

# MEETING MINUTES

## REGION 7 REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM MEETING

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EPA Region 7 Regional Office – 11201 Renner Blvd, Lenexa, Kansas

September 27-28, 2023

### Wednesday, September 27th

A meeting of Regional Response Team (RRT)-7 member agencies and regional stakeholders convened at 08:00 on September 27, 2023, at 11201 Renner Boulevard, Lenexa, Kansas (KS). Co-Chairs Adam Ruiz of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Michael Sams of the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) welcomed participants to the meeting. EPA Deputy Regional Administrator Edward Chu also welcomed the group and thanked attendees for their ongoing coordination efforts and support of emergency preparedness activities through RRT-7. Todd Peterson, USCG RRT-7 Coordinator, then reviewed administrative items and the meeting agenda. Peterson asked if corrections were needed to the previous minutes. As none was requested, Sams moved on to the first agenda item.

Note: The agenda, presentations, and minutes for this meeting can be accessed at [response.epa.gov/R7RRT](https://response.epa.gov/R7RRT).

### Review of RRT-7 Priorities

Sams explained that the RRT-7 Executive Committee (EC) includes the RRT-7 Co-Chairs, Alternate Co-Chairs, and RRT-7 Coordinators. The EC maintains an ongoing list of priorities and will continue to seek input from the larger group on these efforts. Sams presented RRT-7 priority activities with assistance from Federal On-Scene Coordinator (FOSC) and EPA RRT-7 Coordinator Eric Nold as follows:

Priority 1 – Monthly EC Teleconferences: Monthly teleconferences on the second Wednesday of the month continue as planned among EC members to ensure ongoing and effective administration of RRT-7. Calls typically extend for about 60 minutes. RRT-7 members are encouraged to submit topics/issues to be addressed by the EC.

Priority 2 – Conduct Incident-Specific Conference Calls: No incident-specific RRT (ISRRT) activations/calls occurred since the last RRT-7 meeting.

Priority 3 – Region 7 Integrated Contingency Plan (RICP) Update: An annual update will occur in January 2024 focused on ensuring terms are consistent and all contact information is current. Major plan updates occur every five years, with the next major revision due in 2025.

Priority 4 – RRT-7 Members List: RRT-7 Coordinators maintain an up-to-date contacts list of primary and alternate RRT-7 representatives. Nold asked the group to submit changes in agency representation to the RRT-7 Coordinators as these occur. He reminded the group that each voting member agency must maintain one primary representative and at least one alternate representative to RRT-7. These representatives comprise the contacts list used to assemble members during an ISRRT activation.

### National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF) Update

NBAF Public Affairs Specialist, Jason Walker, reviewed timelines to transition various operations from the Plumb Island Animal Disease Center to the new NBAF facility in Manhattan, KS. Walker said that NBAF's Community Liaison Group had been busy engaging stakeholders and that the facility would be ready to open soon. Jeffery Hansford with the Emergency Management Group indicated that NBAF staff had participated in several emergency preparedness exercises in recent months and asked to be invited to future exercises conducted by RRT-7 agencies.



## State Agency Reports

### **Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), Adam Broughton**

**Executive Summary.** IDNR will move its headquarters this winter from the Wallace State Office Building to 6200 Park Avenue in southwest Des Moines. Reorganization of state agencies continues with intent to reduce the number of state departments from 36 to 16. While changes are not anticipated to impact IDNR directly, numerous changes in contact information pertaining to departments and individuals are expected.

**Personnel Changes.** Broughton noted that IDNR's long-time Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) Tier II Coordinator, Elonda Bacon, retired in August. Broughton then displayed IDNR and Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) organization charts, and identified recent changes in position assignments.

**Laws/Regulations/Policies.** The Governor signed Executive Order 10 in January 2023, which placed a moratorium on administrative rulemaking and instituted a comprehensive review of all existing administrative rules. This is to be a 5-year process, and will slow progress on rule updates now in the legislative pipeline. For IDNR, rules will be reviewed regarding air and water quality, solid waste, spills, and the State Preserves Advisory Board. Additionally, IDNR resumed routine inspection of poultry operations and continues to monitor for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI).

**Planning and Coordination Efforts.** Since the last RRT-7 meeting, efforts have included the following:

- Joint EPA-IDNR (included locals) tabletop exercise (TTX)
- 2023 Central States Hazardous Materials (Hazmat) Preparedness & Planning Conference
- Annual County Sanitarians Meetings
- Submittal and approval of county-level hazmat/oil response plans
- First-time award of Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program funding for Iowa
- Increase in Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) funding (\$2.7M to \$3.1M)
- Executed Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) request with States of Florida (Hurricane Idahlia) and Texas (border security).

Upcoming efforts of IDNR include the following:

- Updates to Iowa's Debris Management Plan
- Iowa Homeland Security Conference
- IDNR headquarters' move
- Updates to IDNR's Continuity of Operations / Continuity of Government Plan
- Rewrite of Spills Database
- Rewrite of Mass Animal Mortality Plan.

Upcoming efforts of Iowa HSEM include the following:

- Development/submittal of annual report for the State Emergency Response Commission
- Development/submittal of Hazmat Emergency Preparedness Grant
- Development/submittal of High-hazard Flammable Train Reports
- Updates to Iowa's Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosives (CBRNE) Protocols
- Updates to Iowa's Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Handbook.

