



2008
YEAR IN REVIEW



From the Commander

Greetings and welcome to the National Strike Force Year in Review.

Recently, I had a conversation with a mentor, retired Army Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Simmons, who serves as president of his local veterans group. I asked him, "Was his group squared away?" He stated, "At all times." I could not think of a more descriptive assessment or motto for the National Strike Force readiness and response during 2008. "Squared away at all times."

The National Strike Force delivered a strong performance in 2008 in support of On-Scene Coordinators and Incident Commanders across the nation. We deeply engaged in significant pollution response tasks, trained in numerous local, national and international venues, and exhaustively employed forces in national-level hurricanes. The National Strike Force supported joint operations with the Department of Defense, multiple National Special Security Events, volcanic eruptions in Hawaii, a number of oil pollution-related responses and several hurricane recovery efforts for areas impacted and devastated in parts of the Caribbean and Gulf Coast.

In addition to those extensive field efforts, the Coordination Center teamed with the Coast Guard's Operations Systems Center to develop a Web-based application for the technologically obsolete Response Resource Inventory system. Additionally, the process for conducting preventive assessments within the ports was improved and



Capt. Roderick Walker

expanded to include more partner response agencies.

We are continuing our extensive working efforts with the Deployable Operations Group to develop the long-range strategy for the National Strike Force modernization, focusing on doctrine, training, tactics, techniques and procedures, equipment recapitalization, emerging threats and response sustainability in alignment with the ongoing Coast Guard modernization efforts.

Throughout these operations and activities, the team of active duty, civilians, reservists and auxiliaries that comprise the National Strike Force were squared away at all times. I am extremely proud of the dedication, commitment, esprit de corps and devotion to duty that these members displayed day in and day out. To command this outstanding cadre of America's Maritime Guardians is a great honor and the most significant professional accomplishment of my lifetime.

Spelled out in this publication is information on the Atlantic, Gulf and Pacific Strike Teams, the Public Information Assist Team and the Coordination Center. Also featured is a report on one of the more significant oil spills that we worked, and our critical role in one of the ten hurricanes encountered during the season. There is also a listing of resources and capabilities that make up the National Strike Force. I am hopeful that this information will be helpful in understanding this important national asset. Semper Paratus.

Roderick E. Walker

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Roderick Walker".

Captain, US Coast Guard
Commander, National Strike Force

World's Best Responders: Any time, Any place, Any hazard







Atlantic Strike Team

The Atlantic Strike Team, based in Ft. Dix, N.J., consists of 42 active duty service members, 33 Reservists, seven Auxiliarists and two civilians. The team was commissioned at its current location in September 1991 after relocating from Air Station Elizabeth City, N.C. The AST's area of responsibility covers the Coast Guard's 1st, 5th and 9th Districts, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands in the 7th district and the northern portion of the 8th District. This corresponds to EPA Regions I, II, III, V and VII. In 2008, the AST responded to four oil spills, four hazardous material spills and served in ICS support roles during five incidents. One of the incidents occurred in the Caribbean in March.

The AST provided contractor health and safety oversight for the EPA during the removal of hazardous chemicals at a waste oil site in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands.

The TC Waste Oil site was littered with about 280 drums and large tanks filled with oil and other chemicals. In addition to these containers, there were several hundred lead-acid batteries on wooden skids at the site. Tanks around the site ranged in size from tanker trailers and trucks to former underground tanks.

The EPA continues to work at the site as of February 2009, with plans for a more extensive site evaluation of soil contamination.

In May, members of the AST responded to a diesel spill closer to home after a towboat struck a submerged object in the Missouri River, tearing open one of its fuel tanks.

The towboat Omaha spilled about 2,200 gallons of diesel into the river near West Alton, Mo., May 30.

The crew intentionally grounded the vessel to prevent further damage and the potential of a further spill, and secured it to a tree on the river bank. The Omaha had about 22,000 gallons of diesel aboard.

The AST personnel worked in the incident command post led by the local captain of the port. They provided incident management expertise and guidance on the placement of 4,500 feet of boom in the river to contain the diesel. Team members also advised responders on spill remediation strategy, and team specialists oversaw contractors, salvage and site safety at the incident. The Omaha was taken to a shipyard after its salvage.

In another oil response, the AST deployed to Baltimore Harbor, Md., in July, to help salvage a leaky vessel used as a waste-oil container.

The SeaWitch, a 475-foot hulk, was illegally used to store oil years earlier. The owner was arrested and imprisoned for environmental crimes.

Members from the AST initially responded to reports of oil sheens at the vessel in August 2003. During that response, they determined that there was no immediate environmental threat and demobilized.

The vessel appeared stable and pollution free for five years until oil sheens began to appear around its hull in July. The Maryland Department of the Environment requested the Coast Guard to take over the response, and investigators located thousands of gallons of bunker fuel in the ship and leaks through the hull into the harbor.

The Strike Team members monitored cleanup contractors, and team specialists ensured the salvage operation, oil removal and diving operations were conducted safely and in accordance with regulations.

The salvage operation, removal of all waste oil and scrapping of the vessel is projected to be complete by the middle of 2009.

Clockwise from top left: Workers from Resolve Marine Group and Miller Environmental Group clean oil from the hull of the SeaWitch during "cleanup" and recovery operations, Nov. 10., in Baltimore. Strike Team members use a flash light to check oxygen levels inside their Level A suits during a training exercise in West Virginia's Memorial Tunnel at the Center for National Response, June 24. Strike Team members don level B protection during an exercise at the CNR, June 24. Responders work at the incident command post in Belle Chasse, La., coordinating the response for the DM 932 oil spill on the Mississippi River in July. Petty Officer 2nd Class Darrel Boyles provides safety oversight as contractors remove hazardous material from a cleanup site in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, April 2.



Gulf Strike Team

The **Gulf Strike Team**, based in Mobile, Ala., consists of 43 active duty service members, 33 Reservists, two Auxiliarists and one civilian. The team was commissioned at its current location in March 1973. The GST's area of operation includes the 7th District with the exception of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, the southern portion of the 8th District and part of the 5th District. This corresponds to EPA Regions IV and VI. In 2008, the GST responded to 11 cases involving oil spills, eight hazardous material spills and served in ICS support roles during six incidents.

At one such incident, the GST supervised emergency repairs on a 656-foot motor vessel after it grounded in Brunswick, Ga., in February.

The Centaurus Leader was moved to a berth at a local terminal, where team members developed a salvage plan and supervised repairs to a 22-foot breach in one of the ship's internal tanks. The grounding did not result in any pollution.

There was plenty of pollution though, when the GST responded to a burning oil well near Oliver Springs, Tenn., in March.

The oil well caught fire during drilling operations and released about 84,000 gallons of crude oil into a secondary retention pond. A small amount of crude oil was also found in a nearby tributary to Indian Creek.

The team members collaborated with the EPA as Federal On-Scene Coordinator representatives, and supported site safety, cost documentation, air monitoring and

photo documentation during the response.

