources. The information gathered is used to assess damages, determine the restoration required to compensate for the injured natural resources and lost use of resources, and seek recovery of those damages from the responsible party. NRDA's are typically initiated concurrent with response activities.

Initiation of a NRDA usually involves acquiring data both during and after a spill to document: (1) oil or hazardous substances in water, sediments, soil, and organisms; (2) effects on fish, wildlife, and/or their habitat; (3) exposure pathways; and (4) measures taken to prevent or reduce immediate migration of oil or hazardous substances onto or into a trust resource. To avoid duplication of response activities specified in a NRDA with other response activities, all sampling and field work by Natural Resource Trustees should be coordinated with the lead response agency. If natural resources are injured by a discharge or release of a mixture of oil and hazardous substances, DOI regulations apply. NOAA regulations apply only in assessing damages that may result from discharges of oil.

Trustees often have information and technical expertise about the biological effects of hazardous substances, as well as locations of sensitive species and habitats, that can assist in characterizing the nature and extent of site-related contamination and impacts. Coordination at the investigation and planning stages provides the Trustees early access to information they need to assess injury to natural resources.

## **3500 Technical Support Available to the FOSC**

Various sources of technical/scientific and administrative support are available to the Federal On-Scene Coordinator (FOSC) either through telephone contact, virtual means, or actual dispatch of teams to the field. Support agencies and groups available to the FOSC include the following.

### **3510 Federal Agency Scientific/Technical Support**

#### **3511 U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)**

##### **3511.1 The National Strike Force Coordination Center ([NSFCC](#))**

The NSFCC manages the NSF which is authorized as the National Response Unit required under OPA, with responsibility for administering the USCG Strike Teams, and maintaining response equipment inventories and logistical networks. The NSFCC offers the technical assistance and equipment for spill response, assistance in coordinating resources during oil discharge response, Area Contingency Plan (ACP) or Regional Contingency Plan (RCP) review, coordination of spill response resources information, and inspection of Oil Spill Removal Organization (OSRO) response equipment. Strike Teams provide trained personnel and specialized equipment to assist the FOSC in training for spill response, stabilizing and containing the spill, and monitoring or directing response actions of the responsible parties (RPs) and/or contractors.

##### **3511.1.1 The USCG National Strike Force (NSF)**

The NSF's mission is to provide highly trained, experienced personnel and specialized equipment to the Coast Guard and other federal agencies to facilitate preparedness and response to oil and hazardous substance pollution incidents in order to protect public health and the environment. The NSF's area of responsibility (AOR) covers all Coast Guard Districts and Federal Regions.

##### **3511.1.2 USCG Strike Teams (Atlantic, Gulf, and Pacific)**

The three USCG Strike Teams are available 24 hours a day. If the Strike Team contacted is already committed, another Strike Team will be deployed. Each Strike Team maintains trained personnel and specialized equipment to assist with training in responding to spills, stabilizing and containing spills, and monitoring and/or directing response actions of the RPs and/or contractors. The [Gulf Strike Team](#), based in Mobile, Alabama, provides response coverage to Texas.

##### **3511.1.3 Public Information Assist Team (PIAT)**

[PIAT](#) is an element of the NSFCC staff available to assist the FOSC to meet the demands for public information during a response or exercise. PIAT provides interagency crisis communication team(s) and technical expertise to assist ICs and FOSCs meet their objectives of truth and transparency of operations for the public. PIAT provides emergency risk communication support to ICs and FOSCs during incidents such as oil spills, hazardous substance releases, hurricanes, floods, or other disasters. Its use is encouraged any time the FOSC requires outside public affairs support. Requests for PIAT assistance may be made through the NSFCC or National Response Center (NRC). See the [Spill of National Significance \(SONS\) Public Affairs Reference](#) for more information.

##### **3511.1.4 Incident Management Assistance Team ([IMAT](#))**

The IMAT was developed by the USCG to supply a ready-made team of highly trained individuals to assist the local Incident Command (IC) in dealing with a major incident. The IMAT is located in Norfolk, VA. The team is trained for initial quick response to a regionally or nationally significant event. The team consists of Incident Command Systems (ICS) process experts that can quickly set-up and assist in transitioning from the initial emergency phase to a more sustained

planning process. The IMAT deploys with a limited amount of equipment to ensure ICS functionality within an Incident Command Post (ICP).

### **3511.2 National Pollution Funds Center (NPFC)**

NPFC is responsible for implementing those portions of OPA Title I delegated to the Secretary of the Department in which the USCG is operating. NPFC is responsible for addressing funding issues arising from actual and potential discharges of oil. Responsibilities of the NPFC include: (1) issuing Certificates of Financial Responsibility (COFRs) to owners and operators of vessels to pay for costs and damages incurred by their vessels as a result of oil discharges, (2) providing funding to various response organizations for timely abatement and removal actions related to oil discharges, (3) providing equitable compensation to claimants who sustain costs and damages from oil discharges when the RP fails to do so, (4) recovering monies from persons liable for costs and damages resulting from oil discharges to the full extent of liability under the law, and (5) providing funds to initiate Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) activities.

### **3511.3 USCG District Response Group (DRG)**

DRGs assist the FOSC by providing technical assistance, personnel, and equipment. Each DRG consists of the combined USCG personnel and equipment, including marine firefighting equipment, of each port in the district and a district response advisory team. Specifically, the USCG's Eighth District Response Advisory Team (DRAT) and the Incident Management and Preparedness Advisor (IMPA) provide pollution planning, preparedness, and response policy guidance and assistance to an FOSC and staff on a regular basis.

## **3512 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**

### **3512.1 Environmental Response Team (ERT)**

In the event of a continuing release or discharge, the FOSC has access to EPA's ERT, stationed in Edison, New Jersey; Cincinnati, Ohio; Erlanger, Kentucky; Las Vegas, Nevada; and Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. The ERT provides Scientific Support Coordinators (SSC) with expertise in treatment technology, biology, chemistry, hydrology, geology, and engineering. The ERT also has access to special decontamination equipment and can provide advice on a wide range of issues such as a multimedia sampling and analysis program, on-site safety (including development and implementation plans), cleanup techniques and priorities, water supply decontamination and protection, application of dispersants, environmental assessment, degree of cleanup required, and disposal of contaminated material. The FOSC may designate an SSC as principal advisor on scientific issues who also communicates with the scientific community and assists in requests to state and federal agencies.

### **3512.2 Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) Consequence Management Advisory Division (CMAD)**

The CBRN CMAD, present at five geographic locations, provides 24/7 scientific and technical expertise to the FOSC or response customer for all phases of consequence management. With a focus on operational preparedness, CBRN CMAD facilitates the transition of the latest science and technology to the field response community in order to provide tactical options for screening, sampling, monitoring, decontamination, clearance, waste management, and toxicological/exposure assessment during decontamination of buildings or other structures following an incident involving releases of radiological, biological, or chemical contaminants. CBRN CMAD maintains critical partnerships with: (1) EPA's National Homeland Security Research Center and the EPA's special teams; (2) other federal partners including the U.S.



Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), DoD, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)/ Department of Health and Human Services (HHS); and (3) international partners.

### **3512.3 Radiological Emergency Response Team ([RERT](#))**

RERTs have been established by EPA's Office of Radiation Programs (ORP) to provide response and support during incidents or at sites containing radiological hazards. Expertise is available in radiation monitoring, radionuclide analysis, radiation health physics, and risk assessment. RERTs can provide on-site support including mobile monitoring laboratories for field analysis of samples as well as fixed laboratories for radiochemical sampling and analyses. Request for support may be made 24 hours a day via the NRC or directly to the EPA Radiological Response Coordinator in the ORP.

### **3513 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ([NOAA](#))**

NOAA provides scientific support for responses and contingency planning in coastal and marine areas, including assessments of the hazards that may be involved, predictions of movement and dispersion of oil and hazardous substances through trajectory modeling, and information on the sensitivity of coastal environments to oil or hazardous substances. NOAA provides scientific expertise on living marine resources it manages and protects. It also provides information on actual and predicted meteorological, hydrologic, ice, and oceanographic conditions for marine, coastal, and inland waters, as well as, tide and circulation data. The Secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC), through NOAA, also acts as trustee for natural resources managed or controlled by DOC, including their supporting ecosystems.

#### **3513.1 Scientific Support Coordinators (SSC)**

The SSC, in accordance with the National Contingency Plan (NCP), will provide the FOSC scientific advice with regard to the best course of action during a spill response. The SSC will help facilitate consensus from the Federal natural resource management agencies and provide spill trajectory analysis data, information on the resources at risk, weather information, tidal and current information, etc. The SSC will be the point of contact for the Scientific Support Team from NOAA's Hazardous Material Response and Assessment Division. The FOSC's Guide to NOAA Scientific Support outlines all of the products and services the NOAA SSC can provide for planning and response activities.

The NOAA SSC can provide training and technical expertise with Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique (SCAT). The [Shoreline Assessment Manual](#), updated August 2013 by NOAA/HAZMAT, outlines methods for conducting shoreline assessment after an oil spill.

#### **3513.2 National Weather Service ([NWS](#))**

NWS, a federal organization within NOAA, can provide various types of support to an Incident Command (IC)/Unified Command (UC) operating in the south Texas area through the Corpus Christi office and the Brownsville/Rio Grande Valley office. The IC/UC will be provided with a direct unlisted number to the lead forecaster's desk, through which continuous information on wind speeds, temperatures, and other atmospheric data can be obtained.

### **3514 U.S. Department of the Interior ([DOI](#))**

DOI has jurisdiction over the National Park System, National Wildlife Refuges, fish hatcheries, and public lands. The Regional Environmental Officer ([REO](#)) manages the department's response programs for oil and hazardous substance spills and oversees the department's responsibilities as

a trustee for natural resources. The DOI may become involved in spill response once contacted through the REO who is a designated member of RRT-6. The REO for RRT-6 is located in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

### **3514.1 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ([USFWS](#))**

The Secretary of the Interior acts as trustee for resources managed or protected by DOI Bureaus, including USFWS and Bureau of Reclamation ([USBR](#)). USFWS, an office within DOI, is responsible for the management of migratory birds, federally listed endangered and threatened species, and interjurisdictional fishes within STCZACP planning area. National Wildlife Refuge lands established in/near the ACP planning area include:

- [Matagorda Island Wildlife Management Area](#) (Victoria area)
- [Aransas National Wildlife Refuge](#) (Corpus Christi area)
- [Padre Island National Seashore](#) (Corpus Christi area)
- [Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge](#) (Brownsville area)
- [Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge](#) (Brownsville area)

When a spill occurs, the appropriate [USFWS office\(s\)](#) will provide timely advice on measures necessary to protect wildlife from exposure, as well as priority and timing of such measures. Protective measures may include preventing the oil from reaching areas where migratory birds and other wildlife are located or deterring birds or other wildlife from entering areas by using wildlife hazing devices or other methods.

If exposure of birds and other wildlife to oil or hazardous substances cannot be prevented, an immediate decision will be made regarding rescue and rehabilitation of “oiled” birds and other wildlife. Decisions to rescue and rehabilitate “oiled” wildlife must be made in conjunction with other federal and state natural resource management agencies. Wildlife rehabilitators will need federal and state permits to collect, possess, and band migratory birds and threatened/endangered species.

For more information see the Fish and Wildlife and Sensitive Environments Plan (FWSEP), and the Wildlife Response Plan, within the Consultations Compendium, [Annex 5](#) of the RRT-6 RCP.

### **3514.2 U.S. Geological Survey ([USGS](#))**

USGS maintains expertise in water quality characterization, oil fingerprinting, submerged oil and oil-particle formation, transport and resuspension of oil in fresh waters, riverine two-dimensional (2D) particle transport/hydrodynamic simulations, ecotoxicology, time-of-travel studies for freshwater systems, and geospatial data collection of visible spill plumes applicable to spill response events in freshwater environments. In addition, USGS can provide biological survey assistance for natural resources and contaminants and contribute distribution information about sensitive species (e.g., birds, invertebrates). USGS also provides extensive expertise and information for natural resource damage assessments (NRDAs) (e.g., aerial surveys, abundance estimation, remote sensing, etc.).