### **Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), Delbert Smith**

**Personnel Changes.** Shane McCoy filled the Assistant Spill Coordinator position.

**Significant Incidents/Events/Responses.** The following incidents occurred since the last RRT-7 meeting:

- Alan Winter – Milenia Productions (Harvey County): Individual attempted to dispose of several 5-gallon containers of unknown liquids (some suspected to be acetone) in a large burn pit in a rural area. Explosion occurred after start of the fire, sending the individual to the hospital.
- Union Pacific – Crossing Collision (Shawnee County): Cement truck and locomotive collision occurred at a crossing. As a result of the collision, a natural gas line was compromised and contributed to the situation. Cement truck was burned, and driver lost his life.
- Private Individual (Johnson County): A child ingested triuranium oxide and was hospitalized, inducing need to survey the home and hospital for presence of contamination.

**Laws/Regulations/Policies.** *Kansas Statutes Annotated* (KSA) 65-171(v) was passed, which describes report of a release; cleanup and response to release of pollutant; responsibility for cleanup of release; and related penalties for non-compliance. Additionally, Draft *Kansas Administrative Regulation* (KAR) 28-48-1 regarding reportable quantities of spilled pollutants/hazmats will come before the Joint Committee for Rules and Regulations in October and is scheduled for public hearing in December 2023.

### **Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MoDNR), Sean Counihan**

**Executive Summary.** Counihan reported that MoDNR continues to work through challenges to implement the new Environmental Emergency Response's (EER) spill reporting database. Frequent staff turnover continues to challenge MoDNR, as well as timely replacement of response equipment. Best practices for MoDNR include updates to office and field reports, as well as training all staff to serve as duty officers.

**Personnel Changes.** Counihan introduced Cody Garner, who filled Alan Cortvrient's position within EER as Emergency Operations Unit Chief and will serve as MoDNR's Alternate Representative to RRT-7. The MoDNR Deputy Director and Environmental Quality Deputy Director are retiring, and replacement staff for these positions will be announced soon.

**Significant Incidents/Events/Responses.** The following incidents occurred since the last RRT-7 meeting:

- O'Fallon, MO Fire and Chemical Release: Unknown quantities of sodium hydroxide, sodium cyanide, hydrogen cyanide, and sulfuric acid were released from a facility during a fire. Oversight and coordination with several state and local agencies were required. Runoff from fire suppression activities containing heavy metals was eventually contained, and site mitigation continued for multiple days.
- Stewartsville, MO Cationic Asphalt Emulsion Release: A commercial vehicle accident compromised the cargo within a semi-trailer, resulting in release of 2,500 gallons of asphalt emulsion. About 96 cubic yards of soil, lime, and emulsified product were recovered/removed from the site.

**Planning and Coordination Efforts.** MoDNR staff will attend several standing engagements, including meetings of LEPCs, Missouri Emergency Response Commission, Upper Mississippi River (UMR) Basin Association (UMRBA), Missouri State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), and the Biosecurity Working Group. MoDNR will participate in planning for the 2024 eclipse, and continues to support Homeland Security Advisory Council. Department staff also will attend several training and exercise events in coming months, including SEMA's Earthquake Guardian Exercise and MoDNR's Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan Exercise.

### **Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE), Kirk Morrow**

**Executive Summary.** NDEE continues to recruit candidates from within the agency to become emergency response personnel. Currently, just two of the Department's 273 employees are assigned to NDEE's Emergency Response Program. The program is responsible for initial reporting and actions related to spills and complaints, RRT-7, maintenance of the Nebraska Hazardous Incident Team (NHIT), oversight of EPCRA Tier II submittals, COOP planning, and employee health and safety.

**Significant Incidents/Events/Responses.** Nothing significant to report.

**Laws/Regulations/Policies.** Nothing significant to report.

**Planning and Coordination Efforts.** In addition to plan updates and equipment replacements, NDEE will focus on quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC) training for select staff, and completion of the Department's strategic planning maps. A traffic incident management exercise is planned for November 2023, and NHIT member training will occur in March 2024.

## **Federal Agency Reports**

### **EPA, RRT-7 Co-Chair Adam Ruiz**

**Executive Summary.** Ruiz reviewed Superfund and Emergency Management Division (SEMD) funding in place through October 1, 2023, and contingencies associated with a potential government shutdown. A potential lapse in funding is not expected to directly impact emergency response activities.

**Personnel Changes.** Ruiz reviewed staffed positions within the Assessment, Emergency Response, and Removal Branch. Currently, the branch is almost fully staffed, with just a couple of openings to be filled.

**Planning and Coordination Efforts.** Ruiz overviewed training and exercise participation in recent months by SEMD personnel, including a full-scale exercise sponsored by EPA Region 6 in Corpus Christi, Texas. Upcoming events include a large-area (four counties) field data collection exercise in the South-Central Nebraska Subarea and Annual EPA FOSC Training.

### **USCG, RRT-7 Co-Chair Michael Sams**

**Executive Summary.** Sams reported on near-historic low water levels for the Mississippi River, which has resulted in movement of salt water from the Gulf of Mexico to about 70 miles inland close to the City of New Orleans. Outside Region 7, USCG is working on annual updates to coastal area contingency plans (ACP). Outreach and education regarding Endangered Species Act (ESA) consultations remain emphases for USCG D8.