Contractors recovered 6,000 gallons of pure oil, 250,000 gallons of oily water and 5,225 tons of contaminated soil during the cleanup.

In another challenging response, GST members helped Coast Guard Sector New Orleans remove a highly toxic acid from a leaking storage tank at a facility in Braithwaite, La., in April.

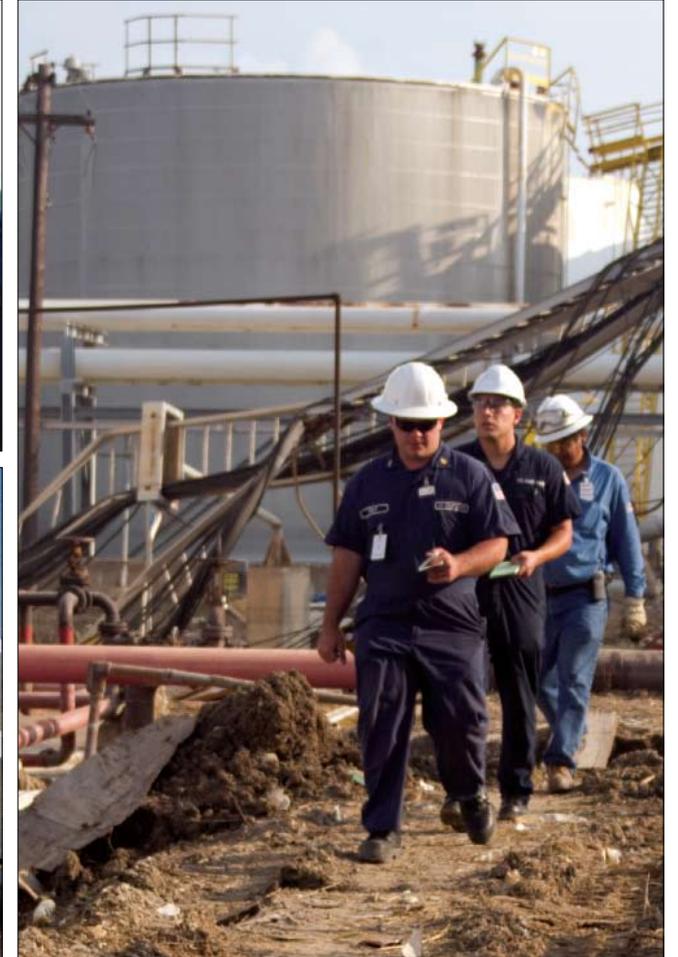
Sector New Orleans received a report in March that fluosilicic acid was leaking from an above ground tank, and investigators determined the release was from a weld failure on the tank.

State officials determined the potential existed for a catastrophic failure of neighboring tanks, and approved a controlled release of the acid to relieve pressure on the fluosilicic acid tanks. They discharged 468,000 gallons of the acid into the Mississippi River.

Another leak was reported on March 25, and Sector New Orleans requested the GST to help develop a plan to remove the rest of the acid from the facility. Strike Team members also supervised site safety during the operation.

The remaining 500,000 gallons of acid was transferred from the site to prevent further release.

Clockwise from top left: Petty Officer 1st Class Matthew Hampton identifies pockets of oil onboard a dredging vessel during the DM 932 response in July. Chief Petty Officer John Barnes and Tom MacKenzie of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conduct shoreline cleanup and assessment operations along the Mississippi River in July. Responders perform assessments at a petrochemical facility after Hurricane Ike in September. A piece of the barge DM 932 is lifted from the Mississippi River during salvage operations, Aug. 10. A responder examines an oil spill sample from the shore of the Mississippi River during the barge DM 932 oil spill response. Fluosilicic acid sprays from an above-ground storage tank at a facility in Braithwaite, La., March 17. Cmdr. Virginia Kammer, Commanding Officer of the Gulf Strike Team, briefs Deployable Operations Group Commander Rear Adm. Thomas Atkin on Hurricane Ike response operations at the Pasadena, Texas, incident command post in September. Center: Coast Guard and state responders oversee salvage operations at a Texas marina during the Hurricane Ike response.







Pacific Strike Team

The Pacific Strike Team, based in Novato, Calif., consists of 42 active duty service members, 32 Reservists, two Auxiliarists and two civilians. The team was commissioned at its current location in March 1973. The PST's area of responsibility covers the Coast Guard's 11th, 13th, 14th Districts and the northwest portion of the 8th District. This corresponds to the EPA's Regions VII, IX and X. In 2008, the PST responded to five cases involving oil spills, 18 hazardous materials releases and served in ICS support roles during five incidents.

Hazardous materials became a problem when floods swept household chemicals into neighborhood yards and streets after heavy rains in Fernley, Nev., in January.

Two members of the PST deployed there to manage the removal of household hazardous waste after a canal levee failed, flooding nearly one square mile.

The Strike Team members, working with the EPA, served as Federal On-Scene Coordinator representatives at the incident command post, established to clean up and remove displaced hazardous waste.

Team members also helped document costs for the response, and oversaw contractors picking up the hazardous materials. Responders collected the waste in a central location where it was sorted for removal to hazardous materials disposal sites.

The next month, the PST helped EPA Region 9 at dwellings affected by radiation in the Navajo Nation in Farmington, N.M.

Coast Guard personnel surveyed and documented Navajo Nation lands and structures for elevated levels of uranium and radon, and oversaw safety at the site from Feb. 11 to April 15, when the EPA halted the assessment phase of the cleanup.

While some team members were in the desert, other members of the PST deployed to monitor air quality during the ongoing eruption of Kilauea Volcano, on Hawaii's big island in April.

There was increased volcanic activity at the popular tourist site that month, with a plume of ash and gas rising from one of the craters.

Coast Guard members monitored sulfur dioxide levels and particulates at various points around the island and found no levels deemed hazardous to the public.

Strike Team members also conducted air-monitoring instrument familiarization, operation and maintenance training for a local fire department on the island.

Clockwise from top left: Ens. Aaron Riutta reviews the site safety plan for the removal of a radiation-contaminated home on the Navajo Nation, N.M., in February. Riutta collects a soil sample from a discard pile at a uranium-contaminated structure on the Navajo Nation. Two PST petty officers double-bag friable asbestos removed from floor tiles in the LST 1166, July 8. Contractors in Guam load old batteries in the back of their vehicle for disposal in February. Petty Officer 1st Class William Stewart pushes a "buggy" outfitted with instruments that detect radioactive hot spots at a site on the Navajo Nation. Petty Officer 1st Class Angie Vallier sets up an air-monitoring station near the Kilauea Volcano, Hawaii, in April.





Public Information Assist Team

The **Public Information Assist Team** is comprised of four highly-trained crisis communications professionals. It was established at Coast Guard Headquarters in 1978 as part of the National Contingency Plan and moved to Elizabeth City, N.C., in 1991.