### **3514.3 Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement ([BSEE](#))**

BSEE works to promote safety, protect the environment, and conserve resources offshore through vigorous regulatory oversight and enforcement. BSEE’s Offshore Regulatory Program develops standards and regulations to enhance operational safety and environmental protection for the

exploration and development of offshore oil and natural gas on the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). BSEE's regional office within the Gulf of Mexico is located in New Orleans, LA.

### **3514.3.1 BSEE OCS Source Control Support Coordinator (SCSC)**

The BSEE SCSC is the principal advisor to the FOSC for source control operations during a loss of well control or pipeline incident on the Outer Continental Shelf. The SCSC provides support for operational decisions and coordination, provides expertise and inspection resources for analysis and monitoring of proposed well-intervention or pipeline source control operations, quantifies flow rate information from the source, and provides forecasting for flow rate modeling. Additionally, the SCSC facilitates consultations, knowledge integration, and consensus from governmental agencies, academic research institutions, and industry for source control issues.

### **3515 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ([HHS](#))**

HHS, through the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry ([ATSDR](#)), serves the public by using the best science, taking responsive public health actions, and providing trusted health information to prevent harmful exposures and disease related to toxic substances. The ATSDR is directed by congressional mandate to perform specific functions concerning the effects on public health of *hazardous substances* in the environment. These functions include public health assessments of waste sites, health consultations concerning specific hazardous substances, health surveillance and registries, response to emergency release of hazardous substances, applied research in support of public health assessments, information development and dissemination, and education and training concerning hazardous substances.

Public Health Technical Specialists from the DHHS Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)) and ATSDR can assist with environmental health support. Environmental Health Support Guidance for Texas is located in [Annex DD](#).

### **3515.1 The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health ([NIOSH](#))**

NIOSH provides national and world leadership to prevent work-related illness, injury, disability, and death by gathering information, conducting scientific research, and translating the knowledge gained into products and services, including scientific information products, training videos, and recommendations for improving safety and health in the workplace.

In response to requests from workers (or their representatives), employers, and other government agencies, NIOSH Health Hazard Evaluation scientists conduct workplace assessments to determine if workers are exposed to hazardous materials or harmful conditions and whether these exposures are affecting worker health. NIOSH evaluates the workplace environment and health of employees by reviewing records and conducting on-site environmental sampling, epidemiologic surveys, and medical testing.

See the [NIOSH Pocket Guide](#) for more information.

### **3516 U.S. Department of Agriculture ([USDA](#))**

USDA has scientific and technical capability to measure, evaluate, and monitor, either on the ground or by use of aircraft, situations where natural resources including soil, water, wildlife, and vegetation have been impacted by hazardous substances and other natural or man-made emergencies. The USDA may be contacted through the U.S. Forest Service emergency staff officers who are the designated members of the RRT.



USDA maintains trusteeship of national forest, wilderness areas, and wildlife within USDA-controlled forests, archaeological sites, range and farm lands, fisheries, and lands enrolled in the [Wetlands Reserve Program](#). Additionally, the USDA plays a key role in the closing and re-opening of fisheries before, during, and after clean-up operations.

### **3517 U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)**

The Secretary of Energy has trusteeship over natural resources under its jurisdiction, custody, or control. DOE's landholdings include national research and development laboratories, facilities, and offices.

The DOE Office of Petroleum Reserves oversees the Strategic Petroleum Reserve ([SPR](#)), the world's largest supply of emergency crude oil, which was established primarily to reduce the impact of disruptions in supplies of petroleum products and to carry out obligations of the United States under the international energy program. The federally-owned oil stockpiles are stored in huge underground salt caverns at four sites along the coastline of the Gulf of Mexico in Texas and Louisiana. There are no storage SPR facilities located within the STCZACP planning area.

### **3518 U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)**

DOT provides response expertise pertaining to transportation of oil or hazardous materials by all modes of transportation. Through the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration ([PHMSA](#)), DOT-PHMSA offers expertise in the requirements for packaging, handling, and transporting regulated hazardous materials.

### **3519 U.S. Department of Defense (DoD)**

#### **3519.1 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)**

The Secretary of the DoD has trusteeship over the natural resources on all lands owned by DoD or the Army (including lands and facilities managed by the USACE, Navy, Air Force, and Defense Logistics Agency). These lands include military bases and training facilities, research and development facilities, and munitions plants. USACE has trusteeship over natural resources under its jurisdiction, custody, or control. USACE landholdings include national research and development laboratories, facilities, and offices. Additionally, the USACE provide information on river levels within most District 8 ACP planning areas; however, the USACE does not currently provide river level data for the STCZACP planning area. River level data for the STCZACP planning area can be found on the National Weather Service River Forecasts ([NOAA – National Weather Service – Water](#)).

#### **3519.2 U.S. Navy Supervisor of Salvage (SUPSALV)**

SUPSALV has an extensive salvage/search and recovery equipment inventory, and the requisite knowledge and expertise to support these operations including specialized salvage, firefighting, and petroleum, oil, and lubricants offloading capability even in open sea response incidents. SUPSALV can also provide equipment for training exercises in support of national and regional contingency planning objectives. The FOSC may request assistance directly from SUPSALV. Formal requests are routed through the Chief of Naval Operations.

#### **3519.3 National Guard Civil Support Teams (CSTs)**

CSTs were created in 1999 to respond to terrorist incidents involving WMD, as well as other disasters and catastrophic events, both natural and man-made. There are 57 CSTs located throughout the United States, with at least one in each state and territory. The mission of a CST

is to support civil authorities at a domestic CBRNE (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and high-yield Explosives) incident site with responsibilities such as identification and assessment of hazards, advising civil authorities, and facilitating the arrival of follow-on military forces during emergencies and incidents.

CSTs normally operate as a State asset, under the command and control of the State Governor, but upon deployment, the unit provides direct support to the IC. CSTs support local emergency responders (Fire, Police, and EMS), as well as State and Federal agencies such as the DOE, FBI, EPA and FEMA. The Texas 6<sup>th</sup> CST is located at Camp Mabry in Austin TX.

### **3520 Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), Academia, and Other Technical Support**

#### **3521 Science and Technology Advisors (S&T Advisors)**

S&T Advisors consist primarily of academia and represent specialized capabilities to provide knowledge, based on science and other technical experience, to supplement and strengthen that of the Incident Management Team (IMT).

The advisory capability may consist of individuals or institutions and may be identified during the preparedness phase or by incident-specific needs. The relationship may be as informal as a list of names and contact information in a directory, or a more formal pre-spill relationship defined through letter of agreement.

The RRT-6 Science and Technology Advisor document, [Annex 10](#) of the RRT-6 RCP provides guidance to Area Committees and FOSCs on ways to engage academia and other technical specialists during oil spill and/or hazardous substance release preparedness and response and on how to align with related activities of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Scientific Support Coordinator (SSC) or the designated State technical representative.

See the Contact Spreadsheet, [Annex A](#) for more information.

#### **3522 Seafood Liaison Specialist (SLS)**

During a response, the seafood/fishing industry is directly impacted by agency decisions that result in fishery closures and subsequent seafood safety testing. Having the capability to engage with all stakeholder groups helps cultivate a broad capability to understand, monitor, characterize, and model hazards that can inform all levels of preparedness and response decisions.

The SLS is a technical advisor that provides a way to collaborate and share information between the Incident Management Team (IMT), the seafood harvesting community, e.g., fishers, seafood restaurants, the agencies responsible for managing fishery closures and seafood safety, and others in the seafood industry. Guidance for the SLS position is located in [Annex 11](#) of the RRT-6 RCP.

#### **3523 Volunteers**

In times of crisis or trouble, many citizens feel compelled to help or lend their assistance and expertise to the response effort. This help can be welcome if the demands of an incident exceed the available resources or if a particular set of skills are in short supply. Volunteers can support response efforts in any number of ways such as conducting beach surveillance, providing logistical support, or assisting in the treatment of impacted wildlife. The decision to employ volunteers will

take into account the benefits that might be gained weighed against safety and liability realities. The UC, in the early stages of the event, will make the decision whether volunteers will be employed and in which capacities they can serve. For more details about the use of volunteers, please refer to Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), [Annex G](#) of this plan, and the National Response Team's [Use of Volunteers Guidelines for Oil Spills](#).

### **3524 Certified Marine Chemist ([CMC](#))**

The United States Coast Guard and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration ([OSHA](#)) require that a certificate issued by a Marine Chemist be obtained before hot work or fire producing operations can be carried out in certain spaces aboard a marine vessel.

In complying with both the U.S. Coast Guard and OSHA regulations, the CMC applies the requirements contained in National Fire Protection Association Standard 306. NFPA 306, Control of Gas Hazards on Vessels, describes conditions that must exist aboard a marine vessel. A survey by the Marine Chemist ensures that these conditions are satisfied. In addition, a CMC is able to perform similar evaluations on other than marine vessels where an unsafe environment exists for workers, or hot work is contemplated on a system that might contain residues of a flammable or combustible product or material.

### **3525 Water Sampling Technical Specialist**

The Water Sampling Technical Specialist is an advisor responsible for helping to create the water sampling and analysis plans, including the Initial Incident Characterization Sampling and Analysis Plan, and any needed updates throughout the response based on the sampling results. The Water Sampling Technical Specialist is responsible for monitoring the progress of sample analysis at the designated laboratory and making arrangements for receipt of data. A detailed plan for Water Sampling during an oil spill or hazardous substance release can be found in [Annex FF](#).

### **3526 Community Air Monitoring (CAM) Coordinator**

The CAM Coordinator leads CAM efforts during emergencies in order to measure, identify, and quantify airborne contaminants. The CAM Coordinator uses these results as a baseline to facilitate fact-based decisions made by officials, ultimately safeguarding human health and the environment. A detailed plan for Community Air Monitoring during an oil spill or hazardous substance release can be found in [Annex EE](#).

### **3530 Federal Agency Legal and Investigative Support**

#### **3531 U.S. Department of Justice ([DOJ](#))**

DOJ can provide expert legal advice on complicated legal questions arising from discharges or releases and federal agency responses. The DOJ represents the federal government, including its agencies, in litigation relating to discharges.

##### **3531.1 Federal Bureau of Investigation ([FBI](#))**

The FBI, under the DOJ, is the lead federal agency for responding to threats from weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The Bureau investigates and collects intelligence on WMD-related threats and incidents to prevent attacks and respond to them when they occur. WMD Directorate (WMDD) is part of the FBI's [National Security Branch](#). The WMDD leads the FBI's efforts to mitigate threats from chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or explosive weapons. The WMDD provides leadership and expertise to domestic and foreign law enforcement, academia,

and industry partners on WMD issues. The FBI approaches these issues through four major areas: preparedness, countermeasures, investigations/operations, and intelligence.

### **3532 U.S. EPA Criminal Investigations Division ([EPA CID](#))**

The EPA CID investigates allegations of criminal wrongdoing prohibited by various environmental statutes. Such investigations involve, but are not limited to, the illegal disposal of hazardous waste; the export of hazardous waste without the permission of the receiving country; the illegal discharge of pollutants to a water of the United States; the removal and disposal of regulated asbestos containing materials in a manner inconsistent with the law and regulations; the illegal importation of certain restricted or regulated chemicals into the United States; tampering with a drinking water supply; mail fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy and money laundering relating to environmental criminal activities. CID Special Agents are sworn federal law enforcement officers with statutory authority to conduct investigations, to make arrests for any federal crime, and to execute and serve any warrant.