**Laws/Regulations/Policies.** Sams noted that updates to the USCG Incident Management Handbook and to the USCG Marine Environmental Response and Preparedness Manual are in progress, with publication of these expected in 2024. USCG D8's District Response Advisory Team currently seeks to hire a GS-13 Supervisor. Additionally, Sams reported that FOSC Representative (FOSCR) College was conducted in June 2023 at Sector Houston-Galveston, and likely will convene there again in May 2024. Additional funding was secured for 2024 FOSCR College, which will allow delivery of an exercise as part of the agenda. Chief Warrant Officer 4 Brandon Todd ([brandon.l.todd@uscg.mil](mailto:brandon.l.todd@uscg.mil)) is primary point-of-contact for those interested in the event.

**Planning and Coordination Efforts.** Sams overviewed various meetings, trainings, and exercises attended since the Spring 2023 RRT-7 meeting. Upcoming coordination efforts include regular meetings of RRTs 4, 5, 6, and 8, as well as the Clean Gulf Conference and the 8th Annual Clean Waterways Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio.

### **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Raquel DiDomenico**

**Executive Summary.** DiDomenico described the agency's efforts to develop a regional chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) materials contacts list. Moreover, FEMA seeks to establish a Region 7 CBRN Working Group of responders and convene quarterly conference calls to address emerging issues.

**Personnel Changes.** Andrew Sebata has been assigned as FEMA Region 7 Response Division Director. Additionally, interviews are occurring to identify a new Operations Integration Branch Chief.

**Laws/Regulations/Policies.** The CBRN Office at FEMA Headquarters has been renamed the Office of Emerging Threats (OET). OET has identified funding to staff two new regional positions in 2024.



**Planning and Coordination Efforts.** Region 7 personnel attended FEMA’s CBRN Coordinator Workshop in Washington, D.C., and highlighted CBRN response issues at the quarterly Region 7 Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC) meeting. Upcoming efforts include development/implementation of a CBRN-focused TTX at a 2024 RISC meeting.

#### **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Adam Davis**

**Executive Summary.** Davis reviewed NOAA metrics for response and restoration actions in 2022. In total, NOAA responded to 151 incidents, allocated \$114M in restoration funds, removed 3,015 metric tons of marine debris, and trained 2,576 persons in various emergency preparedness and response operations.

**Personnel Changes.** Davis advised the group of NOAA’s new Alternate Representative to RRT-7, Lieutenant Commander (LCDR) Chris Duffy. Duffy is NOAA Scientific Support Coordinator working from the Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory under USCG D9.

**Planning and Coordination Efforts.** NOAA has participated on National Response Team (NRT) working groups established to update Special Monitoring of Applied Response Technologies (SMART) used to monitor in-situ burning and dispersant operations. Davis also overviewed publications of new research regarding behavior and impacts of non-petroleum oil discharges to the environment. In June, NOAA delivered shoreline cleanup and assessment technique (SCAT) training to USCG Strike Team and U.S. Department of the Navy personnel. Finally, NOAA continues to host its [science-based lecture series](#) every third Thursday at 15:00 Eastern Time.

**Laws/Regulations/Policies.** The NRT Science & Technology Committee will issue updates to SMART soon. Additionally, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act) conveys grant opportunities for [marine debris projects](#).

#### **U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), Courtney Hoover**

**Personnel Changes.** Hoover reported that the position of DOI’s Alternate Representative to RRT-7 is unfilled. However, John Nelson, Regional Environmental Officer working in DOI’s Philadelphia Regional Office, continues to serve as second alternate representative to RRT-7.

**Planning and Coordination Efforts.** Since the last RRT-7 meeting, DOI sponsored a spill response TTX in Yankton, South Dakota (Siouxland Subarea). In November 2023, a spill response functional exercise will occur in collaboration with EPA Region 8 and rail operators in Grand Junction, Colorado. DOI also plans to collaborate with EPA Region 7 in early 2024 to conduct an exercise in/near the Quad Cities Subarea.

#### **U.S. Department of Transportation, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), Angela Pickett and Ky Nichols**

**Executive Summary.** Pickett and Nichols overviewed PHMSA mission areas and related programs, as well as the Office of Pipeline Safety’s Organizational Chart.

**Laws/Regulations/Policies.** Pickett reported that new rule-making efforts were underway to regulate carbon dioxide pipelines. Both liquid and gaseous lines have grown in number in response to carbon capture initiatives. Public meetings convened in 2023, and a draft rule is expected in early 2024. Additionally, PHMSA’s Office of Hazardous Materials Safety has published new guidance on transport of exempted products, packaging codes, and lithium batteries.

#### **Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), Cory Kokko**

**Personnel Changes.** Kokko reviewed ATSDR staff who serve as Primary and Alternate representatives to RRT-7, and identified Michael Garner as the RRT-7 regional contact for the Administration for Strategic Preparedness & Response (ASPR).

**Planning and Coordination Efforts.** Kokko introduced the group to [ATSDR's Emergency Response webpage](#) and a new resource known as the Assessment of Chemical Exposures (ACE) Tool Kit. These tools provide training on how to perform an epidemiologic assessment after a chemical incident. Kokko then overviewed a new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's communications guide, *Using Empathy in Communications*. The guide provides specific directions for successful health-related communications with various audiences/individuals.

