

## **BACKGROUND: PART ONE - SUPPORT INFORMATION**

### **A. SUBAREA PLAN**

This Subarea Contingency Plan (SCP) supplements the *Alaska Federal/State Preparedness Plan for Response to Oil and Hazardous Substance Discharges/Releases* (the Unified Plan). The SCP in conjunction with the Unified Plan describes the strategy for a coordinated federal, state and local response to a discharge or substantial threat of discharge of oil or a release of a hazardous substance from a vessel, offshore facility, or onshore facility operating within the boundaries of the Subarea of Southeast Alaska. This plan shall be used as a framework for response mechanisms and as a pre-incident guide to identify weaknesses and to evaluate shortfalls in the response structure before an incident. The plan also offers parameters for vessel and facility response plans under OPA 90. Any review for consistency between government and industry plans should address the recognition of economically and environmentally sensitive areas and the related protection strategies, as well as a look at the response personnel and equipment (quantity and type) available within the area (including federal, state, and local government and industry) in comparison to probable need during a response.

### **B. SUBAREA DESCRIPTION**

For its planning process, the federal government has designated the entire state of Alaska as a planning “region” and the southeast portion of the state as a planning “area.” The State of Alaska has divided the state into ten planning “regions” of which one is the Southeast Region. As part of the unified planning process, this SCP addresses the Southeast area or region, and to avoid any confusion in terms, the region is referred to as the Southeast Subarea.

The Southeast Subarea is comprised of the State of Alaska southeast of a straight line commencing at 60-01.3 degrees north latitude, 142 degrees west latitude, thence proceeding northeasterly to its end at the international boundary between the United States and Canada at 60-18.7 degrees north latitude, 141 degrees west longitude. The offshore boundary is 142-00 degrees west longitude from shore to the offshore extent of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) thence southerly and easterly along the boundary of the EEZ to the international boundary at Dixon Entrance. This area includes all of Southeast Alaska from Dixon Entrance to the south up to and including Icy Cape to the north.

This Southeast Subarea matches the area of responsibility for the USCG MSO Juneau Marine Inspection and Captain of the Port Zone and is identical in area to that identified in State of Alaska statute as the Southeast Region. (Geographic boundary coordinates for MSO Juneau are detailed in Title 33, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 3.85-10.)

**FIGURE 1: THE SOUTHEAST SUBAREA**

### C. AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY

This Subarea Contingency Plan covers the region outlined above in subpart B. The USCG Captain of the Port (COTP) is the predesignated FOSC for the Coastal Zone which encompasses all navigable waters seaward of the mean high tide line and an area of shoreline 1,000 yards inland of the coastline. The Environmental Protection Agency is the predesignated FOSC for the Inland Zone which encompasses all lands, rivers, streams, and drainages inland of the 1000-yard wide band which parallels the Alaskan coastline. These zones are clearly defined in the Unified Plan. It is possible that incidents may occur in locations that do not fall under federal jurisdiction and there will be no FOSC in these instances.

The State of Alaska places jurisdiction of spill response for the Southeast Subarea under the Southeast Alaska Response Team (SART) of the Department of Environmental Conservation. The SOSC for the SART is the predesignated SOSC for the entire Southeast Subarea.

Memoranda of Understanding/Agreement (MOU/MOA) between the USCG/USEPA and the USEPA/State of Alaska further delineate the OSC responsibilities. **Annex K of the Unified Plan** includes copies of these MOUs/MOAs.

#### **D. MULTIAGENCY COORDINATION COMMITTEE**

A regional Multiagency Coordination Committee (MAC) will normally be activated for significant incidents which involve resources under the jurisdiction of several agencies. Unlike the MAC defined in the ICS of the National Interagency Incident Management System, regional MACs for spill response do not play a direct role in setting incident priorities or allocating resources. The MAC advises the Unified Command (through the Community Liaison Officer) and provides comments and recommendations on incident priorities, objectives and action plans.