### **3533 U.S. Coast Guard Legal**

The Eighth Coast Guard District has a legal staff that is available to provide support to the USCG FOSC. Additionally, and as needed, USCG Atlantic Area and headquarters can provide legal assistance to the USCG FOSC.

### **3534 U.S. Coast Guard Investigative Service ([CGIS](#))**

CGIS Agents are available to investigate criminal violations of environmental laws enforced by the Coast Guard. CGIS should be notified and consulted regarding all cases that may be referred to the Department of Justice for criminal prosecution. CGIS Agents are trained criminal investigators who are familiar with the legal issues associated with prosecution of a criminal case. Additionally, CGIS Agents regularly work with agents of other Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies and frequently become aware of violations of environmental laws and ongoing criminal investigations through these sources.

Unless expressly directed by the Chief of CGIS or higher authority, CGIS will not conduct an environmental crime investigation in a COTP zone without first notifying and, thereafter, coordinating with the COTP. Likewise, the COTP should avoid committing the Coast Guard to participate in criminal investigations, either solely or in coordination with other enforcement agencies, without first consulting the District Commander who will ensure appropriate coordination with CGIS. In the event exigent circumstances require the initiation of a criminal investigation before such notification or consultation can occur, the required communication must occur as soon as practical thereafter.

### **3535 National Transportation Safety Board ([NTSB](#))**

In accordance with the USCG/NTSB MOU and [46 C.F.R. 4.40-15\(b\)](#) the NTSB shall conduct the investigation of certain major marine and public/nonpublic vessel casualties. Except for the preliminary investigation, a separate Coast Guard casualty investigation will not be conducted, nor will parties in interest be designated by the Coast Guard. Although these investigations are conducted by the NTSB in accordance with their procedures, the Coast Guard will participate fully as a party.

## 4000 Pre-spill Risk Analyses, Consultations, and Response Strategies

This Part of the ACP outlines emergency preparedness efforts within the STCZ planning area including identification of worst case planning scenarios for all transportation modes, pre-spill consultations, the establishment of priority protection areas, and the development of response strategies for consideration in the initial stages of an incident.

### 4100 Worst Case Planning Scenarios

As per the Clean Water Act, a Worst Case Discharge (WCD) is defined as, in the case of a vessel, a discharge in adverse weather conditions of its entire cargo, and in the case of an offshore facility or onshore facility, the largest foreseeable discharge in adverse weather conditions. The following tables identify WCDs for oil products and hazardous substances in the STCZ planning area.

### 4110 WCD Tables for Oil Products in STCZ Planning Area

Table 7: Worst Case Discharges for Oil Products in the STCZACP Planning Area (all transportation modes)				
FOSC-Sector Corpus Christi				
Port of Victoria				
Type	Owner/Operator or Vessel/Facility Name	Location	Amount	Product
MTR Facility	GulfMark Energy, Inc.	Port of Victoria	245,700 bbl	Crude Oil
Vessel	Misc Barge Owners	Port of Point Comfort, Port of Victoria	30,000 bbl	Oil products
Rail	Union Pacific Railroad/BNSF Lines	Victoria County	12, 857 bbl 540,000 gls	Oil products
Port of Corpus Christi				
MTR Facility	Citgo / Valero/ Enbridge/ Flint Hills/ Buckeye STGT	Nueces County	514,906 bbl 21,626,051 gls	Oil products
OCS Facility	Shell Perdido	120 East of SPI, TX	3,870,000 bbl 129,000 bbl/day	Mid Light Crude Oil
Pipeline	Contact DOT PHMSA Hotline (888) 719-9033	Nueces County	24,817 bbl/ 1,042,314 gls	Crude Oil
Pipeline-Breakout Tank		Nueces County	80, 574 bbl/ 3,384,108 gls	Crude Oil
Vessel	Very Large Crude Carrier (VLCC)	Nueces County	2,000,000 bbl 84,000,000 gls	Oil products
Rail	Union Pacific Railroad/BNSF Lines	Nueces County	12, 857 bbl 540,000 gls	Oil products
Port of Brownsville				
MTR Facility	TransMontaigne Southwest	Port of Brownsville	94,318,142 gls	Gasoline, Distillates, Asphalt, Glycols
Vessel	Tank vessel	Port of Brownsville	500,000 bbl	Oil products
Rail	Brownsville & Rio Grande Railway	Port of Brownsville	12, 857 bbl 540,000 gls	Oil products

## 4120 WCD Table for Hazardous Substances in STCZ Planning Area

Table 8: Worst Case Discharges for Hazardous Substances in the STCZACP Planning Area (all transportation modes)				
FOSC-Sector Corpus Christi				
Port of Victoria				
Type	Owner/Operator or Vessel/Facility Name	Location	Amount	Product
Facility	TBD	Port of Victoria	TBD	TBD
Vessel	Misc Chemical Carrier Owners	Port of Point Comfort	20,000 MT or 184,289 bbl	Anhydrous Ammonia
Rail	Union Pacific Railroad/BNSF Lines	Victoria County	TBD	TBD
Port of Corpus Christi				
Facility	TBD	Nueces County	TBD	TBD
Vessel	TBD	Nueces County	TBD	TBD
Rail	Union Pacific Railroad/BNSF Lines	Nueces County	TBD	TBD
Port of Brownsville				
Facility	TBD	Port of Brownsville	TBD	TBD
Vessel	TBD	Port of Brownsville	TBD	TBD
Rail	Brownsville & Rio Grande Railway	Port of Brownsville	TBD	TBD

### 4130 Area Planning and Risk Analysis

Additional risk analysis and area specific worst case scenario planning information for STCZACP is located in [Annex B](#).

### 4140 Gulf of Mexico Offshore Technical Information for Area Contingency Planning

The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) led an offshore Gulf of Mexico WCD project. During this multi-year project (2019-2023), a series of technical documents were developed (please see below).

- Offshore Oil and Gas Infrastructure (GOM Technical Document #1)
- Worst Case Discharge Scenario Modeling Overview and ACP-Specific WCD Scenario Appendices (2A-2F) (GOM Technical Document #2)
- Offshore Response Concept of Operations (CONOPS) (GOM Technical Document #3)
- Offshore Response Strategies and Best Management Practices (BMPs) (GOM Technical Document #4)
- Species Profiles and Best Management Practices (BMPs) (GOM Technical Document #5)
- Offshore Environmental Sensitivity Index Atlas (GOM Technical Document #6)



These documents were developed specifically for incorporation by reference into the coastal zone ACPs and are hosted on the [BSEE Oil Spill Preparedness Division's \(OSPD\) website](#). In addition to the above technical documents, an inventory of offshore spill response equipment and a set of offshore Environmental Sensitivity Indices (ESI) maps will be created and embedded in NOAA's Environmental Response Management Application (ERMA). Collectively, these materials provide a foundation of risk assessment, resources at risk, and conceptual response information to inform coastal zone ACP planning and responses to a significant offshore facility oil spill incident.

### **4200 Pre-Spill Endangered Species Act (ESA) Consultations**

In the event of an oil spill or hazardous substance release, the ESA must be considered in the development of Federal response activities and actions during an oil spill response. Within the coastal zone, the USCG is the Action Agency, and as such, it is the USCG FOSC's responsibility to address any ESA Section 7 Consultation requirements by engaging the Services (USFWS and NMFS) on the potential affects for all potential response actions that may be implemented during the emergency response.

- Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Form (for emergency consultations, pre-spill consultations and post-response procedures), [Annex 8](#) of the RRT-6 RCP.

### **4210 Preauthorization and Best Management Practices (BMPs)**

Pre-spill consultations have been completed for the STCZ planning area for dispersant use and preauthorization for use of Surface Washing Agents (SWAs). Frequently used BMPs can be found on the ESA/EFH Form, [Annex 8](#) of the RRT-6 RCP.

- [Dispersants USFWS from 1994](#)
- [Dispersants NMFS from 1995](#)
- [Surface Washing Agent Preauthorization from 2018](#)

### **4220 Threatened and Endangered Species within STCZ Planning Area**

A list of all threatened and endangered species and designated critical habitat for the STCZ planning area is available from the all-inclusive Listed Species Spreadsheet, [Annex 7](#) of the RRT-6 RCP. The listing is updated annually, and can be sorted according to area, state, species, and more.

### **4300 National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106**

The National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106, among other requirements, requires that “Federal agencies take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties and to provide the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) with a reasonable opportunity to comment.” Additionally, it requires that the Federal agency involved “consult on the Section 106 process with State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO)” ([36 CFR 800](#)).

Within the coastal zone, the USCG is the Action Agency, and as such, it is the USCG FOSC's responsibility to address any NHPA Section 106 Consultation requirements by engaging the SHPO. Please see [Annex M](#) of this ACP for SHPO protocols in Texas.

### **4310 Preauthorization and Best Management Practices (BMPs)**

It is recommended to engage early with any questions regarding response activities involving NHPA requirements. Additionally, for guidance on consultations with Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs), please see [Annex C](#), Fish and Wildlife and Sensitive

Environments Plan (FWSEP) of this ACP, and the Consultations Compendium, [Annex 5](#) of the RRT-6 RCP.

### **4400 Priority Protection Areas**

Area Committees (ACs) are directed by OPA and the NCP to identify environmentally, socio-economic, and otherwise sensitive areas within their defined ACP planning area. These areas are often referred to as *priority protection areas*. ACs have broad latitude to develop specific criteria for identification. Response plans required by federal law or regulation associated with oil exploration, production, transport, or storage, e.g., Oil Spill Response Plans, Vessel Response Plans, and Facility Response Plans must ensure maximum protection of Area Committee identified priority protection areas.

### **4500 Areas of Special Economic or Environmental Importance**

As required by [40 C.F.R. 300.210\(c\)\(3\)\(i\)](#), areas of special economic or environmental importance shall be identified for protection from the impacts of a spill. Considerations include each location's significance, sensitivity to oil, anticipated impacts, and the extent to which potential losses can be recovered/ restored/ compensated. Potential economically sensitive areas include water intakes, high tourism coastal areas, significant port/industrial facilities, marinas, aquaculture sites, and fishing grounds.

### **4510 Economically and Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

*Under development.*

### **4600 Geographic Response Strategies (GRSs)/Plans (GRPs)**

Once priority protection areas are identified and adopted, ACs have the flexibility to provide information that may be useful to ensure appropriate strategies are implemented during any oil removal operation. One methodology is often referred to as Geographic Response Strategies (GRSs) or Geographic Response Plans (GRPs). Texas's existing GRSs/GRPs can be viewed on the [Oil Spill Toolkit \(texas.gov\)](#).

Although GRSs/GRPs are developed and available for use during the planning and response phases, the IC/UC and OSROs must remain flexible and utilize on-scene initiative and their experience and competence in determining actual pollution mitigation "tactics" for a particular incident. GRSs/GRPs are developed using neutral weather conditions and mean-average tidal data and assume an incident response location. The scenarios for a pollution incident are nearly limitless; every spill is different and there are no absolutes. As a result, GRS/GRP locations should be reviewed and considered, but with the understanding that incident-specific mitigation tactics will likely be developed and executed on-scene. Factors such as current and projected winds, water currents/flows, tidal cycles, equipment limitations, bottom conditions, seasonal implications, exact incident location, potential hazards, and the type of oil can have a significant effect on any proposed strategy and should be carefully considered. **If applicable, modifications to any preplanned strategies should be expected.**

### **5000 Response**

This Part of the ACP provides information outlined in the NCP, [40 C.F.R. 300.300 Subpart D](#). Response protocols are guidelines for the response community to ensure success in meeting all legal and statutory requirements before, during, and upon completion of an oil discharge or



hazardous substance release incident. The NCP ([40 C.F.R. 300.317](#)) lists three broad national response priorities:

- Safety of human life
- Stabilizing the situation
- Use of all necessary containment and removal tactics in a coordinated manner

**Note:** These national priorities do not preclude the consideration of other priorities that may arise on an incident-specific basis. Although removal actions will primarily consist of mechanical means, e.g., boom, skimmers, etc., [Subpart J](#) of the NCP (Use of dispersants and other chemicals) provides additional techniques for consideration to mitigate oil discharges. Please see Part 7000 of this ACP for information on specific techniques and processes preauthorized within this ACP planning area.