### **U.S. Department of Defense (DOD)/Defense Coordinating Element (DCE) VII, Jon Schlafer**

**Personnel Changes.** No changes in key personnel occurred since the last meeting.

**Planning and Coordination Efforts.** Schlafer reminded the group of the Defense Coordinating Officer's (DCO) and DCE's mission to support civilian authorities during emergency incidents. He also reviewed DCE VII's organization chart and reported that DCO Colonel Scott Preston will serve in his position another two years before a replacement DCO is certified to replace him.

### **U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), William Reding**

Reding reported that staffing of the three DOE program manager positions in Region 7 has changed within the last couple years. Contact information pertaining to newly assigned individuals will be provided to RRT-7.

### **Open Forum – Part 1**

Kokko indicated that ATSDR would be challenged to identify federal points of contact during a period of government shutdown, particularly if designated RRT-7 representatives will have been furloughed. Kokko asked if each RRT-7 agency had an emergency phone number for use when normal means of contact are unavailable. Sams acknowledged that USCG's representatives to RRT-7 likely would be furloughed and unavailable during a shutdown. However, he noted that each USCG Sector Command and D8 District Command maintain 24-hour emergency numbers. These phone numbers are published at the front of the RICP. Ruiz added that EPA staff would provide an appropriate contact in their out-of-office message, if unavailable during furlough.

### **Subarea Reports**

#### **Central Kansas Wetlands Subarea, EPA FOOSC Daniel O'Crowley**

- EPA, KDHE, and Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC) responded to a discharge of "produced water" from an oil lease to Rattlesnake Creek on September 12, 2023. The discharge occurred immediately upstream from the Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. The subarea contingency plan was used to obtain contact information and to facilitate coordination among responding agencies.
- Oil Spill Response Training is scheduled for October 5, 2023, in Hayesville, Kansas.
- Updates to the subarea's web map application are in progress.
- Training on the subarea web map will occur in conjunction with the next subarea meeting, tentatively scheduled for January 2024.

#### **Greater St. Louis Subarea, EPA FOOSC Sharon Kennedy on behalf of EPA FOOSC Joe Krauska**

- The most recent subarea meeting convened in St. Louis in May 2023, with the next meeting scheduled for November 1, 2023.
- Mississippi River on-water reconnaissance (recon) of UMR Pools 25 and 26 took place in August 2023. Some land-based recon activities are planned for upcoming winter and spring months.
- Subarea plan update is in progress.
- EPA and subarea members continue to coordinate with the UMR Spills Group, which is scheduled to meet October 31, 2023.

### **Siouxland Subarea, EPA FOSC Sharon Kennedy on behalf of EPA FOSC Brianne Stubblefield**

- EPA and numerous subarea member agencies participated in the Missouri National Recreational River Exercise and related trainings in Yankton, South Dakota during the week of April 24, 2023.
- Transportation Rail Incident Preparedness and Response (TRIPR) Training occurred in Sioux City, Iowa, on September 26, 2023.
- A subarea meeting is tentatively scheduled for December 2023, and an equipment deployment exercise (e.g., boom, skimmers, etc.) is under consideration by members.

### **South-Central Nebraska Subarea, EPA FOSC Tim Curry**

- A subarea meeting convened in Grand Island on May 2, 2023, and EPA attended a regional meeting of county emergency managers in August 2023.
- Planning continues for a large-area field data collection exercise scheduled for October 13-14, 2023. The exercise involves about 50 volunteers collecting damaged assessment and oil spill data in four subarea counties.
- A subarea plan update is in progress.

### **Omaha-Council Bluffs Subarea, FOSC John Frey**

- Subarea member agencies attended the recent TRIPR training in Sioux City.
- A subarea plan update is in progress.
- Coordination with industry partners on a potential TTX is occurring.

### **Great Rivers Subarea, EPA FOSC Sharon Kennedy**

- Four Mississippi River recon trips were completed between May and July 2023. About 26 river miles within the subarea remain to be reconned. Low river levels prohibited continuation of river recon activities.
- A virtual subarea meeting is planned for November 2023.

### **Quad Cities Subarea, EPA FOSC Joe Davis**

- A joint DOI/EPA exercise is planned for spring 2024 in the subarea.
- EPA continues to coordinate with the UMR Hazardous Spills Coordination Group.
- The group is considering training on the EPA's Mississippi River web map application.

### **Day 1 Presentations**

- *"Subpart J of the National Contingency Plan (NCP) Updates"* – Greg Wilson, EPA Headquarters
- *"Keystone Pipeline Response, OPA TC Energy Mill Creek"* – Jeff Pritchard, Region 7 EPA
- *"TC Energy Liquids MP 14 After Action Report Action Items"* – Brian Meyer, TC Energy
- *"Nationwide Permit (NWP) 20 and 27 Overview"* – Matt Mikulecky, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

### **Action Items**

No action items were identified during the first day of meeting.

### **Closing Remarks and Meeting Recess**

Co-Chairs thanked the group for their participation in the meeting, particularly individuals who delivered presentations. The meeting recessed at 16:05.