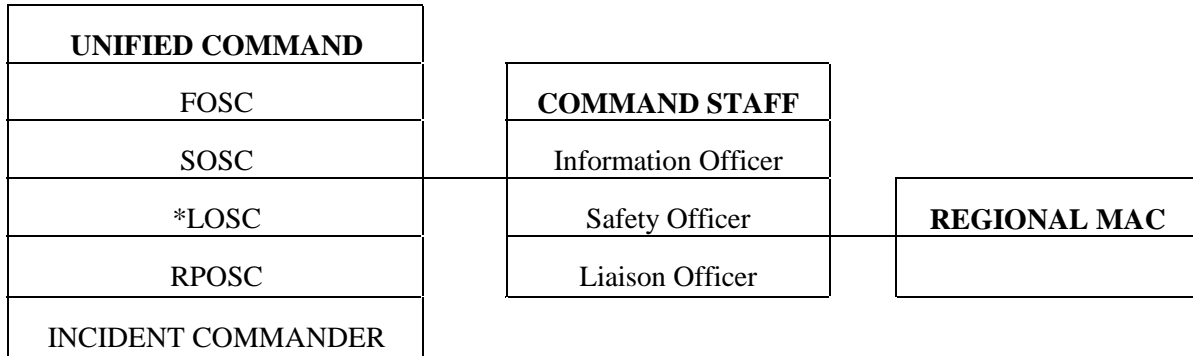
Figure 2 provides the general location of the regional MAC in relation to the Unified Command organizational structure. Additionally, the suggested/potential membership of the MAC is provided in Figure 2. Membership on the MAC is dependent upon the location of the incident and the interests or jurisdiction of the affected communities, landowners, and special interest groups. During incidents where there is no FOSC, federal agencies with jurisdictional responsibilities for resources at risk could participate as a member of the MAC, thus retaining their input on containment, oversight, and cleanup.

As indicated above, the MACs are not directly involved in tactical operations, though some of its members may be. The MACs' role is to convey to the Unified Command information relating to the authority, concerns and expertise of its members. It recommends to the Unified Command overall objectives and priorities and reviews the Incident Action Plans.

MAC activities will be coordinated by the Community Liaison Officer. The MAC will be chaired initially by the Community Liaison Officer. After convening, the MAC will then elect its own chair. MAC discussions will be documented and recommendations and dissenting opinions will be communicated to the Unified Command through the Liaison Officer.

**FIGURE 2**

**Southeast Subarea  
Multiagency Coordination Committee**



Suggested MAC Membership:

- Representatives or Community Emergency Coordinators from affected communities. These may include:
  - Juneau
  - Haines
  - Petersburg
  - Angoon
  - Thorne Bay
  - Klawock
  - Hyder
  - Saxman
  - Hoonah
  - Hydaburg
  - Yakutat
  - Ketchikan
  - Sitka
  - Wrangell
  - Gustavus
  - Pelican
  - Meyers Chuck
  - Kake
  - Metlakatla
  - Craig
  - Kasaan
  - Elfin Cove
- Federal/state/local or private landowners and leaseholders (e.g., National Parks Service, Alaska Dept of Natural Resources)
- Native corporations, organizations and communities
- Environmental or conservation groups
- Special interest groups affected by the incident

**E.      SUBAREA COMMITTEE**

The primary role of the Subarea Committee is to act as a preparedness and planning body for the subarea under the leadership of the FOSCs and SOSCs for the entire State of Alaska. The Subarea Committee consists of the predesignated FOSCs and SOSC for the subarea and, depending upon the event or the issues to be addressed, local government representatives . Each member is empowered by their own agency to make decisions on behalf of the agency and to commit the agency to carrying out roles and responsibilities as described in this plan and the Unified Plan.

The Subarea Committee is encouraged to solicit advice, guidance or expertise from all appropriate sources and establish subcommittees as necessary to accomplish the preparedness and planning tasks. Subcommittee participants may include facility owners/operators, shipping company representatives, cleanup contractors, emergency response officials, marine pilot associations, academia, environmental groups, consultants, response organizations and representatives from regional citizens advisory councils.