## **5100 Initial Reporting, Notifications, and Preliminary Assessment**

When oil is discharged or hazardous substance is released in the STCZACP planning area, the responsible party is required to notify the following:

- [National Response Center \(NRC\)](#): (800) 424-8802
- [Texas Spill-Reporting Hotline](#): (800) 832-8224

The NRC is the national communications center for handling activities related to response actions. The NRC acts as the single federal point of contact for all pollution incident reporting. Notice of an oil discharge or release of a hazardous substance in an amount equal to or greater than the harmful or reportable quantity must be made immediately in accordance with the CWA and CERCLA under 33 C.F.R. part 153, Subpart B, and 40 C.F.R. part 302, respectively. All notices of discharges or releases received at the NRC will be relayed immediately to the appropriate predesignated FOSC. Notifying individual state offices does not relieve the responsible party from the requirements to notify the NRC and the Texas Spill-Reporting Hotline. Refer to the Contact Spreadsheet, [Annex A](#).

### **5110 Preliminary Assessment**

The FOSC shall, to the extent practicable, collect pertinent facts about the discharge or release, such as its source and cause; the identification of potentially responsible parties; the nature, amount, and location of discharged or released materials; the probable direction and time of travel of the discharged or released materials; the pathways to human and environmental exposure; the potential impact on human health, welfare, and safety and the environment; the potential impact on natural resources and property that may be affected; priorities for protecting human health and welfare and the environment; and appropriate cost documentation. These efforts shall be coordinated with other appropriate Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies. The FOSC also shall promptly notify the appropriate trustees for natural resources of discharges or releases that are injuring or may injure natural resources under their jurisdiction.

### **5120 Cleanup Assessment Protocol**

When discharged oil contaminates shoreline habitats, responders survey the affected areas to determine the appropriate response. Although general approvals or decision tools for using shoreline cleanup methods can be developed during planning stages, responders' specific cleanup recommendations utilize field data on shoreline habitats, type and degree of shoreline

contamination, and spill-specific physical processes. Cleanup endpoints should be established early so that appropriate cleanup methods can be selected to meet the cleanup objectives.

[Annex AA](#), Shoreline Cleanup Methods, provides guidance on the applicability of various cleanup methods for typical shoreline habitats found in the northern Gulf of Mexico. Additional tools to assist responders in establishing cleanup methodologies include:

- [Characteristics of Coastal Habitats: Choosing Spill Response Alternatives](#).
- [Characteristics of Response Strategies: A Guide for Spill Response Planning in Marine Environments](#),
- [American Petroleum Institute \(API\) report on Tidal Inlet Protection Strategies \(TIPS\) \(Note: File is too large to load on USCG network\)](#)

**Note:** These can also be found in [Annex F](#), Planning and Response Tools.

When conducted, shoreline surveys should be done systematically because they are crucial components of effective decision-making. Also, repeated surveys may be needed to monitor the effectiveness and effects of ongoing treatment methods (changes in shoreline oiling conditions, as well as natural recovery), so that the need for changes in methodology, additional treatment, or constraints can be evaluated.

[NOAA's Shoreline Assessment Manual](#) outlines methods that can be used to plan and conduct shoreline assessments after an oil spill. It also provides considerations that should be incorporated into assessing the effectiveness of the UC's shoreline cleanup decisions. The [Shoreline Assessment Job Aid](#) is a supplement to the manual. It contains visual examples of many of the terms you would use during shoreline assessments. In addition to these tools, the NOAA SSC also remains a valuable resource to help coordinate shoreline cleanup assessments and establish shoreline cleanup protocols.

## 5200 Emergency Consultations

### 5210 Endangered Species Act (ESA), Section 7

Whenever an FOSC makes a determination that federal response actions *may affect* ESA-listed (threatened or endangered) species and/or designated Critical Habitat or *may adversely affect* Endangered Fish Habitat (EFH), the action agency (USCG within the coastal zone) shall initiate emergency consultation protocols as appropriate. The FOSC initiates this emergency consultation as soon as practicable, via email to the Services, after the response is initiated.

- Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Form (for emergency consultations, pre-spill consultations and post-response procedures), [Annex 8](#) of the RRT-6 RCP.

### 5220 National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Section 106

Within the coastal zone, the USCG is the Action Agency, and as such, it is the USCG FOSC's responsibility to address any NHPA Section 106 Consultation requirements by engaging the SHPO. The FOSC initiates this emergency consultation as soon as practicable after the response is initiated.

- State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Notification, Coordination and Consultation (Federal/State of Texas Guidance), [Annex M](#).

## **5300 General Hierarchy of Response Priorities**

The National Contingency Plan establishes three priority levels for the dedication of emergency oil spill response resources:

- Protection of human health and safety,
- Protection of environmental resources, and
- Protection of economic resources.

Response protocols are also set in place to ensure the established priorities are met during an incident.

### **5310 Safety**

As noted in the priorities outlined in the NCP, the health and safety of the responders and the general public are of primary importance. To ensure that this priority is successfully met each and every time, personnel involved in oil spill response activities must comply with all applicable worker health and safety laws and regulations. The primary federal safety regulations for responders are established by OSHA and can be found in [29 C.F.R. 1910.120](#); these set the safety standard for hazardous waste operations and emergency response (HAZWOPER). Incidents also may pose threats to those communities where the incident occurred, creating significant health safety threats which must be addressed as part of the response. For more details about the establishment of safety protocols for responders and how to safeguard public health during a response, please refer to the Site Safety Plan, [Annex CC](#) and the Environmental Health Support Plan, [Annex DD](#).

### **5320 Priority Identification and Protection Strategies**

Environmental resources at risk are identified in Part 4000 of this document, Environmentally and Economically Sensitive Areas, and in [Annex C](#), the Fish and Wildlife and Sensitive Environments Plan (FWSEP) located within the Consultations Compendium, [Annex 5](#) of the RRT-6 RCP.

### **5330 Risk Assessment for Sensitive Area Prioritization**

The initial response is focused on minimizing impacts through the strategic objectives of:

- Stopping the Source,
- Containment,
- Cleanup,
- Recovery, and
- Protection of Sensitive Areas.

In a pollution event, sensitive area protection prioritization should be determined by three considerations: (1) which sites are at risk (how soon the oil product will get to each sensitive site); (2) the predefined hierarchy of protection priorities; and (3) the time and response resources available to implement a specified protection strategy. Responders should not assume that sensitive locales equidistant from the source of a spill are at equal risk from the oil.

For the purpose of prioritization, “risk” is defined as “the probability of discharged oil reaching the vicinity of a sensitive site of concern.” This means that the urgency to protect key resources is first determined by the likelihood that it will be impacted in the near future and mobilization time for requisite response staff and equipment (can the sites at risk be protected by available resources before oil arrives?). If the sites are too numerous to protect with the response resources

available within projected times of impact, then triage of protection follows as the prescribed general hierarchy as identified for a specific area in the Geographic Response Strategies/ Geographic Response Plans (GRSs/GRPs).

### **5340 Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

During a response, all of the appropriate environmentally sensitive areas will be referenced, and a determination will be made as to which areas will be directly affected, which areas could potentially be affected, and which areas have no threat of being affected. The previously referenced GRSs/GRPs in [Section 4600](#) can be used for guidance, taking into account any special response considerations that will need to be addressed. Additionally, when threatened and endangered species, designated critical habitats, or historical/cultural properties may be affected by response actions, consultations with the appropriate agencies must be initiated. Specific guidelines and requirements for environmentally and economically sensitive resources, to include wildlife rescue and recovery, can be found in [Annex C](#) FWSEP of this plan and within the Consultations Compendium, [Annex 5](#) of the RRT-6 RCP.

### **5350 Wildlife Rescue & Recovery**

The protection, rescue, and recovery of impacted wildlife during a response requires close coordination with those individuals and entities which have the expertise, authority, and equipment to safely and successfully execute it. This complex and high visibility operation is conducted by the Wildlife Branch within a Unified Command structure. The Wildlife Response Plan was developed to outline the policy and procedures for Wildlife Branch operations. Additionally, it lays out the activation criteria and factors to consider when developing wildlife response and recovery actions as well as the organizational infrastructure needed for these operations. For more details about wildlife rescue and recovery operations, please refer to the Wildlife Response Plan, within the Consultations Compendium, [Annex 5](#) of the RRT-6 RCP.

### **5360 Aligning Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) with Response**

Under OPA and CERCLA and various state statutes, Responsible Parties (RPs) are liable for damages for injury to, destruction of, loss of, or loss of use of, natural resources from a hazardous substance release or oil discharge as well as damages from the response to the release or discharge (or substantial threat of discharge/release). The measure of damages includes the cost to restore, rehabilitate, replace, or acquire the equivalent of the injured natural resource; the decline in value of resources pending restoration; and the reasonable cost of assessing the damages. Designated federal, state, and tribal natural resource trustees (Natural Resource Trustees) are responsible for assessing damages through the Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) process.

As described by the U.S. Coast Guard Incident Management Handbook (2014) (IMH), NRDA activities generally do not occur within the structure, processes, and control of the Incident Command System (ICS). However, given that NRDA activities usually overlap with those of the response, a plan for coordination and cooperation between the two efforts is necessary. For details about the necessary communication and coordination methods to be implemented when NRDA and response activities are simultaneously taking place during a spill incident, please refer to the Coordinating Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) with Response, [Annex 9](#) of the RRT-6 RCP.

## **5400 National Incident Management System (NIMS)**

The STCZAC will manage spill incidents in accordance with the NIMS version of the Incident Command System (ICS). The [Coast Guard Incident Management Handbook \(IMH\)](#) is designed to assist Coast Guard personnel in the use of the NIMS ICS during response operations and planned events. This handbook outlines specific details related to NIMS ICS, including position job aids, forms, and other information to guide responders during an event. Brief discussion of a few NIMS ICS concepts are included below, and a link to the handbook may be found in [Annex F](#), Planning and Response Tools.

### **5410 Unified Command (UC)**

When appropriate, a UC shall be established consisting of, at a minimum, the FOSC, the SOSC, and the RP's Incident Commander (IC). The UC can be established "virtually" as deemed necessary. The UC structure allows for a coordinated response effort, which takes into account the federal, state, local, and RP concerns and interests when implementing the response strategy. A UC establishes a forum for open, frank discussions on problems that must be addressed by the parties with primary responsibility for response operations. **Note:** NIMS ICS also provides for local and/or tribal representation within the UC. As such and at a minimum, consideration should be given to expand the UC to accommodate local and/or tribal interest during a particular response.

### **5420 FOSC Decision Authority**

The FOSC has the ultimate authority in a response operation and will only exert this authority, consistent with the [NCP](#), if the other members of the unified command are not present or are unable to reach consensus quickly.

### **5430 Responsible Party**

Each responsible party for a vessel or a facility from which oil is discharged, or which poses a substantial threat of a discharge, into or upon the navigable waters, adjoining shorelines, or the Exclusive Economic Zone of the United States, is liable for the removal costs and damages specified in OPA. Any removal activity undertaken by a responsible party must be consistent with the provisions of the [NCP](#), the Regional Contingency Plan ([RCP](#)), this ACP, and the applicable vessel or facility response plan required by OPA. If directed by the UC at any time during removal activities, the responsible party must act accordingly. Specific responsibilities and requirements for the responsible party during a pollution incident can be found in the [NCP](#), [33 C.F.R. 154 Subpart F](#), and [33 C.F.R. 155 Subpart D](#).