The PIAT's primary mission is to provide emergency public information support to Federal On-Scene Coordinators during: oil spills and hazardous materials releases, natural disasters and domestic terrorism events. Their secondary mission is training the nationwide response community in crisis information management. The team responded to five incidents and trained nearly 300 responders in 2008.

The PIAT area of responsibility encompasses all Coast Guard Districts and EPA Regions.

The weather kept the PIAT very busy in 2008, with floods and hurricanes keeping members in a steady flow of deployments throughout the summer.

Flooding in Iowa, Illinois, Indiana and Missouri prompted Sector Upper Mississippi River, in St. Louis, to activate the PIAT in June to manage response public information activities.

A member of the PIAT deployed as part of an incident management team tasked with managing resources during the response phase. They also planned recovery operations for marine traffic on, and for facilities adjacent to the Mississippi, Illinois and Missouri rivers.

The Coast Guard rescued a handful of people initially during response operations, then shifted priority to managing more than 400 miles of river closures and restrictions to help prevent marine accidents.

The PIAT member, along with Coast Guard and partnering agencies, gathered and disseminated imagery of operations and coordinated interviews with operational personnel conducting rescues, delivering relief supplies and assessing levees and other structures.

For several weeks, the team provided information to the public and industry on: Coast Guard Disaster Assistance and Recovery Team operations, the status of vessel traffic, waterway restrictions and information on marine transportation system recovery plans.

On the heels of the flood, the PIAT braced for hurricane season and the next deployment. All four members of the PIAT deployed to the Gulf Coast in August as Hurricane Gustav moved along an eerily similar path through the Gulf of Mexico toward Louisiana as Hurricane Katrina did in 2005.

The full team deployment for Gustav response operations was the first for the PIAT since Katrina. The team pre-positioned ahead of the storm with other Coast Guard units in New Orleans and Mobile, Ala., – and prepared for the gamut of anticipated Coast Guard operations.

Before the storm made landfall in Louisiana the morning of Sept. 1, the team worked with other crisis information personnel to notify the public and industry about changing waterway restrictions. They also disseminated information to vessels and facilities in Gustav's predicted path on what safety precautions to take.

Although the Coast Guard didn't conduct any search and rescue missions the team was constantly fielding inquires from international media about waterways, sunken vessels, derelict vessel breakaways and minor pollution incidents. Public information personnel also collected imagery of operations and disseminated it to the media.

Clockwise from top left: Petty Officer 1st Class Lawrence Chambers videotapes members of the AST participating in a training exercise at the Center for National Response in West Virginia, June 24. Members of the DM 932 oil spill Unified Command host a media brief in Belle Chasse, La., July 31. Chief Warrant Officer Brandon Brewer conducts an interview with journalists on the Mississippi River during cleanup operations Aug. 1. Petty Officer 1st Class Lawrence Chambers and Petty Officer 3rd Class Adam Baylor capture imagery of the barge DM 932 after its salvage.



Coordination Center

The National Strike Force Coordination Center (NSFCC) provides oversight and strategic direction to the three strike teams, ensuring enhanced interoperability through a program of standardized operating procedures for response, equipment, training and qualifications. The NSFCC Operations Department, Chemical and Engineering Divisions continually assess the equipment and resource needs of the strike teams, ensuring their response equipment and operating procedures are ready to meet new and emerging threats. The Training Division administers a robust training and ready-for-operations program ensuring the strike teams maintain qualified personnel capable of safely responding to a vast and growing spectrum of hazards.

The NSFCC also maintains a national logistics network using the Response Resource Inventory (RRI) database, manages the Coast Guard Oil Spill Removal Organization (OSRO) classification program, administers the National Maintenance Contract (NMC) for the Coast Guard's \$41 million inventory of pre-positioned spill response equipment and is the course manager for the Coast Guard's Oil Spill Response Technician (OSRT) course.

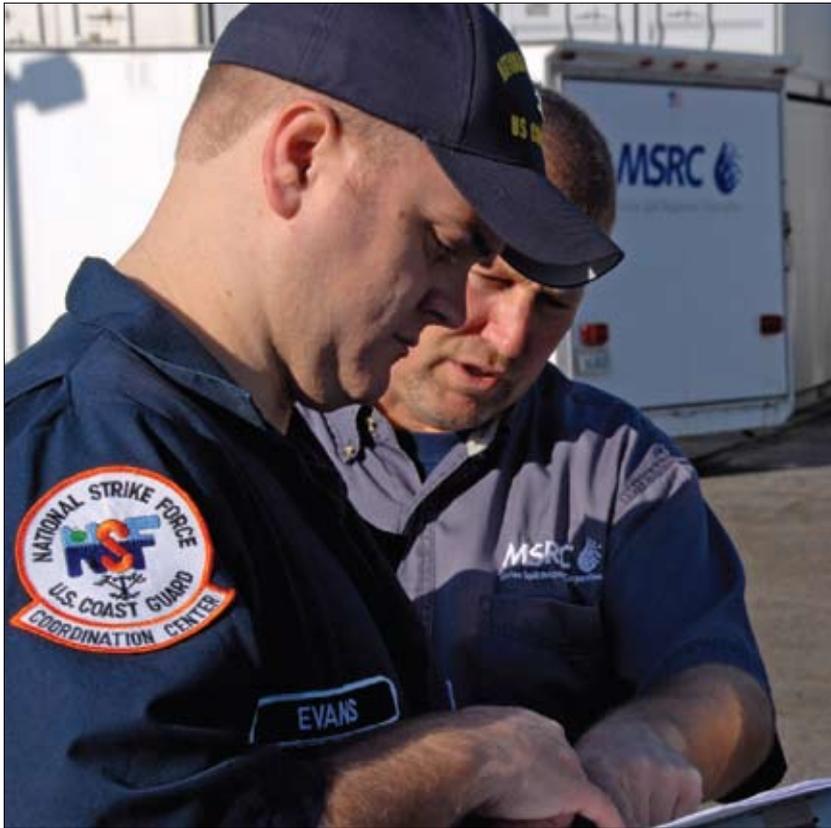
The Oil Pollution Act of 1990 mandated the creation of a national database of response resources that would be maintained by the NSFCC. This voluntary equipment locator system, the RRI, was developed and implemented in 1993. The RRI includes data received from companies that wish to have their equipment listed in a publicly accessible system, as well as data generated from the OSRO classification program. The NSFCC, Coast Guard Headquarters program managers and the Operations Systems Center has completed the upgrade of the RRI database. The new RRI can be found at <https://cgrrri.uscg.mil>.

The new RRI includes resources from classified and non-classified OSRO's, federal, state, local and private response entities. In addition, the Data Entry Module allows an OSRO to easily add, modify or delete their resources. The RRI also provides online tutorials, a user's guide, and immediate notification if your resources are sufficient to receive a classification in desired COTP zones. The report viewing and printing capability allows the user to run various reports and have the ability to see what effects are encountered if equipment is moved within a region.