**Subarea Committee Members**

The Southeast Subarea Committee is comprised of the following:

U.S. Coast Guard, COTP Juneau  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation  
and local government where applicable

### **Subarea Work Groups**

The Southeast Subarea Committee relies on the input from the three work groups listed below. The Subarea Committee welcomes interested participants to serve on work groups in accordance with each individual's area of expertise and the particular needs of the work groups.

The Sensitive Areas Work Group is chaired by a representative from the Department of Interior

The Logistics Work Group is chaired by a representative from the ADEC.

The Operations Work Group is chaired by a representative from the U.S. Coast Guard.

Membership on the work groups can vary and fluctuate but the list below provides some of the regular participants:

- City & Borough of Juneau
- Haines Borough
- Ketchikan Gateway Borough
- City of Petersburg
- City and Borough of Sitka
- City of Wrangell
- representatives from LEPCs and local governments
- Petro Marine Corp.
- SEAPRO
- representatives from other industry and commercial concerns
- U.S. Coast Guard, COTP, MSO Juneau
- USCG 17th District
- U.S. Department of Interior, Office of Environmental Affairs
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Forest Service
- National Marine Fisheries Service
- NOAA Scientific Support Coordinator
- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources

## **BACKGROUND: PART TWO - RESPONSE POLICY AND STRATEGIES**

The strategy for responding to a specific spill or hazmat incident depends upon numerous factors. The strategy can change as the situation changes. As a general rule, the strategies listed below should be used as a guide in developing an effective response. Consider all factors that may affect the particular situation and revise/modify/expand these priorities as the situation dictates. The strategies are further delineated in the procedures and checklists contained in the Response Section, Parts Two and Three. Additional information can be found in the **Unified Plan**.

### **A. FEDERAL RESPONSE ACTION PRIORITIES/STRATEGIES**

The following priorities are general guidelines for response to a pollution incident within the COTP Southeast Alaska zone. They are based on the premise that the safety of life is of paramount importance in any pollution incident, with the protection of property and the environment, although important, being secondary. Nothing in this part is meant to indicate that higher priority items must be completed before performing a lower priority task. They may be carried out simultaneously or in the most logical sequence for each individual incident.

Priority One - Safety of Life - for all incidents which may occur, the safety of personnel, including response personnel, must be given absolute priority. No personnel are to be sent into an affected area without first determining the hazards involved and that adequate precautions have been taken to protect personnel.

Priority Two - Safety of Vessel/Facility and Cargo - the facility and/or vessel and its cargo shall become the second priority.

Priority Three - Protection of the Environment by elimination of the pollution source - containment and recovery of oil in the open water must be effected expeditiously to preclude involvement of the beaches and shorelines. All of Southeast Alaska is considered environmentally sensitive. Due to remote locations and restricted accessibility, it is extremely difficult to protect the majority of the coastline by diversion or exclusion methods. Therefore, securing the source and open water containment and recovery is especially critical and should normally be the first line of defense to protect the environment. Likewise, spills which occur on land or in upland water courses will be dammed, boomed, diked, etc., as feasible to prevent the spread of the pollutant downstream. NOTE: In-situ burning (Annex F for checklist) of a vessel and its pollutant may be an alternative considered by the OSC which places environmental protection priorities above saving the vessel and its cargo.

Priority Four - Protection of the Environment by diversion/exclusion, dispersion, or *in situ* burning. In the event that the location of a spill or the weather conditions do not permit open water recovery, protection of the shoreline becomes paramount, especially areas of greatest sensitivity. It is not possible to protect some areas entirely or even in part. It may be necessary to sacrifice some areas in order to achieve the best overall protection of the environment. The OSC may consider *in situ* burning as a response option. Refer to the **Unified Plan** for an *in situ* burning checklist. The use of dispersants must be considered early in the response phase while the oil is in the open water. Subpart J of the NCP, Annex

X of the RCP, and the **Unified Plan** address in detail the responsibilities of the OSC in the use of chemicals.