### **5440 Common Operating Picture (COP)**

The COP provides visual up-to-date response information so the UC can make informed decisions on the effectiveness of response strategies and future operations. The Coast Guard has adopted NOAA's Environmental Response Management Application ([ERMA](#)) as the platform to display a COP during a response. ERMA is a viewer that pulls real-time and static data to display a single interactive map. Generally speaking, RPs will provide their own COP, but ERMA can be used in conjunction with other platforms to make it easy for users to visualize an active environmental situation or long-term incident assessment. **Note:** Internet Explorer is not compatible with ERMA; please use Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge.

### **5450 Incident Command Post**

When a UC is established – beyond a “virtual UC” -- to manage a multi-day response, an Incident Command Post (ICP) shall be established as near as practicable to the spill site. All responders (federal, state, tribal, local, and private) should be incorporated into the response organization at the appropriate level. A list of potential pre-identified ICPs can be found in the Contact Spreadsheet, [Annex A](#).

### **5460 Public Information**

Considering the high level of environmental awareness in many communities, any pollution incident is likely to generate interest from the public and the media. The public’s perception of a response’s success or failure is often determined early on in the response; this makes the need to provide the public with timely, accurate information critical. For smaller responses these efforts can be managed by a Public Information Officer or appropriate Branch Chief; however, large, more complex events will require the establishment of a Joint Information Center (JIC) to manage information access and flow. For more information, please refer to the [National Response Team’s \(NRT\) Joint Information Center Model](#).

### **5500 Oil Spill Containment, Recovery and Cleanup**

The goal of most oil containment and recovery strategies is to collect the spilled oil from the water and prevent it from reaching sensitive resources. Unfortunately, this is not always possible and sensitive resources do get oiled in spite of response efforts, especially during large oil spills. In those cases, the goal will be to minimize environmental impact using a variety of booming, containment, and recovery techniques.

### **5510 Containment**

Before discharged oil can be effectively recovered, the spreading of the oil must be controlled, and the oil contained in an area accessible to oil recovery devices. Generally, discharged oil is contained using oil containment boom. Typical boom has a floatation section that provides a barrier on and above the water surface and a skirt section that provides a barrier below the surface. The physical dimensions of the boom to be used for a particular spill will be dependent on local conditions. In the open water, it may be necessary to use a boom that is several feet tall. In a protected marsh, a boom that is only a few inches tall may be appropriate.

There are limitations on the effectiveness of any boom. Oil will be lost if the conditions create are such that there is splash-over from breaking waves. Oil will also be carried under the boom skirt (entrainment) if it is deployed in such a way that currents cause the oil to impact the boom with a velocity perpendicular to the boom of greater than 0.7 knots. Once a boom has been deployed, it may be necessary to reposition it due to changing tides and currents. It is desirable to have personnel available to readjust the boom as required. In all cases of boom deployment, consideration must be given to protecting the safety of those involved in the activity.

Various booming strategies are used to prevent spreading and to concentrate the oil so it can be skimmed or vacuumed. Factors that need to be considered are type and size of boom required for weather, winds, tides, and currents in the vicinity of potential spill areas; the type of deployment vessel needed; the amount of boom needed for effective containment; and available skimming capabilities. Fixed or natural anchor points should be selected.



Sorbent booming is useful when the amount of oil is minimal, when tides and currents are light, or when shorelines require protection. Heavier oil can be recovered using adsorbent snare (oil “sticks” to the boom) and lighter fuels generally are recovered using absorbents (sausage, sweep, or pads). Sorbent booming can also be used as a backup for other types of booming to recover product that may have entrained past the primary barrier.

As oil escapes containment, it becomes increasingly difficult to recover. Additional measures must be included to deal with escaping oil. This is particularly necessary where oil booming is subjected to winds, waves, and strong currents; oil entrains or is splashed over boom. To counter oil escapement, deployments should include preplanning to anticipate where it may happen and measures to prevent it.

### **5520 Shoreline Protection Options**

The STCZACP planning area is home to a large expanse of mud flat and marsh systems. These areas are particularly difficult to protectively boom, and every effort should be made to contain and recover the oil before it approaches any of these areas. If the on-water recovery operations are not entirely effective and oil still threatens the marsh areas, intertidal barrier boom may be used to protect the mud flats.

A recommended deployment strategy is as follows: Place intertidal boom along the entire front of the mud flat, with the boom being anchored just offshore of the low –low tide line. In areas where wave entrainment of the boom at high tide is considered to be a problem, place a line of boom across the upper mud flat near enough to the marsh to be away from the threat of wave entrainment. The boom positioned on the mud flat would rest on the flat at low tide and be of the type of construction that would prohibit oil from passing under it on the rising tide. The boom would eventually lift up off the tidal flat surface as the tide continues to rise.

Deployment of this type of boom and its supporting arrangement is extremely labor intensive. It should only be implemented if there is a high probability that oil will reach the marsh areas. It is envisioned that these resources would not be available until equipment began to cascade into the area sometime after the initial response. Other factors to consider for this type of booming are:

- Water body type,
- Water current velocity,
- Water depth,
- Wave height, and
- Shore type.

Generally, sediment berms, dikes and dams will most often be used to protect small coastal inlets or perhaps tidal channels serving wetlands and marshes when these channels are accessible. The object of berms, dikes and dams is to keep oil outside an inlet because there are often abundant natural resources and economically significant areas that use the sheltered waters within.

Occasionally, dikes and dams have been used across a channel to contain the oil within a portion of marsh in order to prevent widespread contamination of other resources. Dikes and dams are not practical when currents are great, waters are deep, and waves are large. Also, beaches with abundant sand are generally the most suitable for building dikes and dams. Berms can be built above the active beach face to prevent oil contamination of high beach during spring tides.

Alternative strategies should be prepared and the necessary supplies and equipment in place should a berm, dike, or dam fail.

Tar ball events are a common phenomenon on south Texas coastlines, especially during the summer months, due to ocean currents and tidal influences. A tar ball is a clump or blob of petroleum generally found washed up on the shore that has been carried by ocean currents, picking up solids and weathering with exposure to environmental elements along the way.

To ensure the highest state of readiness for tar ball clean-up and facilitate an effective response while minimizing environmental, political, and economic impacts, the South Texas Coastal Zone Area Committee has developed a Tar Ball Response Plan. The Tar Ball Response Plan is available in [Annex II](#).

## **5530 On-Water Recovery**

### **5531 Open Water**

Oil removal and recovery in open water is accomplished through the use of skimming devices once the oil has been contained. Skimmers can be freestanding, in which the skimmer is a separate piece of equipment which pumps the oil-water mixture from the contained surface into tanks on a vessel. These skimmers are usually driven by hydraulic units on board a vessel. Self-propelled skimmers have a skimmer as an integral part of the vessel. The skimming vessel positions itself at the head of a concentrated or contained pool of oil and recovers the oil into tanks on board the vessel. There is also a type of skimmer in which the weir or collection zone of the skimmer is an integral part of the boom which is close to the skimmer.

Vessels of Opportunity (VOO), such as fishing vessels, may be used to deploy or tow boom and, depending on the size of the vessel, may be equipped with skimming equipment. VOOs need to have adequate deck space and lifting cranes to carry the necessary equipment.

### **5532 Near-shore/Shallow Water**

Oil recovery techniques and equipment are different in near-shore/shallow water locations than in open water locations. Shallow draft vessels and smaller boom and skimmers are used in these situations. These vessels can maneuver into tight places behind and under wharfs or in sloughs and can actually skim next to shore in many near-shore locations.

Strategies for near-shore cleanup can differ depending on the depth of the water and the location. Near-shore operations, within a bay or inlet, will also require shallow draft vessels, workboats, and skimmers. However, the vessels may only be operable at high tide. At or near low tide, the operation may evolve into a shoreline cleanup operation. Any boom towing boats or skimmers must be able to withstand going aground without sustaining major damage.

### **5533 High Current Environments**

In the STCZACP planning area, it is not uncommon to encounter currents in excess of three knots per hour. With appropriate skimmer operations, it is possible to recover spilled oil in these high current areas. Standard skimming techniques must be modified somewhat to optimize oil recovery.

To be successful, most containment and skimming systems must encounter oil at speeds of less than one knot. Typically, skimmers are operated in conjunction with containment boom. If oil

encounters the boom/skimming system with a perpendicular velocity greater than 0.7 knots, the oil will carry under the boom and be lost. Therefore, the most important consideration for skimming in high currents is to keep the speed of the skimming system below one knot relative to the water's surface.

As a basic example: A skimmer pointed upstream in a 5-knot current would actually be proceeding downstream or backwards at four knots to keep its velocity relative to the water's surface at one knot. Gauging a skimmer's velocity relative to the water's surface can be somewhat difficult. Often the most reliable method is for the skimmer operator to closely monitor the skimming system. They should look for signs of oil entrainment as well as ensuring the integrity of the containment system. As current speeds change, so must the speed of the skimmer. The skimmer monitoring can be aided by using an aerial asset (helicopter, plane, or drone) with an observer. The observer can tell if oil is being lost by the skimmer as well as direct the skimmer to the best skimming location.

Boom is often deployed in front of the skimmer forming a 'V' thus directing oil into the skimmer. The practice increases the area being covered by the skimmer. Ideally this 'V' should be as wide as possible. In high currents, as the 'V' width is increased, the speed of the oil encountering the boom perpendicularly is increased.

Oil will spread more quickly in the direction of the current flow; skimmers should operate in an up and down stream orientation. The oil slick will be elongated in the direction of the currents. Skimmers will encounter the most oil as they proceed up and down stream within the slick. Operating back and forth across stream and across the slick will result in sub-optimal recovery efficiency.

### **5540 Non-floating Oil Recovery and Protection**

Non-floating oil that is spilled and transported subsurface either remains suspended in the water column or is deposited on the seabed, usually after interaction with suspended sediments or sand. Different strategies for containing these oils can depend on the location of the oil.

The recovery of sunken oil has proven to be very difficult and expensive because the oil is usually widely dispersed. Several of the most widely used recovery methods are manual removal, pump and vacuum systems, nets and trawls, dredging, and onshore recovery. Additional information is available in the Unconventional Oil Response Plan, [Annex L](#).

### **5550 Shore-side Recovery and Natural Collection Points**

There are predictable locales where recovery efforts can be optimized at shorelines. There are two situations where oil collection should be vigorously attempted at the shoreline:

- Places where oil naturally collects at the shoreline because of winds and currents
- Diversion and capture of oil as it flows past or along the shoreline to locations with low environmental sensitivity

Oil is a substance that spreads primarily in two dimensions on the water's surface while water moves in three dimensions; oil will spread thin, but it will also accumulate at predictable locales; it will accumulate wherever water has downward currents: such as tide rips along mud flats, and

at windward coves. Responders are encouraged to also consider barge staging areas in the vicinity of a response for collection/pocketing of oil.

### **5560 Shoreline Cleanup**

While skimming and recovery operations are being conducted, concurrent cleanup efforts will need to be taken to address the impacts resulting from an oil spill's contact with shorelines, man-made infrastructure, areas of vegetation, vessels, etc. The appropriate cleanup technique required will vary greatly and primarily depend upon the type of oil spilled, the degree of contamination, the sensitivity of the area and its economic or ecological importance and the ability to conduct the cleanup without causing further damage or trauma.

Following an oil spill's impact to a shoreline, an FOSC will need to identify those areas requiring treatment, establish cleanup priorities, and monitor the effectiveness and impact as a cleanup progresses. The information gathered during the surveys described in Sub-section 5120 and decision-making tools provided in [Annex AA](#) can assist the FOSC in selecting the most appropriate cleanup method(s) based on the kind of oil spilled and the type of shoreline habitat impacted. While evaluating cleanup options, an FOSC may determine that the use of a burning agent chemical countermeasure in support of the In-Situ Burn (ISB) technique provides the greatest net environmental benefit. For more information on the policy, procedures and checklists for burning agent use in support of the ISB technique within the Region 6 coastal zone (out to 3 miles offshore) please refer to the RRT-6 In-Situ Burn Policy located within the RRT-6 Subpart J Compendium, [Annex 4](#) of the RRT-6 RCP.