The Response Support Division at the NSFCC evaluates the environmental emergency response resources available to key federal decision-makers throughout the United States' 42 Captain of the Port (COTP) zones and 10 EPA Regions. The evaluations, known as Preparedness Assessment Verifications (PAVs), capture the status of a region's emergency environmental response posture and identifies (federal, state, or OSRO owned) assets available to the federal decision-maker in an emergency. They also verify the location and material condition of every site where classified OSRO resources are staged. In 2008, the NSFCC conducted 17 PAVs, verifying the disposition of response resources located within a 100 mile radius of 21 Coast Guard Sectors.

The NSFCC also manages the maintenance program for Coast Guard-owned oil spill response equipment via the National Maintenance Contract (NMC). The NSFCC is responsible for more than \$41 million of Coast Guard oil pollution response equipment through the NMC. In 2008 NMC activities include the oversight and coordination of 23 Vessel of Opportunity Skimming System (VOSS) sites, 16 Spilled Oil Recovery System (SORS) sites and all three strike teams.

Clockwise from top left: Petty Officer 2nd Class Adam Evans reviews a checklist during a preparedness assessment visit in Long Beach, Calif., Dec. 8. A lancer barge is lifted off a pier during an oil spill response exercise. Coast Guard members inflate boom before deploying it from a vessel. Petty Officer 1st Class Todd Legutki conducts a preparedness assessment visit aboard a Marine Spill Response Corporation ship Dec. 8. The Coast Guard Cutter Hickory exercises VOSS equipment during an annual oil spill drill in Alaska.





Big Spill in the Big Easy

The New Orleans waterfront reeked like a highway truck stop.

From its source on the Mississippi River, the thick smell of petroleum oozed along the streets and narrow alleyways of the Central Business District and the French Quarter, shoving the hot scent of Cajun spices and beignets back into the bars and restaurants.

A tugboat, pushing a barge laden with 420,000 gallons of heavy fuel oil, maneuvered directly into the path of a 600-foot tanker in the wee hours of July 23, with immediate and disastrous results. The tanker Tintomora T-boned the barge DM 932, tearing the barge almost completely in half. With only a slender arm of twisted steel keeping the partially sunk hulk together, it was pushed downriver by the slowing tanker and was eventually secured to the Crescent City Connection bridge with tugs.

One only had to step outside and take a breath on Canal Street to know that something was leaking oil nearby.

The Captain of the Port of New Orleans closed nearly 100 miles of the river to traffic as the barge started leaking what would finally total about 282,000 gallons of oil. The black muck infiltrated the batture – marshy areas between the river and levees – and clung to riprap as it flowed downriver with the current. The closure included the Port of New Orleans, and kept hundreds of vessels from transiting the lower Mississippi River and passes in the delta.

Coast Guard personnel from the Gulf, Atlantic and Pacific Strike Teams, as well as the Public Information Assist Team – 51 team members in all – spent weeks in the New Orleans area staffing key positions at the incident command post and working in the field to assess and remediate impacted shoreline areas along about 100 miles of the river.

Strike Team members in the field escorted the media to document cleanup operations, provided cleanup contractor oversight, monitored site safety and performed shoreline cleanup and assessment. NSF personnel at the incident command post documented the costs associated with the response, disseminated information to the public and media, advised the unified command and served in key roles in all sections of the response organization.

Strike Team members worked with their partners to develop and execute plans for containment and salvage of the oil, and helped prioritize areas for cleanup. About 2,000 people worked in the command post and in the field conducting skimming, salvage and shoreline cleanup operations. NSF members worked closely with other Coast Guard units and federal agencies, Louisiana officials, local responders and representatives from industry and the responsible party.

Clockwise from top left: Three tugs hold up a barge that was split in two on the Mississippi River July 23. An oil spill cleanup team hauls bags of absorbent material away from the Mississippi River. Response crews muster before sunrise at the incident command post in Belle Chasse, La., July 31. Chief Petty Officer Steven Moynihan and Cathy Woodruff, of Oil Mop Inc., discuss changes in ongoing cleanup efforts of spill July 30.

By Aug. 1, workers had contained and cleaned up enough of the oil that the entire length of the river was opened to vessel traffic, with a safety zone remaining around the sunken barge.

“The Strike Force brought a great depth of knowledge and abilities,” said Paul Book of American Commercial Lines, the owner of the barge. “The experience was a joint effort – we had a common focus and worked together for the good of the environment and industry.” Book was a member of the Unified Command, which was based at the Oil Mop, Inc., facility in Belle Chasse, La.



Salvagers finished removing the barge from the river Aug. 10. Strike Team members remained on scene after the barge was raised, completing shoreline assessments and safety oversight at shore and on-water cleanup areas. The National Strike Force concluded operations at the spill Aug. 28.

“The successful implementation of ICS in a large spill is critical to a response’s effectiveness and the National Strike Force was the linchpin in this process,” said Capt. Lincoln Stroh, Captain of the Port of New Orleans and the Federal On Scene Coordinator for the response. “I can’t thank them enough.”

Coast Guard Petty Officer 3rd Class Nicholas L. Adams scoops an oil sample from the Mississippi River July 27. The sample of oil was used as evidence in the investigation of the oil spill.

I K E

The Texas Gulf Coast, a hub of the petrochemical industry, has seen its share of hurricanes, and industry and agencies there know how to prepare for them. But as the eye of Hurricane Ike approached Galveston, Texas, there was little doubt that this massive storm had the potential to cause serious hazardous material and oil spills across western Louisiana and eastern Texas.

When Hurricane Ike made landfall at Galveston Sept. 13, as a category 2 storm with 110-mph sustained winds, it left a path of destruction in its wake along hundreds of miles of coastline.

“When Hurricane Ike’s landfall was imminent, I immediately requested National Strike Force support,” said Capt. Bill Diehl, Commander of Coast Guard Sector Houston-Galveston, and Federal On-Scene Coordinator for the hurricane response. “Based on my previous positive experience with major response operations, I knew the NSF would provide exceptional incident management and pollution response services,” he said.

Members from every unit of the National Strike Force deployed after the hurricane to assess, contain and remediate oil and chemical incidents caused by Ike.

The Coast Guard’s primary mission before and after the storm was search and rescue, but as assessments were conducted along Ike’s path, hundreds of potential pollution sites were identified. A Unified Command was established in Pasadena, Texas, Sept. 22 to manage Emergency Support Function 10, the hazardous materials element of the National Response Plan. Members of the Environmental Protection Agency, Coast Guard, Texas General Land Office and Texas Commission on Environmental Quality comprised the command and worked closely with other agencies to identify, assess and clean up pollution sites.

Cmdr. Virginia Kammer, Commanding Officer of the Gulf Strike Team, served as the Federal On-Scene Coordinator Representative for Diehl at the Pasadena command post. As a member of the ESF-10 Unified Command, Kammer set priorities for containment and cleanup, freeing Diehl to manage other elements of the hurricane response from the Houston command post.