Priority Five - Protection of the Environment by beach cleanup and the use of “sacrificial areas.” It may not be possible to protect the entire shoreline from oil. In fact, it may be allowed purposely to come ashore in some areas as an alternative to damaging others. Selection of the proper shoreline cleanup technique depends on many different factors including the following:

- Type of substrate
- Amount of oil on the shoreline
- Depth of oil in the sediment
- Type of oil (tar balls, pooled oil, viscous coating, etc.)
- Trafficability of equipment on the shoreline
- Environmental or cultural sensitivity of the oil shoreline
- Prevailing oceanographic and meteorological conditions

The best way to minimize debate over the most appropriate response is to involve all interested government and private agencies. The shoreline assessment groups shall attempt to agree on the amount and character of the oil that is on the shorelines, anticipate interactions between the stranded oil and the environment, and the geological and ecological environment of the involved shorelines. Once a consensus is met, a process is necessary to determine the proper treatment required.

Shoreline cleanup options may include the use of physical and/or chemical processes. Chemical shoreline cleanup products may increase the efficiency of water-washing during the cleanup of contaminated shorelines. However, the product must be listed on the EPA National Contingency Plan Product Schedule and authorization must be obtained from the ARRT and the government on-scene coordinator at the spill. Physical shoreline cleaning methods include techniques such as: natural recovery, manual sorbent application, manual removal of oiled materials, low pressure flushing (ambient temperature), vacuum trucks, warm water washing, high pressure flushing, manual scraping, mechanical removal using heavy equipment. Bioremediation is also considered as a shoreline cleaning method. Bioremediation is the application of nutrients to the shoreline to accelerate the natural biodegradation of oil. The OSC shall request the RRT to provide site-specific guidelines for source protection measures required during shoreline cleanup operations.

## **B. STATE OF ALASKA RESPONSE PRIORITIES**

1. Safety
2. Public Health
3. Source Mitigation
4. Environment
5. Cleanup
6. Restoration
7. Cost Recovery

## **BACKGROUND: PART THREE - AREA SPILL HISTORY**

### **A. NAVIGABLE WATERS SPILL HISTORY**

Southeast Alaska supports a wide variety of vessel traffic, everything from small recreational boats up to medium-sized tank ships and large cruise ships. Numerous opportunities exist for spills to occur due to the high volume of vessel traffic, the pervasive natural navigational hazards, and the large volume of oil products transported in the region.

Crude oil is not transported in SE Alaska. However, Trans Alaska Pipeline Service (TAPS) tankers regularly transit between 175-200 miles off the outer coast of the region. On two separate occasions between 1984 and 1990, major spills have occurred as the result of small hull fractures that slowly released North Slope Crude oil over long distances before the problem was discovered. No environmental damage or shoreline impact was ever recorded. The most persistent oil transported in the region is #6 bunker fuel oil which is transported in bulk to the pulp mill in Ketchikan and carried as bunker fuel aboard cruise ships and some transiting freighters.

The largest actual persistent oil spill for SE Alaska occurred on Christmas Day, 1979 when the M/V *Lee Wang Zin* capsized in Dixon Entrance, drifted into Alaska waters, and discharged about 200,000 gallons of #6 bunker fuel. The oil traveled with the prevailing winds and currents at about one mile per hour. Maximum extent of the oil reached Port Alexander on the southern tip of Baranof Island. About 350 miles of shoreline were initially oiled and cleanup activity lasted until April 25, 1980. Approximately 25,000 gallons of oil were recovered. Over 2,600 cords of oil-soaked wood were burned.

The next largest spill of #6 bunker oil occurred in 1984 when approximately 1000 gallons discharged from a ruptured fuel line at the Mt. Edgecumbe facility in Sitka Harbor. Boom was deployed and a large portion of the oil was recovered with skimmers.