For hard surface man-made areas impacted by a spill (sea walls, pier faces, rip rap, vessel hulls, etc.), evaluation of the options for removing the oil require the same care and consideration as naturally occurring areas of the environment. The challenges posed by the cleanup of these areas can be compounded by economic pressures as well as environmental, making the issue of a timely cleanup all the more urgent. In addition to having some of the same techniques available for the cleanup of a shoreline (manual removal, low/high pressure washing, passive use of sorbents, etc.), an FOSC may determine that use of a Surface Washing Agent (SWA) chemical countermeasure may be appropriate. For more information on the policy, procedures and checklists for SWA use within the Region 6 coastal zone please refer to the RRT-6 Surface Washing Agent (SWAs) policy located within the RRT-6 Subpart J Compendium, [Annex 4](#) of the RRT-6 RCP.

### **5570 Decontamination**

Decontamination is the process of removing or neutralizing contaminants that have accumulated on personnel and equipment during an oil spill response. Effective decontamination procedures protect responders from having unnecessary contact with oil that contaminates and permeates the protective clothing, respiratory equipment, tools, vehicles, and other equipment used during the response. It also protects people and the environment by minimizing the transfer of oil into clean areas of the response site and prevents the uncontrolled transportation of contaminants from the site into a community.

A Decontamination Plan should be developed (as part of the Site Safety Plan) and set up before any personnel or equipment may enter areas where the oil recovery or cleanup is taking place. The decontamination plan should at a minimum:

- Determine the number and layout of decontamination stations;

- Determine the decontamination equipment needed;
- Determine appropriate decontamination methods;
- Establish procedures to prevent contamination of clean areas;
- Establish methods and procedures to minimize responder contact with oil during the removal of personal protective clothing and equipment (PPE), and;
- Establish methods for disposing of clothing and equipment that are not completely decontaminated.

For more information about recommended decontamination procedures and practices please refer to the [Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(OSHA\) Decontamination Site](#).

### **5580 Disposal**

During the course of any response involving the collection and removal of oil, it becomes necessary to address the proper disposal of those materials which were contaminated by oil. The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), also known as the Solid Waste Disposal Act, addresses this issue. RCRA directs that the generation of hazardous waste is to be reduced or eliminated as expeditiously as possible and that when it is generated, it be treated, stored, or disposed of to minimize the threat to human health and to the environment. In order to ensure the proper disposal of materials contaminated by hydrocarbons in accordance with all regulations (local, state, federal), please refer to the Disposal Plan, [Annex GG](#).

### **5590 Terminating Cleanup Operations**

When to terminate specific oil spill cleanup actions can be a difficult decision; when is clean, clean enough? The increasing cost of the cleanup and the damage to the environment caused by cleanup activities must be weighed against the ecological and economic effects of leaving the remaining oil in place. The decision to terminate cleanup operations is site-specific. Cleanup usually cannot be terminated while one of the following conditions exist:

- Recoverable quantities of oil remain on water or shores
- Contamination of shore by fresh oil continues
- Oil remaining on shore is mobile and may be refloated to contaminate adjacent areas and near shore waters

Cleanup may normally be terminated when the following conditions exist:

- The environmental damage caused by the cleanup effort is greater than the damage caused by leaving the remaining oil or residue in place
- The cost of cleanup operations significantly outweighs the environmental or economic benefits of continued cleanup
- The FOSC, after consultation with the members of the Unified Command, determines that the cleanup should be terminated

**Note:** Per [40 C.F.R. 300.320\(a\)\(5\)\(b\)](#), removal shall be considered complete when so determined by the FOSC in consultation with the Governor(s) of the affected state(s).

### **5600 Response Funding and Cost Recovery**

The Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund (OSLTF) is available to the FOSC for the payment of removal costs determined by the FOSC to be consistent with the National Contingency Plan as a result of, and damages resulting from, a discharge, or substantial threat of a discharge of oil impacting the

navigable waters of the United States. The OSLTF was established by Section 311(k) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act ([FWPCA](#)) and is administered by the U.S. Coast Guard's National Pollution Funds Center (NPFC). In the event of an oil spill, an FOSC, state, claimant, or trustee can obtain access to these federal funds through the processes outlined in the following sections.

### **5610 Hazardous Substance Pollution Response Funding**

An MOU between the USCG and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) authorizes the USCG to access the Hazardous Substance Trust Fund (Superfund) when it undertakes response activities pursuant to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). A USCG FOSC has the authority to approve the expenditure of these funds to prevent or mitigate immediate and significant harm to human life or health or to the environment from the release or potential release of hazardous substances. The process through which a USCG FOSC accesses these funds is outlined below (FOSC Access to the Federal Funds). The NPFC is responsible for the administration of the USCG's portion of the Superfund, while the EPA retains overall responsibility for the fund's general administration.

### **5620 FOSC Access to Federal Funds**

When federal actions are authorized by the Clean Water Act or CERCLA, the OSLTF or the Superfund, respectively, may be accessed to fund them. A USCG FOSC uses the NPFC's Ceiling and Number Assignment Processing System (CANAPS) to establish and manage a Federal Project Number (FPN) for an oil spill or a CERCLA Project Number (CPN) for a Hazardous Substance incident. CANAPS interfaces with the Coast Guard's Financial Management and Procurement Services (FSMS) to create an accounting line to provide funding support to the FOSC. For specific guidance regarding the administration of a FPN or a CPN, refer to the "Procedures for Accessing the Funds" as well as the "CANAPS User Guide" in the [NPFC User Reference Guide](#).

### **5630 Funding Authorizations for Other Agencies**

Federal, state, local, and tribal governments assisting the FOSC during a response may receive reimbursable funding through a Pollution Removal Funding Authorization (PRFA). The NPFC can be consulted regarding PRFAs, but authorization to establish and use this funding source is provided by the FOSC. The decision to use another agency to help in the response must be documented in writing (to include what is required and why it is needed) and must be signed by the FOSC. After the PRFA has been approved by the FOSC, the other agency is required to follow the same cost documentation procedures used by the FOSC. If additional or an increase in funding is required, the request must be made to the FOSC. For more information about PRFAs please refer to [NPFC User Reference Guide](#).

### **5640 State Access to the OSLTF for Immediate Removal or Prevention Costs**

OPA allows state Governors to request payment of up to \$250,000 from the OSLTF for removal costs required for the immediate removal of a discharge of oil, or prevention of a substantial threat of a discharge of oil. Requests are made directly to the FOSC who will determine eligibility. If a state anticipates the need to access the OSLTF, they must submit a request which shall include the person's name, title, address, telephone number, and the capacity in which they are employed. FOSCs will provide initial coordination of the request and subsequent coordination and oversight. For more information about a state's access to the OSLTF please refer to [Technical Operating Procedures for State Access to the OSLTF](#).



### **5650 Trustee Access to the OSLTF**

OPA provides access to the OSLTF by Trustees for the purpose of conducting a Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA). Executive Order 12777 introduced the concept of a Federal Lead Administrative Trustee (FLAT) in an effort to provide a focal point for addressing natural resource issues associated with a specific incident. The NPFC will only accept requests for initiation of a NRDA from, and normally work directly with, the designated FLAT. For purposes of requests for initial funding for a NRDA, State and Tribal Trustees must work through a FLAT. When a request for a NRDA has been made, the NPFC Natural Resource Damage Claims Division will then assign a claims manager to coordinate the approval process. Together, the NPFC Natural Resource Damage Claims Manager and the FLAT will execute a request and authorization for obligation of funds through an Interagency Agreement (IAA). For more information about the process of initiating a Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) and for the regulations and procedures for making a Natural Resource Damage (NRD) claim please refer to [NPFC Natural Resource Damage Claims](#).

### **5660 Local and Tribal Government Access to the Superfund**

Local and federally recognized tribal governments may request reimbursement of cost to carry out temporary measures to protect human health and the environment without a contract or cooperative agreement. All costs for which local governments are seeking reimbursement must be consistent with the NCP and Federal cost principles outlined by the Office of Management and Budget. Reimbursements are limited to \$25,000 per hazardous substance response. In addition, reimbursement must not supplement local government funds normally provided for emergency response. States are not eligible for reimbursement from the Superfund and no state may request reimbursement on behalf of political subdivisions within the state.

The EPA will make all decisions regarding recovery of expenditures from the Superfund. All agencies expending Superfund money must submit an itemized account of all funds expended in accordance with provisions of contracts, Interagency Agreements (IAA), or Cooperative Agreements with EPA. These agreements must be in place prior to the expenditure of funds. For more information on the Local Government Reimbursement (LGR) program please refer to [EPA Local Government Reimbursement Program](#).

### **5670 Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request**

When an FOSC makes the determination that a DoD asset or DoD resources are necessary to conduct a response (i.e., US Navy SUPSALV), a Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request (MIPR), vice a PRFA, must be established. For more information about establishing a MIPR please refer to [NPFC Technical Operating Procedures - Chap 5 \(MIPR\)](#).

### **5680 Documentation and Cost Recovery**

Maintaining a thorough and complete record of response actions and expenditures is a critical element to any successful response. Keeping a thorough record aids in the recovery of costs and can be used to generate best management practices and lessons learned as well as support the restoration of natural resource injuries.

### **5681 National Contingency Plan (NCP) Documentation Requirements**

The NCP outlines broad documentation and cost recovery requirements and can be found in [40 C.F.R. 300.315](#). During significant and protracted pollution responses, the FOSC is encouraged to mobilize one of the USCG's Type 1 Documentation Unit Leaders to oversee all facets of

incident-related documentation. Type 1 Documentation Unit Leaders contact information is provided in [Annex A](#).

### **5682 Cost Documentation Procedures**

Costs generated against the fund during a response will be paid by the NPFC through the line of accounting established by the FPN or CPN. Upon completion of the response, the NPFC will seek to recover those costs from the RP. Only through careful documentation of those costs and expenditures is cost recovery possible; this makes maintaining a detailed cost documentation process a critical part of any response. For specific information on cost documentation requirements and cost recovery procedures, please refer to the [NPFC Technical Operating Procedures for Incident and Cost Documentation](#).

### **5683 NPFC User Reference Guide**

The NPFC User Reference Guide is designed to serve as a reference tool during an oil discharge or hazardous substance release when the Federal On-Scene Coordinator (FOSC) is providing oversight or conducting response operations under the NCP. This guide includes all relevant Federal regulations, technical operating procedures (TOPs), forms and sample letters, and other documentation designed to make funding of recovery operations and the recovery of Federal expenditures as efficient and easy as possible. This guide is available to all interested parties and can be found at: [NPFC User Reference Guide](#).

### **5690 Oil Spill Claims**

#### **5691 Claims to the OSLTF**

Claimants (individuals, corporations, and government entities) can submit claims for uncompensated removal costs or certain damages caused by an oil spill (as listed below) to the OSLTF, administrated by the NPFC, if the Responsible Party for the discharge does not satisfy their claim. The NPFC adjudicates claims and pays those with merit.

The Responsible Party can submit claims to the NPFC provided that:

- The total of all response costs and damage claims exceeds the Responsible Party's statutory limit of liability; or
- The spill was solely caused by a third party, an Act of God, or an Act of War.

The categories of uncompensated losses covered by the OSLTF are:

- Removal costs,
- Real or personal property damages,
- Loss of profits or earning capacity,
- Loss of subsistence,
- Loss of government revenues,
- Cost of increases to public services, and
- Damages to natural resources.

Generally, claims for all costs and damages resulting from an oil pollution incident must be presented first to the Responsible Party or its guarantor. For more information about the claims process, please refer to the [NPFC Claimant Guide](#).