## Thursday, September 28th

After Sams welcomed the group to the second day of the meeting, Ruiz introduced Alternate EPA Co-Chair Heath Smith to facilitate a TTX involving a train derailment, hazmat spills/discharges, and fire. Ruiz asked the group to convey agency's information needs and likely response actions as if the incident occurred in their home jurisdiction and they participated in an ISRRT activation conference call. Based on the exercise scenario and questions posed to the group, the following comments and observations were provided:

- The impacted waterway should be secured. USCG Strike Team assistance should be considered to support these operations if the incident timeline allows.
- Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) would be extremely helpful in several tasks, including identification of hazards, spill/plume trajectories, and locations of downwind/downstream receptors. DOI, certain USCG sectors, and local public safety agencies reportedly possess UAV/drone capabilities.
- A local agency should request a temporary flight restriction (TFR) for the area. The Federal Aviation Administration can implement the TFR and allow exceptions for UAVs to operate.
- It was noted that UAVs are not known to be rated for intrinsic safety necessary for safe operation within flammable atmospheres.
- While a state representative would integrate into Unified Command, states maintain limited response capabilities for such an incident and would be challenged to provide significant support for timely water sampling and air monitoring operations.
- States would request an ISRRT activation if duration of the incident is expected to exceed one operational period. EPA likely would be contacted by states to request the activation; however, USCG may be contacted if impacts on waterway(s) are of major concern. Additionally, any serious consideration for use of a chemical or bioremediation countermeasure (CBC) would elicit an immediate request for ISRRT activation.
- Noted was that the first federal official on the scene of the incident should coordinate information and initiate response actions per the NCP until the FOSC arrives.
- It was not clear whether any RRT-7 member agency would support air monitoring operations.
- DOI would notify local bureaus/offices and quickly determine if federal lands have been or could be impacted. Needs for ESA Section 7 consultations and Pollution Removal Funding Authorization (PRFA) would be anticipated.
- EPA public affairs staff would work with state and local public information officers (PIO) to develop a public messaging plan and establish a (physical) Joint Information Center (JIC), if necessary.
- Technical experts would be deployed to assess potential farm/animal impacts, as well as potential impacts on the larger food supply chain.
- The nearest National Weather Service office would provide ongoing weather forecasting services, and the Interagency Modeling and Atmospheric Assessment Center (IMAAC) could be contacted to provide atmospheric dispersion modeling and hazard prediction products.
- Tribes would need FOSC/RRT-7 support to oversee cleanup activities. Tribes that have a designated Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) would provide technical support to the FOSC for cleanup operations on culturally sensitive lands/sites. State Historic Preservation Offices/Officers (SHPO) having jurisdiction also should be contacted.

### USCG FOSCR Reports

#### **Sector UMR, USCG Chief Petty Officer (CPO) Brandon Shishido**

**Executive Summary.** Sector UMR recently underwent a large influx of new personnel. Nearly 50 percent of personnel, including CPO Shishido, are new to their assignments.



**Metrics/Trends/Challenges.** Shishido reported a significant increase in reported spills/discharges—more than twice the number notifications through the National Response Center (NRC) over the past six months than during the preceding six-month period. No ESA or National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) consultations occurred in association with the 88 incidents reported to the NRC.

**Significant Incidents/Events/Responses.** The following incident occurred since the last RRT-7 meeting:

- Mile Marker 347, UMR – Sunk Deck Barge and Excavator: On June 15, 2023, an uninspected towing vessel (UTV) was pinned under an unsecured barge and excavator. While only 30 gallons of oil were discharged, refloating the barge before refloating the UTV presented several unique challenges.

**Exercises/Trainings/Coordination.** Since the previous RRT-7 meeting, Sector personnel attended trainings on FOSCR, public relations, and Incident Command System (ICS). Coordination and preparedness activities included subarea meetings and participation in a multi-agency recon of the Mississippi River earlier this summer. Sector personnel also attended the 7th Annual Clean Waterways Conference and RRT-8 meeting.

Staff expect to conduct one more government-initiated unannounced exercises (GIUE) this year and three additional GIUEs in 2024. Other coordination activities include regular attendance of subarea meetings and RRT meetings, as well as the Clean Gulf Conference this November and 8th Annual Clean Waterways Conference in April 2024.

### **Sector Lower Mississippi River (LMR), USCG Lieutenant Commander (LCDR) Aaron Riutta**

**Executive Summary.** LCDR Riutta reported significant numbers of new personnel at Sector LMR. Riutta also described the Sector’s new UAV/drone program. While just one pilot has been certified thus far, six additional drone operators are slated for certification within the next 12 months.

**Metrics/Trends/Challenges.** Riutta reported that Sector LMR had received five oil discharge notifications and zero hazmat release notifications through the NRC since the previous RRT-7 meeting. No consultations involving ESA or NHPA issues occurred regarding these incidents.

**Exercises/Trainings/Coordination.** Since the last RRT-7 meeting, unit personnel have trained on the Oil Sample Handling and Transmittal Guide and received ICS (Environmental Unit Leader) training. Sector staff participated in an ICS exercise and workshop on emergency consultations. Staff were able to attend the Joint RRT-4/6 in May, and a joint EPA/USCG GIUE occurred in June 2023.

Upcoming activities include trainings on pollution regulations and transfer monitors. Training and exercises with the Drone Piloting Program are also anticipated in the coming months. Additionally, Sector personnel will complete at least one more GIUE in 2023.

### **Sector Ohio Valley, Marine Safety Unit (MSU) Paducah, USCG Marine Science Technician Petty Officer 2nd Class (MST2) John Doubleday**

**Executive Summary.** Low river levels resulted in increase of grounded vessels and restricted access to regulated facilities. Station Paducah also was unable to launch a small response boat for a Mississippi River recon trip because of low water. Consequently, unit personnel increasingly coordinate with local agencies that can assist with small boats if needed for pollution responses.

