



16480
June 25, 2003

Plan Holders
Prince William Sound Tanker Escort and Response Plan

Dear Plan Holder:

On June 17, 2003, we sent notification of the National Preparedness for Response Exercise Program (NPREP) being sponsored by the U.S. Coast Guard. In response to that letter, we have received several inquiries regarding the scope, intent, and structure of the government led NPREP exercise scheduled for 2004.

Coast Guard Headquarters coordinates scheduling for NPREP Area Exercises on a triennial basis and that schedule is posted in the Federal Register. The National Strike Force Coordination Center is responsible for facilitating government led area exercises. These exercises should be viewed as an opportunity for plan holders to make continuous improvements to their response plans and to their response system, thereby improving the community's ability to coordinate a response effort. Plan holders can use issues that arise during the evaluation of the exercise to make necessary changes to their response plans to maintain the highest level of preparedness.

Some of the features of the NPREP program are:

- Planning is conducted by a Joint Design Team (JDT) comprised of Federal, State, and industry representatives. The exercise design is based on the selected industry's response plans and the Area Contingency Plans, in this case, the Prince William Sound Subarea Contingency Plan;
- Can vary in length from 8-12 hours to several days;
- Develop objectives from the 15 response plan core components of PREP. These can be found at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/nsfwweb/nsfcc/prep/index.html>;
- The scenario should be detailed enough to support the formation of a Unified Command (UC) and focus participant activities on accomplishing the objectives;
- Participation of the Area Response Mechanism. This mechanism is comprised of Spill Management Teams (SMT), a UC, and an appropriate command post;
- An equipment deployment of at least Tier 1 response assets in keeping with the scenario is included to exercise the SMT and UC;
- Organizations fund their own participation;
- Participants will evaluate the exercise and provide input for an after action report;
- The participating COTP will provide certification of "Area Exercise Credit" to the industry plan holder following completion of the evaluation report. This credit is good for six (6) years.

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Please consider taking the opportunity to support our commitment to effective oil spill response by volunteering to participate as the industry leader in PREP 2004. It is important that we identify an industry leader by August 1, 2003, to allow adequate time for planning, budgeting and resource scheduling. Additional information on PREP can be found at the following web address: <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/nmc/response/#PREP>. If you are interested in serving as industry leader, please contact LT Cathy Huot at (907) 835-7262.

Sincerely,

M.A. SWANSON
Commander
U.S. Coast Guard

Copy: Alyeska Pipeline Services Company/SERVS
Alaska Maritime and Cruise Line Agencies
Regional Citizens Advisory Council
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
D17(m/mor/osr/ole)
CG AIRSTA Kodiak