

Annex F

Volunteer Education Information Fact Sheet

Annex F: Regional Response Team Region 4 Volunteer Education Information Fact Sheet

Background:

The **Oil Pollution Act of 1990** (OPA 90) was passed by the United States Congress to prevent further oil spills from occurring in the United States after the Exxon Valdez oil spill. The OPA improved the nation's ability to prevent and respond to oil spills by establishing provisions that expand the federal government's ability, and provide the money and resources necessary, to respond to oil spills. OPA 90 also created the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund (OSLTF).

In addition, the OPA provided new requirements for contingency planning both by government and industry. The National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP) has been expanded in a three-tiered approach: the Federal government is required to direct all public and private response efforts for certain types of spill events; Area Committees -- composed of federal, state, and local government officials -- must develop detailed, location-specific Area Contingency Plans; and owners or operators of vessels and certain facilities that pose a serious threat to the environment must prepare their own Facility Response Plans.

What is the purpose of the **Unified Command**? A Unified Command allows agencies with different legal, geographic, and functional authorities and responsibilities to work together effectively without affecting individual agency authority, responsibility, or accountability to manage an incident. Under a Unified Command, a single, coordinated Incident Action Plan will direct all activities from within a single Incident Command Post (ICP).

The use of volunteers is addressed in the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP). 40 CFR Part 300.185 states:

“Area Contingency Plans (ACPs) shall establish procedures to allow for well organized, worthwhile, and safe use of volunteers, including compliance with § 300.150 regarding worker health and safety. ACPs should provide for the direction of volunteers by the OSC/RPM [On-Scene Coordinator/Remedial Project Manager] or by other federal, state, or local officials knowledgeable in contingency operations and capable of providing leadership. ACPs also should identify specific areas in which volunteers can be used, such as beach surveillance, logistical support, and bird and wildlife treatment. Unless specifically requested by the OSC/RPM, volunteers generally should not be used for physical removal or remedial activities. If, in the judgment of the OSC/ RPM, dangerous conditions exist, volunteers shall be restricted from on-scene operations.”

According to 31 U.S.C. 1342 and 10 U.S.C. 1588, CG FOSCs have the authority to use volunteers during emergency response operations.

Definitions:

The **Oil Spill Removal Organizations** (OSROs) are entities that provide response resources. The Coast Guard classification program was created in response to regulatory requirements established by OPA 90. The program is completely voluntary and its purpose is to assist oil-handling facilities and vessels in writing spill response plans. By listing a Coast Guard classified OSRO in a response plan, the plan holder is exempted from providing and updating extensive lists of response resources. This remains the only

regulatory benefit that plan holders receive from using a classified OSRO. An OSRO that does not have a Coast Guard classification may still be employed by a plan holder and may be listed in the plan, but must be listed along with its entire emergency response resource inventory.

This voluntary program provides a measurement of the degree of capability of an OSRO using variables such as the amount and type of equipment, its geographic location, and the OSRO's degree of control over its response resources (whether the resources are owned or contracted). The classification part of the program is only a planning tool and DOES NOT GUARANTEE THE PERFORMANCE of an OSRO. This program does not relieve the plan holders (facility or vessel) of their responsibility to determine whether an OSRO will meet specific planned response needs as required by 33 CFR 154 and 155.

The definitions section of the NCP includes “volunteer” as follows: **Volunteer** means any individual accepted to perform services by the lead agency which has authority to accept volunteer services (examples: See 16 U.S.C. 742f(c)). A volunteer is subject to the provisions of the authorizing statute and the NCP.

Affiliated Volunteers are those associated with a government (Federal, State, Local, and/or Tribal) agency or non-government organization (NGO) and have been trained for a specific role. Examples of AVOs are the Oiled Wildlife Care Network (OWCN), CG Auxiliary and the Tri-State Bird Rescue and Research Organization. Corporation for National & Community Service state volunteer coordinator contact information can be found at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/contact/stateoffices.asp>.

Unaffiliated Volunteers, also referred to as **convergent volunteers**, are those with no connection to a government agency or NGO (e.g. Incident Command Post (ICP) walk-in, individuals or groups with no response knowledge or training). There are two types of convergent volunteers; paid and unpaid.

Organizational Hierarchy:

The size and scale of the incident along with the number of willing volunteers will determine the degree of management and coordination required. Professionals will be needed to process, train, and supervise volunteers, space and equipment will also be required for these tasks, food, housing, and transportation may be needed, and safety equipment may also be required for volunteers. A position within the ICS structure will be assigned to coordinate these responsibilities for volunteers. Until a website can be established with more specific directions, the Liaison Officer can assist with initial requests.

Required Training:

Required training is based on functional responsibilities of each volunteer serving within the Incident Command System (ICS). All volunteers are required to have Introduction to Incident Command System (ICS) online course # IS 100 and an Introduction to the National Incident Management System (NIMS) online course # IS 700 (<http://www.training.fema.gov/IS/crslst.asp>), prior to check-in at the Incident Command Post.

Other training outlined under “Health and Safety” shall be assessed for volunteers based on the risk of potential exposure to chemical, physical, and biological hazards. Marine oil spill responders face a variety of health and safety hazards, including fire and explosion, oxygen deficiency, exposure to carcinogens and other chemical hazards, heat and cold stress, and safety hazards associated with working around heavy equipment in a marine environment.

Health and Safety:

Some States have federally approved State plans outlining health, safety, and training requirements based on HAZWOPER standards, further information can be found at <http://www.osha.gov/dcsp/osp/index.html>.

HAZWOPER training requirements are outlined in 29 CFR 1910.120 (q) and further guidance is provided in “Training Marine Oil Spill Response Workers Under OSHA’s Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Standard” 8182 Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) #3172 (www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3172.pdf).

After completion of HAZWOPER has been met a member must review and sign acknowledgement of the incident site safety plan. A verbal incident safety briefing will also be provided.

Injuries shall be reported to the person assigned to manage volunteers and to the medical unit leader. For immediate assistance call 911 in accordance with the incident site safety plan. Personal health care insurance information shall be provided to medical providers. The volunteer should contact the Department of Labor for an assessment of workers’ compensation benefits eligibility. State workers compensation board information can be found at <http://www.dol.gov/esa/owcp/dfec/regs/compliance/wc.htm>. Careful consideration should be given to assigning tasks to unaffiliated volunteers.