“This allowed us to simultaneously push out on all fronts of the best response model: saving lives, protecting the environment, mitigating the economic impact, keeping the public informed, and involving all our stakeholders,” said Diehl. “The NSF expertly delivered on the environmental response front.”

Team members managed more than 240 oil spill and hazardous response sites in record time, said Diehl. National Strike Force members filled key positions in the command post, including operations, logistics and finance. National Strike Force members focused on waterside issues, but consulted closely with their land-based counterparts at the TCEQ, TGLO and EPA.

“One of the constants we have continued to enjoy through the years is the level of experience the Strike Team brings to the table at every spill event,” said Rich Arnhart, the TGLO representative on the Unified Command. “We’re glad to see them arrive.”

National Strike Force members brought critical skills and knowledge to the Hurricane Ike response, and will take their experiences there to the next response. With each response, lessons are learned and are applied the next time.

“The team’s flawless performance was critical to the success of the Coast Guard’s Hurricane Ike response operation,” said Diehl. “The National Strike Force will continue to be one of my first calls when faced with a major incident in the port.”

When Hurricane Ike’s landfall was imminent,



I immediately requested National Strike Force support. - Capt. Bill Diehl

Opposite: Hurricane Ike covers more than half of Cuba in this photo from the International Space Station, Sept. 9.

Clockwise from top left: Petty Officer 1st Class Christopher Wolf, of the GST, assesses damage at a petrochemical facility near Houston, Texas. A fire destroys a home in Galveston, Texas.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Shannon Brugh, of Coast Guard Air Station New Orleans, searches for people in distress in Houma, La.

A Coast Guard member documents a sunken vessel in the Galveston area.



Command Cadre



Capt. Roderick E. Walker
Commanding Officer
email: roderick.e.walker@uscg.mil



Cmdr. Christine N. Cutter
Executive Officer
email: christine.n.cutter@uscg.mil



**Chief Petty Officer
Mark M. Mackowiak**
Command Chief
email: mark.m.mackowiak@uscg.mil

The Unified Command and salvage crews lift the final section of the damaged DM 932 barge that spilled 220,000 gallons of fuel oil into the Mississippi River July 23. The salvage operation took two weeks to complete due to adverse conditions in the river such as current and falling water levels. The spill stretched from the New Orleans business district area into the Gulf of Mexico.



Cmdr. David C. Haynes
Commanding Officer
email: david.c.haynes@uscg.mil



Lt. Cmdr. Monica Rochester
Executive Officer
email: monica.l.rochester@uscg.mil



**Senior Chief Petty Officer
Claudia Simpson**
Command Chief
email: claudia.n.simpson@uscg.mil



Cmdr. Virginia Kammer
Commanding Officer
email: virginia.j.kammer@uscg.mil



Cmdr. Edward Bock
Executive Officer
email: edward.l.bock@uscg.mil



**Chief Petty Officer
Steven Moynihan**
Command Chief
email: steven.moynihan@uscg.mil



Cmdr. Michael Day
Commanding Officer
email: michael.h.day@uscg.mil



Lt. Cmdr. Joe Loring
Executive Officer
email: joseph.b.loring@uscg.mil



**Chief Petty Officer
Jonathan M. Grimes**
Command Chief
email: jonathan.m.grimes@uscg.mil



Strike Team Qualifications

Response Member

Entry-level Strike Team position, attained by member within six months. Primary responsibility is to assist the Response Technician.

Qualifications and Training:

- 160-hour National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) HAZMAT technician course
- 80-hour Basic Strike Team equipment and response training
- NOAA Shoreline Clean-up Assessment Training
- Familiar with Strike Team equipment
- 100- and 200-level ICS training

Response Supervisor

Highest enlisted-level Strike Team position, may be attained within 30 months. Primary responsibilities are to supervise strike team operations and lead responses.

Qualifications and Training:

- Qualified Response Technician
- 24-hour NFPA HAZMAT Incident Commander course
- EPA Health and Safety for Decision Makers course
- FEMA Professionals in Emergency Management course

Response Technician

Second-level Strike Team position, attained within 18 months. Serve as technical experts and fill leadership positions in response organizations.

Qualifications and Training:

- Qualified Response Member
- 80-hour NFPA HAZMAT specialist training
- 40-hour Weapons of Mass Destruction training
- 40-hour oil spill response training
- EPA water/soil/air sampling course
- 300-level ICS training
- Expert with all Strike Team equipment and operations