## **5692 NOAA Damage Assessment Procedures**

NOAA published a final rule to guide Trustees in assessing damages to natural resources from discharges of oil. The rule provides a blueprint that enables Natural Resource Trustees to focus on significant environmental injuries, to plan and implement efficient and effective restoration of the injured natural resources and services, and to encourage public and responsible party involvement in the restoration process.

Under the rule, the NRDA process is divided into three phases:

- **Pre-assessment:** The trustees evaluate injury and determine whether they have the authority to pursue restoration and if it is appropriate to do so;
- **Restoration Planning:** The trustees evaluate and quantify potential injuries and use that information to determine the appropriate type and scale of restoration actions; and
- **Restoration Implementation:** The trustees and/or responsible parties implement restoration, including monitoring and corrective actions.

This process is designed to rapidly restore injured natural resources and services to the condition that would have existed had the spill not occurred and to compensate the public for the losses experienced from the date of the spill until the affected natural resources and services have been recovered. For more information about this process please refer to [NOAA NRDA Process](#).

## **5700 Hazardous Substance Response**

### **5710 Introduction**

This segment of the ACP provides general guidelines for initial response actions necessary to abate, contain, control and remove the released substance and describes some of the unique issues associated with a hazardous substance release. Hazardous substance response is outlined within Subpart E of the NCP. [40 C.F.R. Part 300 Subpart E](#) establishes methods and criteria for determining the appropriate extent of response authorized by CERCLA and CWA Section 311(c). These include:

- When there is a release of a hazardous substance into the environment; or
- When there is a release into the environment of any pollutant or contaminate that may present an imminent and substantial danger to the public of the United States.

The release of hazardous substances is unique compared to an oil spill in that hazardous substances have a greater potential to impact human health. In general, oil spills are of great concern due to their potential to cause long-term damage to the environment. However, oil spills do not routinely pose an immediate threat to human life. On the contrary, hazardous substance releases can pose an immediate danger to humans when released in even the smallest quantities.

The definition of a Hazardous Substance is: Any substance designated as such by the administrator of the EPA pursuant to the CERCLA ([42 U.S.C. Sec. 9601](#) et seq.), regulated pursuant to Section 311(c) of the federal CWA ([33 U.S.C. Sec. 1321](#) et seq.), or designated by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

The definition of harmful quantity is: A quantity of a hazardous substance the release of which is determined to be harmful to the environment or public health or welfare or may reasonably be

anticipated to present an imminent and substantial danger to the public health or welfare by the Administrator of the EPA pursuant to federal law, or designated by the TCEQ.

More information on area specific Hazardous Substance response can be found in [Annex D](#).

### **5720 Environmental Support to the FOSC**

In the event of a Spill of National Significance or pollution incident which poses a threat to public health, local, state, and national health, public officials shall be notified. For more information about environmental support available to the FOSC, please refer to [Annex DD](#).

### **5730 State Policy**

#### **5731 Texas**

Except as provided in Chapter 40, Natural Resources Code, the TCEQ will be the state lead agency in spill response, will conduct spill response for the state, and will otherwise administer this subchapter. The TCEQ will conduct spill response and cleanup for spills and releases of hazardous substances other than oil in or threatening coastal waters according to the applicable provision of the state coastal discharge contingency plan promulgated by the commission under Section 40.053, Natural Resources Code. The TCEQ will cooperate with other agencies, departments, and subdivisions of Texas and of the United States in implementing this subchapter. In the event of a release and after reasonable effort to obtain entry rights from each property owner involved, if any, the executive director of the TCEQ may enter affected property to carry out necessary spill response actions.

The TCEQ may issue rules necessary and convenient to enforce state regulations and conduct hazardous material spill cleanup.

Cleanup and restoration standards have been established by TCEQ regulations and are based on a “pre-spill” concept of restorative action. In other words, the objective of each spill cleanup should be to return the site to pre-spill or background conditions or, if necessary, to an acceptable risk-based level of contamination. Required clean-up and restorative levels are described in 30 TAC 327.5. This cite also contains a provision for the completion of a cleanup under the Risk Reduction Rules in 30 TAC 335.8 and/or other TCEQ risk-based corrective action rules.

Cleanup standards are not established for total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH) due to the broad range of chemical constituents that make up TPH. Rather, concentrations of constituents of concern for which toxicity values have been established (e.g., benzene) should be determined and compared to health-based standards such as NIOSH or other published personal exposure limit values.

The state may have a cause of action against any responsible person for recovery of expenditures out of CERCLA and costs that would have been incurred or paid by the responsible person if the responsible person had fully carried out the duties under §26.266 of the Texas Water Code. Such costs may include reasonable and necessary scientific studies to determine impacts of the spill, how to respond to spill impacts, costs of attorney services, out-of-pocket costs associated with state agency actions, and costs of remedying injuries caused by reasonable cleanup activities. Regulation also enables the TCEQ to assert the state's right to a cause of action for recovery of twice the costs incurred in cleaning up the spill or discharge.

## 5800 Post-spill Consultations

For actions not covered by a pre-spill consultation that are used, or are considered for use during an emergency response, the FOSC must follow ESA and/or EFH emergency response procedures and complete ESA and/or EFH consultations in collaboration with the Services once the emergency phase of the response has ended. To the extent applicable, post-spill NHPA Section 106 consultations with the SHPO (and possibly others) would also need to be completed if not initiated or completed during the emergency phase.

Additionally, the following annexes are also applicable to Endangered Species Act (ESA), Essential Fish Habitat (EFH), and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) mandates:

- The Wildlife Response Plan, within the Consultations Compendium, [Annex 5](#) of the RRT-6 RCP.
- The all-inclusive FWSEP/WRP Contact Spreadsheet, [Annex 6](#) of the RRT-6 RCP.
- All-inclusive Listed Species Spreadsheet, [Annex 7](#) of the RRT-6 RCP.

## 6000 Response Resources

The Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA) amended the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (FWPCA) to require the preparation and submission of response plans by the owners or operators of certain oil-handling facilities and for certain oil-carrying tank and non-tank vessels (referred to here as plan holders). These plan holders are required to submit response plans which identify and ensure either by contract or other approved means (i.e., Letter of Intent), the availability of response resources (i.e., personnel and equipment) necessary to remove a worst case discharge (WCD), including a discharge resulting from fire or explosion, and to mitigate or prevent a substantial threat of such a discharge. Additional response resources for marine firefighting and salvage are identified in [Annex E](#).

## 6100 Oil Spill Removal Organizations (OSROs) and Equipment

### 6110 OSRO Classification Program

The U.S. Coast Guard created the voluntary OSRO classification program so that plan holders could simply list OSROs in their response plans rather than providing an extensive, detailed list of response resources. If an OSRO is *classified* by the U.S. Coast Guard, it means their capacity has been determined to be equal to, or greater than, the response capability necessary to ensure plan holder compliance with the statutory requirements. A more in-depth discussion of the classification program can be found here: [USCG OSRO Guidelines](#).

### 6120 Response Resource Inventory (RRI) database

As part of maintaining their classification, OSROs must provide detailed lists of their response resources to the Response Resource Inventory (RRI) database. The National Strike Force Coordination Center (NSFCC) administers this database, along with the OSRO classification program. The RRI database is the backbone of the classification program and its capabilities are two-fold: a classification element and an inventory function. The classification element of the RRI database complements the Facility Response Plan and Vessel Response Plan development and review processes by systematically classifying OSROs' response capabilities to meet the plan holders' response capability requirements. An OSRO's classification levels (Maximum Most Probable Discharge and Worst Case Discharge Tiers 1, 2 & 3) are based on its ability to meet time delivery requirements for containment boom, temporary storage capacity and skimmer capacity.



Once entered into the system by the OSRO, the RRI database translates the information into an estimated daily recovery capacity (EDRC) that determines an OSRO's level of classification for each of the six various operating areas (Rivers/Canals, Great Lakes, Inland, Nearshore, Offshore, and Open Ocean) in a particular COTP zone.

The inventory function of the RRI database makes a great deal of information available to response and contingency planning personnel; it not only outlines the locations and amount of "core equipment" (boom, skimmers, temporary storage), but includes other important support equipment including vessels, dispersant application platforms, aerial oil tracking capabilities and personnel. In order to access the inventory functions of the RRI database, administrator login privileges are required. These privileges are issued by the NSFCC and are limited to members of the U.S. Coast Guard and those OSRO members designated by their company to maintain the equipment inventory. To make a request for administrative login privileges, contact the NSFCC at: [Contact NSFCC for RRI Administrative Access](#).

### **6130 Classified OSRO listings for the Sector Corpus Christi COTP Zone**

The NSFCC maintains a portion of the RRI database that allows all interested parties (no administrative access required) open access to reports about a company's Mechanical, Dispersant, Marine Fighting and Salvage and Non-Floating Oil classifications. This site also provides a point of contact report (listed by name/company number) for all the OSROs in the United States. The mechanical classification reports can be viewed by company name, by USCG District, or by COTP zone and outline which operating environments the classification has been granted (Rivers/Canals, Nearshore, Open Ocean, Inland, etc.) and for which volume of discharge. To see which OSROs are classified within the Sector Corpus Christi COTP zone, please refer to: [RRI Classification and POC Reports site](#).

### **6140 Basic Ordering Agreements (BOAs)**

The U.S. Coast Guard's Commander, Operational Logistics Command (LOG), Contracting Office (LOG-9) Contingency and Emergency Support Branch (LOG-92) maintains a list of pre-established emergency response contracts known as BOAs. These contracts are established with OSROs around the country and are available for use at any time by a USCG Federal On-Scene Coordinator (FOSC). LOG-92 negotiates the terms and rates of these contracts ahead of time, enabling an OSRO to be quickly hired to provide pollution response services when the FOSC needs to conduct oil removal or hazardous substance response operations under the National Contingency Plan. While an FOSC always has the option to exercise a BOA contract, this does not preclude the hiring or contracting of a non-BOA pollution response service provider should the FOSC deem it necessary. LOG-92 contracting officers are available 24/7 to support the FOSC.

### **6150 Oil Spill Response Cooperatives and Consortiums**

There are numerous industry-funded major oil spill response cooperatives and consortiums in the United States today. Unlike a classified OSRO which is hired by a single plan holder to ensure compliance with statutory requirements, these organizations are formed to provide pollution response services to companies from the oil and gas industry which elect to become members and pay for the coverage or service. Each consortium or cooperative makes the decision about the type and quantity of equipment they offer to their member clients. This equipment is often highly specialized and tailored to serve a specific sector of the oil and gas industry (exploration and production, or transportation, for example) and allow them to meet worst case discharge planning



standards. Some examples of cooperatives and consortiums that operate in the Gulf of Mexico include the following:

- [Clean Gulf Associates](#)
- [HWCG LLC](#)
- [Marine Well Containment Company](#)
- [Oil Spill Response Limited](#)
- [Wild Well Control](#)

## 6200 Hazardous Substance Response

### 6210 Hazardous Substance Response Resources and Technical Expertise

*Under development.*

## 6300 Salvage and Marine Firefighting Resources

### 6310 Salvage and Marine Firefighting Equipment and Technical Expertise

*Under development.*

## 7000 Response Technologies

### 7100 Response Technologies for Oil Spill Response

While mechanical recovery (e.g., booms, skimmers, etc.) will typically be the most widely used response option, there are several other tools available to mitigate oil spills. The NCP directs that Regional Response Teams (RRTs) and Area Committees address, as part of their planning activities, the desirability of using certain alternative response technologies when removing or controlling oil discharges. RRT-6 has developed several policy documents to address the approval and use of these chemical countermeasures. Links to these policy documents, which are all located on the [RRT-6 homepage](#), can be found in this section.