**Metrics/Trends/Challenges.** Since the previous RRT-7 meeting, the unit has received six NRC notifications: five oil discharge and one hazmat release notifications. No ESA or NHPA consultations occurred related to these incidents.

**Significant Incidents/Events/Responses.** The following incidents occurred since the last RRT-7 meeting:

- Mile Marker 42.5, UMR – Motor Vessel (M/V) City of Louisville: On August 2, 2023, M/V City of Louisville grounded on rocks during low water. Fluctuating water levels during salvage operations caused multiple small discharges of oily bilge water from the engine room and damaged steering pump systems.

An estimated 800 gallons of oil possibly was in the submerged engine room. An estimated 40 gallons discharged into the waterway. The salvage company used A-frame barges to sling the vessel and free it from the rocks.

***Exercises/Trainings/Coordination.*** Since the previous RRT-7 meeting, MSU Paducah personnel have attended an oil spill response course hosted by Sector Ohio Valley and FOSCR College at Sector Houston-Galveston. Unit staff also participated in a full-scale ICS exercise and completed one GIUE. MSU Paducah continued to assist EPA with Mississippi River recon activities in support of the Great Rivers Subarea Contingency Plan. Additionally, MSU staff have engaged Kentucky Department of Environmental Protection personnel to attend GIUEs.

Before the next RRT-7 meeting, Sector personnel will attend trainings on FOSCR roles/responsibilities, public relations, and ICS. MSU will continue to work with EPA and Station Paducah to complete recon of the remaining Mississippi River segment in support of the Great Rivers Subarea. Within the next two months, unit personnel will attend the Clean Gulf Conference, RRT-5 meeting, and RRT-4 meeting.

### **RRT-7 Priorities List**

With assistance from the RRT-7 Coordinators, Sams reviewed the RRT-7 Priorities List.

### **Open Forum – Part 2**

State representatives requested clarification on recent changes to the revised definition of “Waters of the United States” and how state response activities would be affected. The group agreed that a response to an actual discharge would not be affected by the changes.

Regarding the TTX, Chris Marcy of the National Pollution Funds Center (NPFC) reminded the group that claims on the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund should be submitted as soon as practical. Additionally, the fund can be used to support cleaning/rehabilitation of oiled wildlife, public information activities, and hiring of tribal members to work at culturally sensitive sites.

### **Action Items**

1. How much petroleum is typically added to ethanol to denature it? Does the blend vary? How common are transports of pure ethanol (ethyl alcohol)?
2. Are USCG Strike Teams developing drone capabilities, or do they already possess such capabilities?
3. Remind attendees to write their names on both sides of erasable table tents.

### **Dates of Next RRT Meetings**

Nold reported that, based on feedback he had received from the group, future RRT-7 meetings would likely convene at the EPA Region 7 Regional Office. He then reviewed the RRT-7 meeting schedule as follows:

- Spring 2024: EPA Region 7 Regional Office, March 27-28, 2024
- Fall 2024: EPA Region 7 Regional Office, September 25-26, 2024
- Spring 2025: EPA Region 7 Regional Office, March 26-27, 2025
- Fall 2025: EPA Region 7 Regional Office, September 24-25, 2025.

### **Closing Comments and Meeting Adjournment**

Ruiz expressed appreciation for participation and coordination efforts by those attending the meeting. Sams observed that the virtual component of meetings remains critical for maintaining communication among response partners who cannot always attend meetings in person. He reminded the group to call the RRT-7 EC as any issue or question arises throughout the year. The meeting adjourned at 11:18.