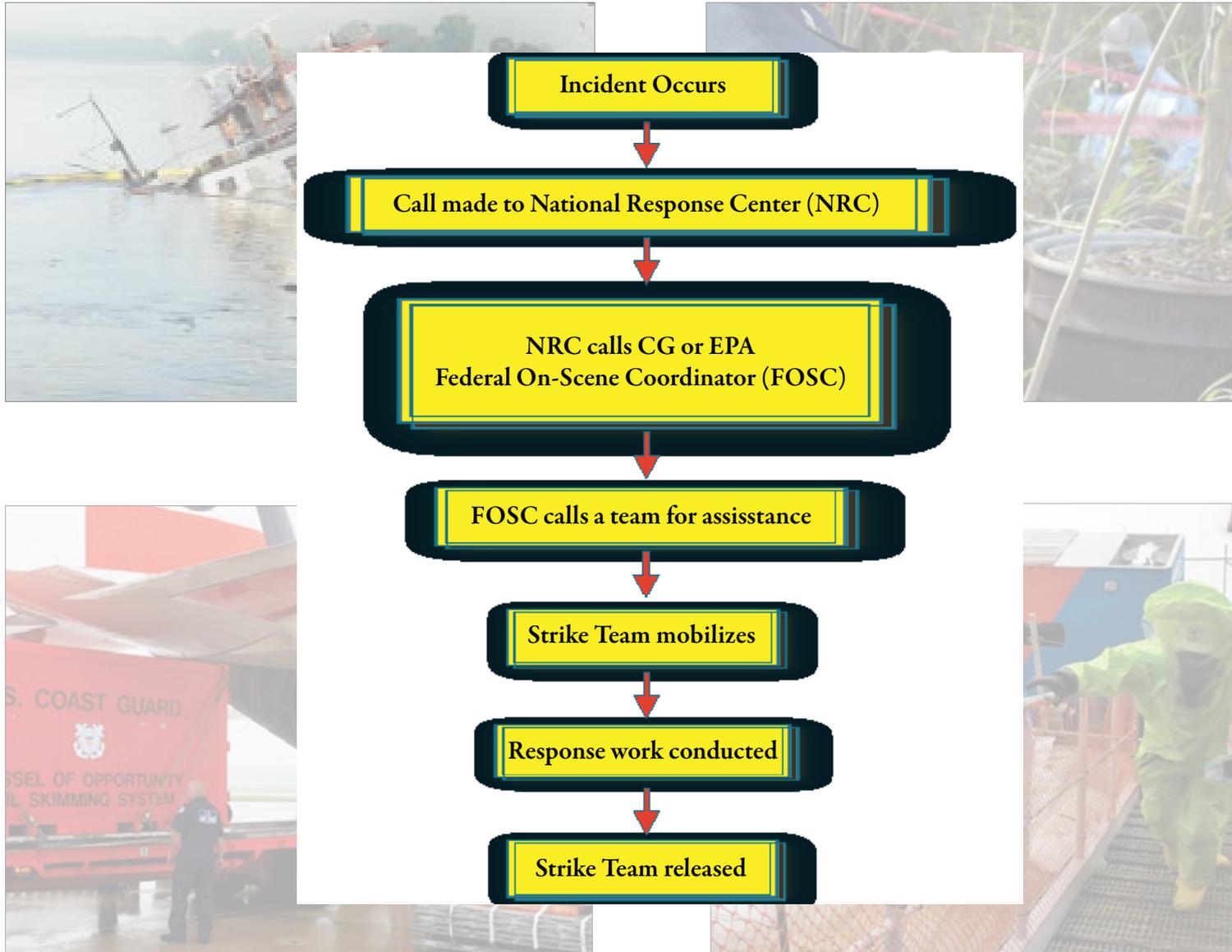
Response Officer

Highest Strike Team position, attained within 18 months and only available to strike team officers.

Qualifications and Training:

- Requires extensive field experience
- Response Officers are NFPA HAZMAT incident command qualified and capable of managing all aspects of an incident response

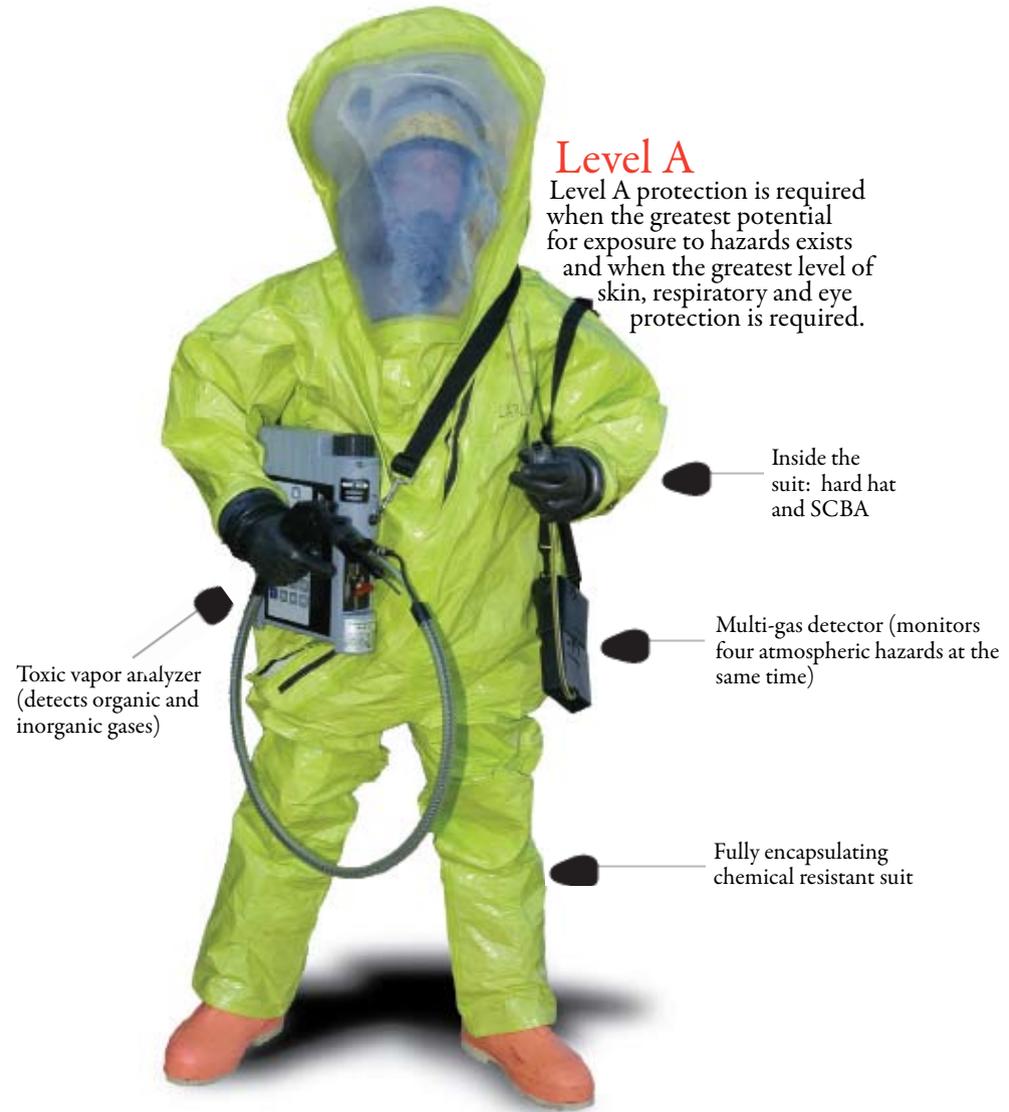
Activation and Deployment





Strike Team Resources

Type -I incident Nationally significant incident involving resources from throughout the nation in massive quantities. Examples include: Spills of National Significance (SONS), the Sept. 11 attacks and the Exxon Valdez oil spill. **Type -II incident** Regionally significant, involving resources from outside the immediate location of the incident, and may include out of state resources. Examples include: Space Shuttle Columbia Recovery Operation, major hurricane response and major oil spills impacting several states. **Type -III incident** Local but complex due to the extended time involved in the response (48 or more hours) or may escalate into a Type II or I incident. May require strike team assistance as a force multiplier for the operational commander. Examples include: localized oil or chemical spills, vessel sinkings and groundings, hazardous cargo leakage from various transportation modes and localized flooding events. **Type -IV incident** Routine emergencies that may not normally require strike team assistance.



Level A

Level A protection is required when the greatest potential for exposure to hazards exists and when the greatest level of skin, respiratory and eye protection is required.

- Inside the suit: hard hat and SCBA
- Multi-gas detector (monitors four atmospheric hazards at the same time)
- Fully encapsulating chemical resistant suit
- Toxic vapor analyzer (detects organic and inorganic gases)



Level B

The same level of respiratory protection is required as in Level A, but a lesser degree of skin protection is needed. Level B protective clothing includes a one piece ensemble with the SCBA worn outside the garment. Separate gloves and boots would be sealed at the interfaces to minimize chemical penetration.



Level C

The same level of skin protection as Level B, but a lower level of respiratory protection is needed. One- or two-piece splash suits are worn with a cartridge respirator. Chemicals are not hazardous via skin absorption and are typically well below established exposure limits. Level C is required when the concentration and type of airborne substances are known and the criteria for using air purifying respirators is met.



Level D

Level D is the minimum protection required. Protection is primarily a work uniform.