### 7110 Dispersants

Dispersants are chemical agents (similar to soaps and detergents) that help break up an oil slick into very small droplets, sending them from the surface down into the water column. These agents are typically sprayed onto discharged oil by specially outfitted boats or aircraft. While dispersants don't remove the spilled material, they do allow the smaller dispersed particles of oil to be more easily biodegraded by the water's naturally occurring microbes. The application of this chemical countermeasure can be a critical element in preventing significant oiling of sensitive habitats during an oil spill response. Before a dispersant can be used, it must first be listed on the NCP Product Schedule (see [Sub-section 7140](#) of this document). Within RRT-6, the use of dispersants within the offshore environment has been preauthorized.

In some instances, oil discharges do not originate from sources on the surface, but rather from oil exploration, production, and/or transmission facilities located hundreds, and often thousands, of feet below them. These discharges can result from any number of casualties including loss of well control or loss of a pipeline's integrity. In cases such as these, dispersants can be injected directly into the flow at the oil discharge's source using the technique known as Subsea Dispersant Injection (SSDI). By reducing oil droplet size at the source, SSDI reduces the amount of oil reaching the sea surface. This in turn, lowers the potential for oil to impact wildlife on the surface or to impact environmentally sensitive areas on the shore.

**Note:** Preauthorization extends only to the aerial and surface spray application of dispersants; SSDI is not preauthorized.

For the most up-to-date policy, procedures, and checklists when conducting a surface dispersant application operation in the offshore environment of the RRT-6 coastal zone (seaward starting from the ten-meter isobath or three nautical miles offshore, whichever is farthest) please refer to [RRT-6 Dispersant Pre-Approval Guidelines and Checklist](#). For the most up-to-date policy, procedures, and checklists when conducting an operation in the nearshore environment of the RRT-6 coastal zone (seaward starting at the shoreline, but shoreward of the ten-meter isobath or three nautical miles offshore, whichever is farthest from shore – i.e., shoreward from the area of preauthorization) please refer to RRT-6 Nearshore Dispersant Guidelines and Checklists (Expedited Approval Process) located within the RRT-6 Subpart J Compendium, [Annex 4](#) of the RRT-6 RCP.

### **7120 Burning Agents (In-Situ Burn)**

The word “in-situ” is the Latin term for “in-place.” An In-Situ Burn (ISB) refers to the initiation of a controlled burn of discharged oil as a means to mitigate the oil’s harmful impacts. The fuels to feed an ISB are provided by the vapors from the spilled oil and, for those spills with impacts inshore or on land, any other organic materials with which the oil may have come into contact. Often the source of ignition is insufficient to light the oil and start the burn; in these instances, FOSCs may decide to use burning agents to help start the burn. Burning agents are defined by the NCP as “...*those additives that, through chemical or physical means, improve the combustibility of the materials to which they are applied.*” Burning agents are not required to be included on the NCP Product Schedule. In RRT-6, burning agent use has been preauthorized within the offshore environment; the terms and conditions of this preauthorization may be found (RRT-6 In-Situ Burn Policy for the Offshore Environment – May 2022) located within the RRT-6 Subpart J Compendium, [Annex 4](#) of the RRT-6 RCP. Burning agent use has not preauthorized within the inshore/nearshore environment.

For the most up-to-date policy, procedures and checklists when conducting an in-situ burn operation in the Offshore Environment of the RRT-6 coastal zone (seaward starting three nautical miles offshore) please see RRT-6 In-Situ Burn Policy for the Offshore Environment, of the RRT-6 RCP. For the most up-to-date policy, procedures and checklists when conducting an operation in the Inshore/Nearshore portion of the RRT-6 coastal zone (out to three nautical miles offshore) please refer to RRT-6 In-Situ Burn Policy located within the RRT-6 Subpart J Compendium, [Annex 4](#) of the RRT-6 RCP.

### **7130 Surface Washing Agents (SWAs)**

SWAs are chemicals that are used to enhance oil removal from hard surfaces. They generally contain a mixture of a non-polar solvent and a surfactant. The solvent dissolves into the highly viscous or weathered oil to create a less viscous and somewhat uniform liquid oil or oily mixture. The surfactant reduces the interfacial tension between the liquid oil and the surface the oil has adhered to. Depending on environmental conditions and the combination of solvents and surfactants, the removed oil will either float or disperse. The latter may have a negative environmental impact, making SWAs with the “*lift and float*” characteristics generally preferable. SWAs cannot be used unless they are listed on the NCP Product Schedule (see Section 7140 of this document). SWA use is preauthorized by RRT-6 for “*lift and float*” products ***only*** for locations

pre-identified within the Area Contingency Plan. Within the STCZACP planning area, SWA preauthorization exists within the Corpus Christi Inner Harbor; please see [Annex JJ](#) for details on specific locations. The documentation on pre-spill Endangered Species Act and Essential Fish Habitat consultation with the Services is in [4210](#). For the most up-to-date policy, procedures and checklists when using SWAs within the RRT-6 coastal zone please refer to RRT-6 Surface Washing Agents (SWAs) Policy located within the RRT-6 Subpart J Compendium, [Annex 4](#) of the RRT-6 RCP.

### **7140 NCP Product Schedule**

Subpart J of the NCP directs the EPA to prepare a schedule of spill mitigating devices and substances that may be used to remove or control oil discharges; this is known as the NCP Product Schedule. The NCP Product Schedule lists the following types of products authorized for use on oil discharges: Dispersants, Surface Washing Agents, Bioremediation Agents, Solidifiers, and Herding Agents. **Note:** Before any chemical countermeasure may be used, the FOSC must first seek RRT-6 approval through the consultation and concurrence process or have its use preauthorized. The only exception to this is when the FOSC uses the provision listed in [40 C.F.R. § 300.910\(d\)](#).

Per [40 C.F.R § 300.965](#), the listing of a product on the NCP Product Schedule does not constitute approval or recommendation of the product. The listing means only that data have been submitted to EPA as required by Subpart J of the NCP. For the most current listing of approved substances for use, please refer to the [NCP Product Schedule](#).

## **7200 Monitoring and Evaluation of Alternative Response Technologies**

### **7210 Special Monitoring of Applied Response Technologies (SMART)**

The Special Monitoring of Applied Response Technologies (SMART) protocols are a set of cooperatively designed monitoring standards utilized when conducting In-Situ Burn or Dispersant operations. SMART establishes a monitoring system for the rapid collection and reporting of real-time, scientifically-based information, in order to assist the Unified Command (UC) with decision-making during In-Situ Burn or Dispersant operations. SMART recommends monitoring methods, equipment, personnel training, and command and control procedures that strike a balance between the operational demand for rapid response and the UC's need for feedback from the field.

### **7220 Dispersant Monitoring**

When making a dispersant application, the UC needs to know whether the operation is effectively dispersing the oil or not. The SMART dispersant protocols are designed to provide the UC with real-time feedback on the efficacy of the dispersant application and consist of three different levels (or tiers) of monitoring. It should be noted that the SMART dispersant protocols may be useful for evaluating the dilution and transport of the dispersed oil, but they do not monitor the fate, effects, or impacts of the dispersed oil.

The three tiers of monitoring are Tier I, Tier II and Tier III:

**Tier I** consists of visual observation by an observer to provide a general, qualitative assessment of a dispersant's effectiveness. Visual monitoring may also be enhanced by advanced sensing instruments such as infrared thermal imaging or other like devices. However,

sometimes a dispersant's effectiveness is difficult to determine by visual observations alone.

**Tier II** protocols employ a monitoring team to confirm the visual observations by taking water samples and running them through a fluorometric instrument while on-scene.

**Tier III** follows Tier II procedures, but also collects information on the transport and dispersion of the oil in the water column. This level of monitoring can help to verify that the dispersed oil is diluting toward background levels. Tier III is simply an expanded monitoring role and may include monitoring at multiple depths, the use of a portable water laboratory, and/or additional water sampling. It also can be moved to a sensitive resource (such as near a coral reef system) as either a protection strategy or to monitor for evidence of exposure.

### **7230 In-Situ Burn (ISB) Monitoring**

Air monitoring is an important component of any ISB operation. These measurements allow the FOSC to continuously evaluate air quality data, ensuring that human health and safety are safeguarded in real-time. Typical by-products from an in-situ burn include carbon dioxide, water vapor, soot (particulate matter), and other gaseous compounds. Of these, the soot, being comprised of very fine, carbon-based materials, is responsible for a smoke plume's dark/black appearance and pose the greatest inhalation hazard.

The SMART protocols for air monitoring are used when there is a concern that the public or response personnel may be exposed to the hazardous components of the burning oil's smoke. These monitoring operations are conducted by one or more teams, depending upon the size of the operation. Each monitoring team uses a real-time particulate monitor capable of detecting the small particulates emitted by the ISB (ten microns in diameter or smaller), a global positioning system, and other equipment required for collecting and documenting the data. Each monitoring instrument provides an instantaneous particulate concentration as well as the time-weighted average over the duration of the data collection. The readings are displayed on the instrument's screen and stored in its data logger. In addition, the SMART protocols direct that particulate concentrations be logged manually every few minutes by the monitoring team in a recorder data log.

Monitoring teams are deployed at designated areas of concern to determine ambient concentrations of particulates before the burn starts. During the burn, if the team's instruments detect high particulate concentrations or if the time weighted averages approach exceed pre-established levels, the information is passed to technical specialists within the UC for further review and possible action (i.e., personnel evacuation, termination of burn, etc.). To review the complete set of SMART protocols for ISB and Dispersant operations, please refer to [Special Monitoring of Alternative Response Technologies \(SMART\)](#).

### **7240 Alternative Response Tool Evaluation System (ARTES)**

While actively mitigating the effects of an oil discharge or, when engaging in the preparedness effort to do so, the FOSC has any number of mechanical or chemical countermeasures' use to consider. These responses or planning efforts can often generate interest within a local community, region, or even the nation. As this interest grows, members of the general public, companies or sectors of industry can feel compelled to approach the FOSC to offer their non-conventional service or idea to help the response or preparedness effort. In these instances, the

FOSC may be requested to consider using a non-conventional alternative countermeasure (a method, device, or product that hasn't been or isn't typically used for spill response). To assess whether a proposed countermeasure could be a useful response tool, it's necessary to collect and quickly evaluate information about it.

To assist an FOSC in evaluating the efficacy of a non-conventional alternative countermeasure, a process known as the Alternative Response Tool Evaluation System (ARTES) was developed. The ARTES is designed to evaluate potential response tools on their technical merits against established, consistent criteria either during an actual incident or during pre-spill planning. Using a series of forms which examine a proposed response tool and document its properties, a designated team can rapidly evaluate it and provide feedback to the FOSC with a documented recommendation regarding its use.

Under the ARTES framework, when it has been determined that it would be appropriate for a product to be evaluated, a vendor or supplier will complete and submit the [Proposal Worksheet \(PWS\)](#); this form is designed to capture data about the product and once filled in, is provided to a review team for analysis and evaluation.

Once the vendor has filled out and submitted the PWS, it will then be reviewed by either one of two review teams depending upon whether the request for evaluation was being made during an actual spill response, or during a period of pre-spill planning. The Response Tool Subcommittee (RTS) will conduct the review during a pre-spill planning effort, and the Alternative Response Tool Team (ARTT) does so during an actual incident. To document their review and evaluation of the product and the PWS, the review team will complete a [Data Evaluation Worksheet \(DEW\)](#).

Once the evaluation has been completed and documented on the DEW, the review team then will formulate their recommendation and document it on the [Summary Evaluation Worksheet \(SEW\)](#). The SEW captures the team's recommendation of whether or not the proposed response tool should be used, and is provided to the FOSC as well as to the initiator of the evaluation request (vendor).

It should be noted that that the FOSC need not wait for the ARTES recommendation when deciding whether or not to use a response tool. The ARTES is designed to help assist in the decision-making process but does not limit or prevent an FOSC from using a product they deem necessary. **Note:** Completion of the ARTES evaluation does not mean that a product is pre-approved, recommended, licensed, certified, or authorized for use during an incident.

## **7300 Response Technologies for Hazardous Substance Response**

*Under development.*