**Meeting Attendees (Day 1: 44 in-person and 23 remote, Day 2: 33 in-person and 19 remote, Total Participants: 70)**

Name	Organization	Phone	Email	Sept. 27th	Sept. 28th	Count
Ascherl, Joseph	Iowa Local Emergency Planning Commission	712-212-4247	joseph.ascherl@iowa.gov	X	X	1
Ashford, Kellen	U.S. EPA Region 7	816-610-2132	ashford.kellen@epa.gov	X		2
Beuthe, Michael	U.S. EPA Headquarters	732-770-6913	beuthe.michael@epa.gov	X*		3
Broughton, Adam	Iowa Department of Natural Resources	515-204-3352	adam.broughton@dnr.iowa.gov	X	X	4
Bruschi, Audra	National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) / National Weather service	816-200-1400	audra.bruschi@noaa.gov	X	X	5
Burgess, Kevin	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	303-236-4260	kevin_burgess@fws.gov	X*		6
Chiccine, Catherine	U.S. EPA Region 7	913-551-7917	chiccine.catherine@epa.gov	X	X	7
Ciurej, Amanda	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	308-379-6592	amanda_ciurej@fws.gov	X*	X*	8
Counihan, Sean	Missouri Department of Natural Resources	573-522-9279	sean.counihan@dnr.mo.gov	X	X	9
Curry, Tim	U.S. EPA Region 7	913-551-5129	curry.timothy@epa.gov	X	X	10
Davis, Adam	NOAA	206-549-7759	adam.davis@noaa.gov	X	X	11
Davis, Joe	U.S. EPA Region 7	913-551-7909	davis.joe@epa.gov	X*		12
Davis, Todd	U.S. EPA Region 7	913-551-7749	davis.todd@epa.gov	X	X	13
Days-Austin, Roslyn	U.S. Department of Agriculture	970-631-3380	rosalynn.days-austin@usda.gov	X*	X	14
DeGraffenreid, Jeff	Olathe Fire Department	913-284-8535	jpgdegraffenreid@olatheks.gov	X	X	15
Deselich, Eric	Region 7 START / Tetra Tech, Inc.	816-665-9088	eric.deselich@tetrattech.com	X	X	16
DiDomenico, Raquel	Federal Emergency Management Agency R7	816-283-7061	raquel.didomenico@fema.dhs.gov	X	X*	17
Dom, Joseph	Kansas Department of Health and Environment	785-296-1914	joe.dom@ks.gov	X	X	18
Doubleday, John	USCG, Marine Safety Unit Paducah	270-442-1621	johnathan.j.doubleday@uscg.mil	X	X	19
Edwards, Jeffery	Nebraska Department of Environment & Energy	402-471-8309	jeffery.edwards@nebraska.gov	X*	X*	20
Ferguson, Doug	U.S. EPA Region 7	913-551-7221	ferguson.doug@epa.gov		X*	21
Frey, John	U.S. EPA Region 7	816-807-8805	frey.john@epa.gov	X		22
Gann, Rick	Missouri Department of Natural Resources	660-385-8016	rick.gann@dnr.mo.gov	X*	X*	23
Garner, Judd	Missouri Department of Natural Resources	573-526-3372	cody.garner@dnr.mo.gov	X	X	24
Gilbert, Ed	U.S. EPA Headquarters	202-566-0928	gilbert.edward@epa.gov	X*		25
Gutberlet, Chris	20th CBRNE Command	301-549-0788	christopher.j.gutberlet.civ@army.mil	X	X*	26
Hall, Wendell	Missouri Department of Natural Resources	417-838-0795	wendell.hall@dnr.mo.gov	X*	X*	27



Name	Organization	Phone	Email	Sept. 27th	Sept. 28th	Count
Hannon, Kenneth	Missouri Department of Natural Resources	573-526-4794	ken.hannon@dnr.mo.gov	X*	X*	28
Hensley, Dave	U.S. EPA Region 7	913-551-7768	hensley.dave@epa.gov	X	X*	29
Hingst, Page	Santee Sioux Nation	402-644-1627	page.hingst@santeeoep.com	X*	X*	30
Hoover, Courtney	U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI)	303-478-3373	courtney_hoover@ios.doi.gov	X*	X*	31
Jurgens, Bob	U.S. EPA Region 7	913-551-7283	jurgens.bob@epa.gov	X		32
Kennedy, Sharon	U.S. EPA Region 7	913-551-7958	kennedy.sharon@epa.gov	X	X	33
Kenney, Aleshia	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	309-757-5800	aleshia_kenney@fws.gov	X*	X*	34
Kilgore, Nathan	Burns & McDonnell	816-506-8137	nkilgore@burnsmcd.com	X	X*	35
Kokko, Cory	Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry	913-217-5981	guc0@cdc.gov	X	X	36
Kraidy, Donna	DOI, Bureau of Indian Affairs	505-563-3423	donna.kraidy@bia.gov	X*	X*	37
Krueger, John	USCG, Sector Lower Mississippi River	901-833-0345	john.l.krueger@uscg.mil	X	X	38
Kulp, Samuel	USCG, Marine Safety Unit Paducah	270-442-1621	samuel.w.kulp@uscg.mil	X	X	39
Lueckenhoff, Leslie	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	573-540-3831	leslie_lueckenhoff@fws.gov	X*		40
Mammoliti, Kirk	U.S. EPA Region 7	913-551-7902	mammoliti.kirk@epa.gov		X	41
Marcy, Chris	USCG, National Pollution Funds Center	202-795-6092	christopher.marcy@uscg.mil		X*	42
McCoy, Shane	Kansas Department of Health and Environment	785-296-1679	shane.mccoy@ks.gov	X	X	43
McLane, Stephen	Missouri Emergency Response Commission	573-526-9237	stephen.mclane@sema.dps.mo.gov	X*	X*	44
Meyer, Brian	TC Energy Corporation	402-492-7408	brian_meyer@tcenergy.com	X	X	45
Miesner, John	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	785-539-3474	john_miesner@fws.gov	X*		46
Mikulecky, Matthew	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Kansas City Dist.	785-289-3025	matthew.j.mikulecky@usace.army.mil	X		47
Morrow, Kirk	Nebraska Dept of Environment & Energy	402-471-8584	kirk.morrow@nebraska.gov	X	X	48
Nichols, Ky	U.S. DOT, PHMSA Central Region	9182404047	ky.nichols@dot.gov	X		49
Nold, Eric	U.S. EPA Region 7	913-551-7488	nold.eric@epa.gov	X	X	50
Peterson, Todd	USCG, Eighth District	228-249-1105	todd.m.peterson@uscg.mil	X	X	51
Pickett, Angela	U.S. DOT, PHMSA Central Region	816 329-3823	angela.pickett@dot.gov	X	X*	52
Principe, Vanessa	U.S. EPA Headquarters	202-564-7913	principe.vanessa@epa.gov	X*		53
Pritchard, Jeff	U.S. EPA Region 7	913-551-7772	pritchard.jeffrey@epa.gov	X		54
Reding, William	U.S. Department of Energy	240-474-2774	william.reding@nnsa.doe.gov	X		55
Riutta, Aaron	USCG, Sector Lower Mississippi River	901-521-4747	aaron.l.riutta@uscg.mil	X	X	56



