

REGION II REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM

February 12, 2002

Mr. John Gustafson
Executive Director
National Response Team
USEPA Headquarters - MC 5104A
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Mr. Gustafson:

Section 300.115 of the National Contingency Plan calls for reports to the National Response Team to be submitted on a semi-annual basis. Due to the events that occurred within Region II's area of responsibility on and after September 11th and the operational workload that followed for both the EPA and USCG, Region II is submitting an annual report for 2001 for the period of January 01 through December 31, 2001.

In an effort to adhere to the guidelines provided at this past year's NRT / RRT Co-Chairs meeting, this report is streamlined to cover only incidents and activities of national significance / interest.

I. MAJOR ACTIVITIES

A. NOTEWORTHY RESPONSE ACTIVITIES:

Terrorist Attacks on the World Trade Center, NY:

EPA Efforts: Since September 11th, EPA has been actively involved in the response, recovery and cleanup efforts at the World Trade Center Site. EPA OSCs were mobilized into NYC within hours to commence air sampling and monitoring activities. EPA personnel staffed the FBI JOC, FEMA's ROC, the NYC EOC, the NJOEM EOC, the NYSEMO EOC, and the FEMA DFO. The USCG Atlantic Strike Team assisted EPA Region II in establishing and maintaining an Incident Command System in Edison, NJ, assisting in air monitoring, assisting financial firms in access to facilities and managing wash stations at Ground Zero and Freshkills Landfill. EPA Region II received FEMA mission assignments to conduct environmental sampling and monitoring; collection and disposal of hazardous materials; establishment of wash stations for both site personnel and vehicles; vacuuming of dust and debris from streets, parks and other public areas; and monitoring of outfall discharges. Staff assistance was received from USCG District 7, EPA Headquarters and many of the EPA Regional Offices. Additional information on EPA's activities at the World Trade Center site can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/epahome/wtc/>.

U.S. Coast Guard Efforts: D1(m) supported EPA Region 2 in ESF #10 as regional vice-chair. ACTNY responded with 5 Coast Guard Cutters and 12 small boats to facilitate initial evacuation of 500,000+ people from lower Manhattan, closed the NY/NJ Port, and incorporated full ICS structure for Homeland Security. Prolonged response efforts included: 58 cutters/ boats (20 CG Auxiliary), 1,228 USCG personnel (including Reservists), use of Atlantic Strike Team, National Strike Force, PSU 305 and PSU TRADET. NOAA SSC assisted with harbor surveys and acted as the liaison with all NOAA assets. Personnel from Atlantic Strike Team and the National Pollution Funds Center assisted EPA in Edison, N.J.

Responses to Anthrax Contamination:

EPA Region II has provided technical assistance to the US Postal Service at both the Morgan Postal Facility in New York City and the Hamilton Township Postal Facility in New Jersey, in response to the anthrax contamination at those facilities. EPA OSCs have provided assistance with issues such as cleanup and decontamination techniques, sampling and monitoring, and disposal of contaminated materials and PPE.

B. EXERCISES/WORKSHOPS:

Exercises:

USCG Activities New York conducted a Government Led PREP Area Exercise from 04 June 01 to 07 June 01. Exercise was located along the Hudson River near Suffern, NY. It provided an opportunity for ACT NY to develop a stronger up-river response section in the Area Plan that had not been tested in several years. Participants included D1(mor), NYSDEC, EPA, NOAA, MSRC and several other state/local agencies. For a more detailed summary and lessons learned, please contact the USCG RRT Coordinator.

Several industry-led PREP exercises occurred during this report period with various levels of federal participation.

Unannounced Industry PREP Drills:

The Coast Guard routinely conducts unannounced drills according to the PREP guidelines. The purpose of these drills is to improve both industry and Coast Guard response to oil spills. The drills are held quarterly in each CG Captain of the Port zone.

EPA Region II also performed unannounced exercises at several FRP-regulated facilities, under the PREP guidelines.

Workshops/Seminars:

WMD awareness and initial response training: Training was held for all First Coast Guard District units during two sessions (23 October 01 in Sturbridge, MA & 24 October 01 in Boston, MA). Training was provided by U.S. Army Biological, Chemical Command.

C. RRT MEETINGS:

RRT II held a meeting from 04 to 05 April 01 at the USCG Atlantic Strike Team Facility in Fort Dix, NJ. Topics included equipment and capabilities of the Atlantic Strike Team, PREP Exercise discussion, lessons learned from several incidents involving DOD materials, a presentation on the Galapagos Island spill, and NRS/FRP interaction. For a more detailed summary please contact the USCG RRT coordinator.

D. COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUP UPDATES:

NOAA SSC, Ed Levine, completed ESI maps for Connecticut, New York and New Jersey.

II. GENERAL PREPAREDNESS AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING

A. TRAINING:

Oil spill response outreach:

ICS training continues at the Area Committee / Local Spill Management Team level throughout the Coastal Zone.

B. FEDERAL/STATE PLANNING EFFORTS /EFFORTS TO IMPROVE STATE AND LOCAL COORDINATION:

WMD response planning and training has been thrust into the forefront of all Federal, State and Local agencies. The response communities within Region II are using the close relationships that have been established throughout the years to work together as much as possible. With multiple agencies at all levels, seeking to redefine response and contingency planning with regard to WMD, policy and guidance from the national/federal level is needed to establish consistency and normalcy. Additional guidance is needed on relationship between ESF-10 and federal OSCs.

Coastal Area Planning:

Several Coastal Area Committees are actively updating their plans to the new ICS-format prescribed by a September 2000 Commandant Instruction. For more details contact Mr. Scott Lundgren, D1(mor).

III. PERSONNEL CHANGES/ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

Mr. Tom Plesnarski replaced Mr. Tom Quinn (Retired) as the New York State RRT Representative.

CAPT Joseph Coccia relieved CAPT David P. Pekoske as CO of MSO/GROUP Long Island Sound.

LCDR Joe Gleason replaced CDR Scot Graham as the Alternate USCG Co-Chair.

LT Arex Avanni assumed the role of USCG RRT 1 & 2 coordinator.

New contact information is available in the latest RRT II contact list, for further information contact the USCG RRT Coordinator.

IV. ISSUES REQUIRING RRT ACTION:

RRT members will be called upon to provide additional capability information at future meetings, to improve use of RRT services by OSCs, States, and Tribes.

V. FUTURE PLANS:

NEXT RRT meeting:

The Region II RRT plans to hold a meeting in late spring, agenda & details TBD. Updates will be sent via email and posted at <http://www.uscg.mil/d1/staff/m/rrt/rrt2.html>

CONCURRENCE:

_____/_____
Bruce Sprague (Date)
EPA Co-Chair
U.S. EPA, Region II

_____/_____
Captain John Grenier (Date)
U.S. Coast Guard Co-Chair
First Coast Guard District