Mini-ANDROS II Robot provides the NSF with visual first responder capability. It can be used for remote atmospheric testing and is equipped with a video uplink system that can provide downrange intelligence for entry teams. The visual data can also be provided to key decision makers. The robot can be operated at a distance of 1,200 feet through fiber optic cable. Each strike team has one Mini-ANDROS II robot.



Hazardous Material Response Trailer

The HMRT trailer houses all chemical response gear to sustain a response for three to four days. It is road-deployable anywhere within the continental United States without need of special permits and can be deployed by aircraft. Each strike team has one HMRT.



Air-Deployable Hazardous Material Response Trailer

The "Level A" chemical response trailer houses all chemical response gear and is self-sustaining for one-three days. The AST and GST have this capability.



Fly-Away Box (Gulf Strike Team)

The GST developed the "fly-away" box to address the need for an easy-to-deploy offshore HAZMAT load for the NSF. This ISU-90 box is air-loadable, containing similar standard level "A" trailer load. With the small size, the team is able to deploy this gear by air, boat or a combination of the two. Keeping the contents modular allows responders to load the specific gear that is required and deploy the box to a platform, offshore vessel or remote location to conduct a HAZMAT response.



Pump Load The large pumping system is designed for lightering oil tankers and cargo vessels. The submersible pumps incorporated in the ready load are capable of pumping a wide range of petroleum products, mild acids, corrosives, and water. The large pumping system is prestaged on a trailer and palletized into four segments, ready for rapid deployment by aircraft or tractor trailer. The system consists of two HPU Deutz prime movers, one HVPU Highstar prime mover, three submersible pumps with associated hoses on pallets, and one support box with various kits. Additional stainless steel discharge hoses (three - six inches) are available to add to the load as required for chemical off-loading of corrosive materials. The hoses are flex hose type with a stainless steel braided cover and cam-lock fittings.

Sea Slug The Fluid Containment Bladder is used for storage and transportation of recovered fluid during oil spill recovery operations. The FCB is a flexible, closed tube tapered at each end with a cast aluminum fitting assembly designed to distribute the towing load to the container fabric. The FCB comes with all fittings and gear for filling and towing operations at sea and can additionally be used for fluid storage on land.



The Sea Slugs are constructed using high strength PVC-coated polyester material with closed-cell foam for floatation. The sea slug has a stainless steel towing gear, with marine grade aluminum fittings. To protect the FCB from damage due to inadvertent grounding, the bottom half is fitted with a second skin which is sealed in place. Each end of the bladder also has a connection for filling or off-loading and the front of the FCB has a smaller bladder used for buoyancy. Each strike team has two 10,000 gallon sea slugs. The GST has two additional 25,000 gallon sea slugs.





32-Foot Munson Utility Boat has a square bow, a drop ramp door, a wheel house, a tow bit, a removable J-davit, complete hydraulics package and a full array of electronics. The boat can operate in seas up to six feet, transport up to 16 people at one time, and is powered by twin/counter-rotating 225-horsepower engines for increased maneuverability. It is transportable over the road or by C-5 aircraft. Each team has one 32-foot Munson.



18-Foot Johnboat is an aluminum-hulled vessel. The boat can be used to deploy harbor boom, transfer personnel and conduct other logistical tasks. It is powered by one 50 horsepower outboard engine and is mounted on its own road-ready trailer for transport over the road or by C-130. Each team has a johnboat.



24-Foot Munson Utility Boat is an aluminum-hulled vessel. It can be used to deploy harbor boom, transfer personnel and conduct other logistical tasks. It is powered by two 90-horsepower outboard engines and is mounted on its own road-ready trailer for transport over the road or by C-130. The PST and GST each have one 24-foot Munson boat. The AST has a 23-foot Sea Ark with two 130-horsepower engines and the same capabilities as the Munson.



Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat

has a fiberglass keel and deck. It can be used to deploy harbor boom, transfer personnel and conduct other logistical tasks. It is powered by two 40-horsepower outboard engines and is mounted on its own road-ready trailer for transport over the road or by C-130. The GST and PST have one 17-foot RHIB and the AST has a 50-horsepower 18-foot RHIB.



Viscous Oil Pumping System VOPS is designed to be incorporated into and enhance an existing offloading pumping system. It is designed to be used when the oil characteristics to be pumped create higher frictional hose resistance than either the pump or the hose system can handle in the form of discharge pressure.

The system is based around the concept of injecting a small amount of water via a uniquely designed annular injector into the internal circumference of a pipe or hose which is pumping oil. The water forms an internal coating, or tube of water, between the oil and the pipe wall. This water sleeve replaces the oil-to-hose wall friction factor with an oil-to-water friction factor. This creates a drastic reduction in head pressure from friction losses. The VOPS as is not a complete lightering system but is designed to enhance the operation of existing lightering pump systems. Each strike team has one VOPS.



Flood Response Trailer Two johnboats with two outboard motors are stacked on a two-axle trailer with two ATVs and fuel for rapid deployment for flood responses. They can be transported by road or C-130. Each 14-foot johnboat is an aluminum hulled vessel powered by one 20 horsepower outboard engine. The boat can be used to deploy harbor boom, transfer personnel and conduct other logistical tasks. The ATVs are four wheel drive, light terrain vehicles. The strike teams have different makes and models of ATV in their inventories to perform a variety of functions from personnel transport to carrying equipment. The vehicles are for off road use only and are ideal for beach surveys. Load capacity, including rider and gear, is 380 lbs. Front cargo rack maximum capacity is 66 lbs. Rear cargo rack maximum capacity is 132 lbs. The ATV has the capability of (four) forward gears and (one) reverse gear. They can tow a light trailer utilizing a 1-7/8" trailer hitch ball. They can also be operated at night due to installed lighting systems. Each strike team has one flood response trailer.



Vessel of Opportunity Oil Skimming System VOSS is a modular, oil recovery skimming system that can be secured to, and operated from, a vessel of opportunity at a spill site. With this system, a vessel between 60 to 400 feet in length can be quickly transformed into an oil recovery vessel. The optimum size vessel is 100 to 300-feet long. The vessel must be capable of operating at a sustained speed of one-half to one knot and have strong rails which can accommodate universal clamps to rig the outriggers and skimmer lifting davit. Rails at least three feet high are required for davit clamps, while two-foot high rails, bollards and chocks are needed to attach outrigger clamps. Deck space of 300-500 square feet is needed for equipment layout, rigging and storage. Freeboard in the aft third of the vessel of ten feet or less is desirable to facilitate rigging the “J” sweep boom configuration. A shipboard weight handling boom or crane with a 2,000-pound capacity to facilitate installation of equipment is recommended, if available. Installation of lifting davits is not required when a shipboard crane can place the 400-pound skimmers into the water, inside the boom pocket on both sides of the ship. The VOSS has a maximum skimming output of 190-gallons per minute and a maximum sweep width of 42-feet off each side or 84-feet plus the beam of the vessel. It can skim and pump both light and heavy oil at one-half to one knot, using the fast sweep boom, depending on sea state, oil viscosity and thickness. The VOSS is pre-staged on a 48-foot low-bed tractor trailer for fast response. It has two containers, each

with a complete sweeping and skimming system for one side of a vessel. These systems can be split between two vessels or installed on one vessel as a two-sided sweeping system. Two collapsible inflatable barges are also staged on the trailer in their own containers for storage and transport of recovered oil or off-loaded product. The entire VOSS and two barges without the trailer can be loaded on a C-130 military aircraft, or with the trailer on a C-5 military aircraft, for transport to distant locations. A VOSS configured with fast sweep boom is configured differently. For this reason fast sweep loads cannot be split without consulting the appropriate DRAT or NSFCC personnel. Each strike team has one VOSS.