The majority of oil spilled in SE Alaska is refined products - diesel, kerosene, aviation and automotive fuel. These products are carried primarily aboard tank barges originating in Seattle and destined to a variety of commercial users in the cities, towns, camps, mills, and mines in the region. These carriers use the Inside Passage for most all deliveries. On the majority of spills, little if any product is recovered due to the rapid dissipation of the product, the sea and weather conditions, and the often remote locations of the incidents. When response equipment is deployed, it usually involves the use of sorbent materials to collect the fuel and boom to prevent oil from entering sensitive areas or to encircle the source to prevent the spread of oil.

The largest vessels transporting refined products in the region are the tankships *Frank H. Brown* (48,000 bbls), and the *Coast Range* (262,000 bbls). The *Frank H. Brown* transits from Vancouver, B.C. to Skagway, and the *Coast Range* transits only to the Union facility in Ketchikan.

On average, 300-500 non-persistent oil spills are reported annually in SE Alaska to the USCG or the ADEC. The majority of these spills are less than 15 gallons and result mostly from bilge pumping operations, fuel tank overflows, or mystery spills. Cleanup is usually not required or possible due to a combination of rapid natural dispersion and travel time to scene. Fishing vessels account for the majority of spills in the 50-300 gallon range. Many of these releases result from vessels sinking in remote locations. Sitka, Ketchikan, and Petersburg have the largest fishing fleets in the region.

Spills larger than 500 gallons have occurred as a result of tank barge or tank ship groundings, fish processor sinkings, cruise ship discharges, and pipeline ruptures at land storage facilities. Southeast Alaska has had 10 spills of greater than 1000 gallons from tank barge or ship groundings, due primarily to the navigation hazards associated with narrow channels and bedrock shoals. Response operations have generally proven ineffective in removing oil from the water due to adverse weather and ocean current conditions, the often lengthy travel time to the incident location, and the lack of product concentration as a result of rapid natural dispersion and evaporation.

Some of the larger examples of refined product spills include the following:

<b>DATE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>SOURCE</b>	<b>GALLONS (DIESEL)</b>	<b>CAUSE</b>
12/05/73	Sitka Sound	Tank Barge	4,500	Grounding
08/05/79	Sitka Sound	Tank Barge	2,800	Grounding
11/15/82	Wrangell Narrows	Tank Barge	32,631	Grounding
11/18/82	Frederick Sound	Tank Barge	29,000	Grounding
04/01/83	Skagway	Facility	50,000	Pipeline Rupture
04/08/84	Hydaburg	Tank Barge	40,000	Grounding
05/15/84	Hoonah	Tank Barge	7,000	Grounding
10/25/85	Tongass Narrows	Tank Barge	1,500	Unknown
04/08/86	Wrangell Narrows	Tank Barge	77,280	Grounding
02/25/87	Hydaburg	Tank Barge	9,000	Grounding
10/27/87	Wrangell Narrows	Tank Barge	16,597	Grounding
01/26/88	Wrangell Narrows	Tank Ship	4,494	Grounding
09/00/88	Dora Bay	Freight Ship	30,000	Grounding
09/15/89	Tongass Narrows	Fish Processor	20,000	Sinking
01/14/94	Juneau	Tank Farm	undetermined	Collapse
10/05/94	Skagway	Pipeline	2,000	Landslide
05/01/95	Douglas	Heating Tank	5,000	Rupture
12/01/95	Lynn Canal	Tug	5,000	Sinking
04/18/96	Hoonah	Cargo Barge	7,000	Grounding
09/05/96	Ketchikan, Ward Cove	Business	3,000	Leak
10/21/96	Ketchikan, Ward Cove	Business	3,500	Overfill

In July 1991, a private report conducted by Arthur D. Little, Inc. assessed the threat of non-crude oil spills from tank vessels in Alaska. The study was commissioned by the State of Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. Key findings from that report concerning SE Alaska are:

\*Southeast Alaska is the most spill-prone region in Alaska, but the average spill size is less than 15 gallons.

\*Wrangell Narrows is the single area in all of Alaska that has had the most incidents and stands out as a high risk area. Except for Wrangell Narrows, all other spills are widely distributed without correlation to specific routes.