Name	Organization	Phone	Email	Sept. 27th	Sept. 28th	Count
Riwai-Couch, Cara	DOI, Bureau of Reclamation	303-445-2538	criwaicouch@usbr.gov	X*		57
Ruiz, Adam	U.S. EPA Region 7	913-551-7926	ruiz.adam@epa.gov	X	X	58
Sams, Michael	USCG, Eighth District	504-671-2234	michael.k.sams@uscg.mil	X	X	59
Schlafer, Jon	Defense Coordinating Element VII	210-845-9472	jon.d.schlafer.civ@army.mil	X	X	60
Seastrom, Michael	Kansas Department of Health and Environment	7852964298	michael.j.seastrom@ks.gov	X	X	61
Shishido, Brandon	USCG, Sector Upper Mississippi River	314-269-2566	brandon.l.shishido@uscg.mil	X	X	62
Smith, Delbert	Kansas Department of Health and Environment	785-368-7301	delbert.smith@ks.gov	X	X	63
Smith, Heath	U.S. EPA Region 7	816-718-4277	smith.heath@epa.gov	X	X	64
Smith, Yvonne	U.S. EPA Region 7	913-551-7795	smith.yvonne@epa.gov	X*	X*	65
Suleiman, Gibran	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	785-565-3586	gibran_suleiman@fws.gov	X*	X*	66
Walker, Jason	U.S. EPA Headquarters	202-566-0297	walker.jason@epa.gov	X*		67
Wenzel, Paul	USCG, Marine Safety Unit Paducah	270-442-1621	paul.a.wenzel@uscg.mil	X	X	68
Weyand, Kevin	Olathe Fire Department	913-971-7955	kweyand@olatheks.org	X		69
Wilson, Greg	U.S. EPA Headquarters	202-5647-989	wilson.gregory@epa.gov	X*		70

Note:

\* Attended remotely



**ACRONYM & ABBREVIATION LIST**

ACE	Assessment of Chemical Exposures
ACP	Area Contingency Plan
ASPR	Administration for Strategic Preparedness & Response
ATSDR	Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
CBC	Chemical and Bioremediation Countermeasure
CBRN	Chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear
CBRNE	CBRN and explosives
COOP	Continuity of Operations
CPO	Chief Petty Officer
D8	U.S. Coast Guard Eighth District
DCE	Defense Coordinating Element
DCO	Defense Coordinating Officer
DOD	U.S. Department of Defense
DOE	U.S. Department of Energy
DOI	U.S. Department of the Interior
EC	Executive Committee
EER	Environmental Emergency Response (MoDNR)
EMAC	Emergency Management Assistance Compact
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
EPCRA	Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FOSC	Federal On-Scene Coordinator
FOSCR	Federal On-Scene Coordinator Representative
GIUE	Government-initiated unannounced exercise
Hazmat	Hazardous material
HPAI	Highly Pathogenetic Avian Influenza
HSEM	Homeland Security and Emergency Management (Iowa)
ICS	Incident Command System
IDNR	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
IMAAC	Interagency Modeling and Atmospheric Assessment Center
ISRRT	Incident-Specific Regional Response Team
JIC	Joint Information Center
KAR	<i>Kansas Administrative Regulation</i>
KCC	Kansas Corporation Commission
KDHE	Kansas Department of Health and Environment
KSA	<i>Kansas Statutes Annotated</i>
LCDR	Lieutenant Commander
LEPC	Local Emergency Planning Committee
LMR	Lower Mississippi River

**ACRONYM & ABBREVIATION LIST (Continued)**

MO	Missouri
MoDNR	Missouri Department of Natural Resources
MST2	Marine Science Technician Petty Officer 2nd Class
MSU	Marine Safety Unit
M/V	Motor Vessel
NBAF	National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility
NCP	National (Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution) Contingency Plan
NDEE	Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy
NHIT	Nebraska Hazardous Incident Team
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NPFC	National Pollution Funds Center
NRC	National Response Center
NSGP	Nonprofit Security Grant Program
NWP	Nationwide Permit
OET	Office of Emerging Threats (FEMA)
PHMSA	Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (U.S. Department of Transportation)
PIO	Public Information Officers
PRFA	Pollution Removal Funding Authorization
QA/QC	Quality Assurance / Quality Control
Recon	Reconnaissance
RICP	Regional Integrated Contingency Plan
RISC	Regional Interagency Steering Committee
RRT	Regional Response Team
SCAT	Shoreline cleanup and assessment technique
SEMA	State Emergency Management Agency
SEMD	Superfund and Emergency Management Division
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office/Officer
SMART	Special Monitoring of Applied Response Technologies
START	Superfund Technical Assessment and Response Team
TFR	Temporary Flight Restriction
Tetra Tech	Tetra Tech, Inc.
THPO	Tribal Historic Preservation Office/Officer
TRIPR	Transportation Rail Incident Preparedness and Response
TTX	Tabletop exercise
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UMR	Upper Mississippi River
UMRBA	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USCG	U.S. Coast Guard
UTV	Uninspected Towing Vessel