Inflatable Boom The purpose of the boom is to provide a barrier to contain, collect, or protect areas from oil floating on the water. The inflatable boom is designed to be rapidly deployed and recovered with a minimum amount of manpower. In 30 minutes four personnel can deploy 656 feet of boom from the reel or retrieve it from the water. A diesel hydraulic power pack supplies hydraulic power to the integral air blower and to the boom reels. A tool box containing spare parts and accessories completes the staging unit inventory. Each team has more than 6,500 feet of inflatable boom on hand.



PIAT Response Kit The Public Information Assist Team brings a response kit to every incident. The kit includes tools that are needed to accomplish their mission, such as news release distribution, photography, videography and recording television news broadcasts for media analysis and documentation.



Frequently Asked Questions

How do I request Strike Team assistance?

Contact the nearest Strike Team or National Response Center for direct deployment of needed assets for National Contingency Plan (NCP) incidents. The teams maintain an aggressive response posture to provide maximum special team support to Federal On Scene Coordinators. Ask for the Operations Officer or the Officer of the Day. For non-environmental response incidents, a request for forces needs to be filed with the Deployable Operations Group (DOG).

If I am uncertain as to whether an incident requires support from the Strike Team, what should I do?

Call. The Commanding Officer, operations officer or command duty officer will discuss the incident and specifically recommend what equipment or personnel resources they can provide to support the response.

Where can I obtain an equipment listing for various Oil Spill Response Organizations (OSRO) in a specific AOR?

The Response Resource Inventory (RRI) is a data base that is maintained at the NSFCC and contains equipment inventory for classified OSROs. The database contains locations as well as equipment amounts and capabilities. Information derived from the RRI can be retrieved from the NSF website. For specific OSRO inventory information, contact the Response Support Division at 252-331-6000 ext 3036 or the website at: <https://cgrri.uscg.mil>

How do I request the Public Information Assist Team?

Public information professionals who are skilled in the Incident Command System (ICS), Joint Information Center (JIC), risk communications and crisis media relations, can be requested for NCP incidents directly through the NSFCC or through the National Response Center at 800-424-8802. For non-NCP incidents, a request for forces needs to be filed with the Deployable Operations Group (DOG).

Who pays for a Strike Team to respond?

In most cases, the On-Scene Coordinator has the \$1 billion Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund (OSLTF) or the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) fund to pay for associated costs resulting from oil spills or substantial threats of oil or hazardous material spills to navigable waterways of the United States. If the incident does not meet either of those funding specifications, the requesting agency would fund the Strike Teams' response through the Stafford Act or other means.

Why are you called the "Strike Team?"

According to Ron Winslow's book *Hard Aground*, after a 22,000-gallon oil spill in Tampa Bay, Fla., a Florida congressman was enthralled with the idea of a "commando-style" operation responding to oil spills along the coast and in the Great Lakes. He coined the phrase "Strike Team" and in 1970 "the development of a National Strike Force" was included in the National Contingency Plan for oil spills.

Can a specific Strike Team member be requested to respond to an incident?

Operational commanders can contact teams directly for response assistance at the onset of the incident to discuss specific responders for key leadership positions. If there is an incident response organization established, an ICS form 213-RR should be completely filled out and turned in to Logistics.

Can the Strike Teams respond to projects in the remediation phase?

Strike Teams respond to projects or incidents at all phases. Contact the nearest team for additional information.

Can a foreign government request Strike Team assistance in the event of a major incident and if so, how?

Strike Teams deploy internationally to assist foreign governments in a variety of incidents. The requesting government contacts the U.S. State Department for Strike Team support.

Photo Credits

On the Cover: Petty Officer 1st Class Neil Gibb ensures contractors perform salvage and lightering operations safely on the tugboat Omaha in the Missouri River, June 1, 2008. Photo by LTJG Brownie Kuk.

Pg. 2, Clockwise from top left: PA3 Brandyn Hill; PA3 Adam Baylor; Baylor; Baylor; CWO Mark King.

Pg. 5, Clockwise from top left: Coast Guard photo; Coast Guard photo; PA3 Christina Bozeman; Baylor; Baylor; Coast Guard photo; PA1 L.F. Chambers. Center: Coast Guard photo.

Pg. 6, Clockwise from top left: Brian Milton (EPA); Mike Folan (EPA); MST2 Mihai Leta; BM1 Chris Snyder; ENS Aaron Riutta; Jack Hill.

Pg. 8, Clockwise from top left: Baylor; Baylor; Baylor; photo illustration by CWO Brandon Brewer.

Pg. 11, Clockwise from top left: Baylor; Coast Guard photo; Coast Guard photo; Baylor; Coast Guard photo.

Pg. 12, Clockwise from top left: AET2 Chris Lippert; Baylor; Baylor/illustration by PA2 Andrew Kendrick; Baylor.

Pg. 13, Baylor. Pg. 14, NASA photo. Pg. 15, Clockwise from top left: Bozeman; David J. Phillip (Associated Press); PA3 Jaclyn Young; PA3 Annie Berlin. Pg. 16, Baylor. Pg. 19, Clockwise from top left: PA3 Thomas Atkenson; CWO Mark King; Coast Guard photo; Coast Guard photo.

Pg. 29: Response crews deploy sorbent boom on the Mississippi River during the DM932 oil spill in August 2008. Baylor

Back page: Mississippi River oil spill clean up crews exit the hot zone through a decontamination line July 28. Baylor



2008

YEAR IN REVIEW

Produced by the National Strike Force

Commanding Officer
Capt. Roderick Walker
Executive Officer
Cmdr. Christine Cutter

Design Staff

Senior Editor: CWO Brandon Brewer
Editor: PAC Mark Mackowiak
Feature Stories Writer: PA1 L.F. Chambers
Layout and Design: PA3 Adam Baylor

Atlantic Strike Team (609) 724-0008

Gulf Strike Team (251) 441-6601

Pacific Strike Team (415) 883-3311

Public Information Assist Team
and Coordination Center
(252) 331-6000



National Strike Force Web Site: www.uscg.mil/hq/nsfweb/index.html

National Strike Force News Web Site: www.StrikeForceNews.com