\*The Southeast region received the highest hazard ranking in the state due to the highest number of spills, relatively large volume of non-crude oils transported, physical hazards (narrow channels, high currents, bedrock-dominated waters), and the proximity of numerous sensitive resources to the main transport routes.

\*Of all the regions in the state, non-crude oil transport in Southeast Alaska poses the greatest threat. Because of the nearness of the shipping lanes to coastal areas, spills can be expected to impact the coastal area, particularly the wetlands and sheltered coves, with great rapidity. The spilled oil is also extremely difficult to control due to strong currents and the rapid natural dispersion of the oil.

## **BACKGROUND: PART FOUR - ABBREVIATIONS and ACRONYMS**

ACP	Area Contingency Plan
ACS	Alaska Clean Seas (North Slope industry cooperative)
ADEC	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
ADF&G	Alaska Department of Fish and Game, also as ADFG
ADNR	Alaska Department of Natural Resources
ADOT&PF	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, also as ADOTPF
AFB	Air Force Base
ANSC	Alaska North Slope Crude oil
ARRT	Alaska Regional Response Team
BBLs	Barrels
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BOA	Basic Ordering Agreement
CART	Central Area Response Team (ADEC)
CCGD 17	Commander, Coast Guard District 17
CISPRI	Cook Inlet Spill Prevention and Response Inc. (industry cooperative)
COTP	Captain of the Port (USCG)
CTAG	Cultural Technical Advisory Group
DOD	Department of Defense
DOI	Department of the Interior
DRAT	District Response Advisory Team
DRG	District Response Group
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency, also as USEPA
ESI	(Alaskan) Environmental Sensitivity Index
F/V	Fishing Vessel
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FOSC	Federal On-Scene Coordinator
GIS	Geographic Information System
GSA	General Services Administration
HAZMAT	Hazardous Materials, also as hazmat
HAZWOPER	Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response
ICS	Incident Command System
IDLH	Immediate Danger to Life and Health
INMARSAT	International Maritime Satellite Organization
JPO	Joint Pipeline Office (gov't agencies involved with managing/regulating TAPS)
LEPC	Local Emergency Planning Committee
LEPD	Local Emergency Planning District
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
MAC	Multiagency Committee
M/V	Motor Vessel
MLT	Municipal Lands Trustee Program
MOA	Memoranda of Agreement
MOU	Memoranda of Understanding
MSO	Marine Safety Office (USCG)
MSRC	Marine Spill Response Corp. (national industry cooperative)
NART	Northern Area Response Team (ADEC)

NIST	National Institute of Standards and Technology
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NOTAMS	Notice to All Mariners; also, Notice to Airmen
NPDES	National Pollution Discharge Elimination System
NPFC	National Pollution Fund Center
NRC	National Response Center
NRT	National Response Team
NRDA	(Federal/State) Natural Resource Damage Assessment
NSF	National Strike Force
NSFCC	National Strike Force Coordinating Center
NWR	NOAA Weather Radio
OHMSETT	Oil and Hazardous Material Simulated Environment Test Tank
OPA 90	Oil Pollution Act of 1990
OPCEN	Operations Center
OSC	On-Scene Coordinator
OSRO	Oil Spill Response Office
PIAT	Public Information Assist Team
PIO	Public Information Officer
POLREP	Pollution Report (USCG)
PWS	Prince William Sound
RCAC	Regional Citizens Advisory Council
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1978
RP	Responsible Party
RRT	Regional Response Team
SART	Southeast Area Response Team (ADEC)
SCBA	Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus
SCP	Subarea Contingency Plan
SERVS	Ship Escort Response Vessel Service (for Alyeska terminal in Valdez)
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer (ADNR)
SITREP	Situation Report (ADEC)
SONS	Spill of National Significance
SOSC	State On-Scene Coordinator
SSC	Scientific Support Coordinator (NOAA)
SUPSALV	U.S. Navy Superintendent of Salvage, also as NAVSUPSALV
TAPS	Trans Alaska Pipeline System
T/V	Tank Vessel
USCG	United States Coast Guard
VIRS	Visual Information Response System
VTS	Vessel Traffic Separation System/Scheme