

**FEDERAL REGION IV**

**REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM**

**STRATEGIC PLAN**

**FEDERAL REGION IV  
REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM**

**VISION STATEMENT**

***Provide prompt, reliable, knowledgeable, and competent assistance. Our actions will be decisive and purposeful.***

***Be recognized as a quality organization committed to adding value to federal, state, local, and industry efforts to mitigate the effects of oil and hazardous substance incidents.***

***Our membership will continue to welcome all segments of the regional response community. Continue working as an efficient and effective team, pooling our talents, experience, and resources to provide the best possible assistance to On Scene Coordinators and Remedial Project Managers.***

***Be proactive and progressive in our deliberations so as to earn the respect of the entire response community for our responsiveness, resourcefulness, and innovation.***

**FEDERAL REGION IV  
REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM**

**OBJECTIVES**

***Our objective is to protect public health, welfare, safety, and the environment by ensuring coordinated, efficient, and effective support of the responding federal, state, and local On Scene Coordinators and Remedial Project Managers to significant oil and hazardous substance incidents within Federal Region IV as mandated by the National Contingency Plan (NCP). We are also committed towards providing for the development and coordination of preparedness activities prior to a pollution incident by addressing regional issues and providing guidance to Federal Region IV Area Committees (ACs), State Emergency Response Commissions (SERCs), and Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs).***

**STRATEGIES**

We accomplish our objectives through the following strategies:

- providing support, consensus advice, and assistance to Federal On Scene Coordinators (OSCs), Remedial Project Managers (RPMs), Area Committees, and Unified Commands;
- assisting Area Committees and State Emergency Response Commissions (SERCs) in the development of their contingency plans and through the SERCs assist the LEPCs and local communities in development of their contingency planning and preparedness efforts;
- providing training, networking, information, communication, and coordination mechanisms to OSCs, RPMs, Unified Commands, SERCs, LEPCs, and Area Committees;
- coordinating the acquisition of resources and agency technical expertise to add value to the response of OSCs/RPMs and Unified Commands;
- evaluating the response of OSCs and Unified Commands, including lessons learned and case studies;
- providing a conduit to ensure timely and effective planning and information flow between the NRT, RRT member agencies, Area Committees, Unified Commands, and OSCs/RPMs;
- assisting other RRT member agencies and organizations in development and implementation of contingency plans for natural and man-made disasters;
- evaluating, providing guidance, developing agreements and pre-approval documents for response/mitigation technologies as desired or necessary;
- providing outreach and marketing of RRT and member agency technical expertise, resources, and capabilities; and

- continually building consensus and working relationships with RRT member agencies, industry, the private sector, political entities, media, environmentalists, academia, and the response community.

## **FEDERAL REGION IV REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM**

### **(RRT IV) STRATEGIC PLAN**

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#### **Background**

On February 6 and 7, 2007, the RRT began the review and revision to the strategic plan which was developed in 1997. This effort included the need for the document to be NIMS compliant and thus a number of terms and definitions have been changed to reflect the current planning doctrine. The following information is provided to assist the RRT's general membership in understanding the process employed and to enable active and effective participation of all RRT members in completing the strategic plan.

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#### **Strategic Planning**

Strategic Planning is a process in which the leadership of an organization envisions the organization's desired future state and develops a means to achieve that state. Once organizational leadership can articulate a shared vision, then objectives, strategies, and tactics can be developed to ensure the vision becomes a reality.

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#### **Definitions**

**Vision.** The conception of how the organization will meet its mission in the future. The vision describes how the organization will look and behave in the future. The "ideal" state of the organization.

**Objectives.** The primary purpose of the organization; reason for the organization's existence. NOTE: For a government organization, the objectives define the value provided to the public.

**Strategies.** Statements of broad tasks to be accomplished over a five year time period. Strategies should be challenging, but achievable. Strategies will ensure fulfillment of the objectives and realization of the vision.

**Tactics.** Specific means to achieve the strategies; output-oriented actions, plans, programs, procedures, and initiatives. Tactics represent pieces of a strategy that can be accomplished within one year.

**Stakeholders.** Stakeholders are those individuals or organizations that have the most interest in the organization's products and services. In essence, they are the organization's primary customers.

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### **The Plan**

A Strategic Plan is a blueprint or "road map" for realizing an organization's shared vision. It supports the vision by establishing objectives, strategies, and tactics for all members in the organization. These strategies and tactics guide members in carrying out the objectives and realizing the vision.

The underlying concept of strategic plan development is that an organization will be successful when there is a high degree of congruence between:

- + The organization's objectives and strategies
- + The expectations and support of its stakeholders
- + The organization's operational and administrative capacity

The organization will be successful when it uses its operational and administrative capacity to produce something the public values that is supported by its stakeholders - those who have an interest in the outcomes of the organization.

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### **Objectives**

When identifying an organization's objectives, organizational representatives focus on the services and products they provide that are of some value to identifiable customers. Members of the Management Committee aligned the objectives with the RRT's edict found within the National Contingency Plan (NCP), 40 CFR 300, specifically 40 CFR 300.115 - "Regional Response Teams".

The NCP dictates that the RRT provides:

1. The appropriate regional mechanism for development and coordination of preparedness activities before a response action is taken and for coordination of assistance and advice to the federal On Scene Coordinator/Remedial Program Manager (OSC/RPM) during such response actions; and
2. Guidance to Area Committees, as appropriate, to ensure inter-area consistency of individual Area Contingency Plans (ACPs) and consistency of individual Regional Contingency Plan (RCPs), ACPs, and NCP.

The two principal components of the RRT mechanism are:

1. A **standing team** consisting of designated representatives from each participating federal agency, state governments, and local governments (as agreed upon by the states). The role of the standing RRT includes communication systems and procedures, planning, coordination, training, evaluation, preparedness, and

related matters on a region wide basis. It also includes coordination of Area Committees for these functions in areas within the region as appropriate; and

2. A **incident-specific team** formed from the standing team when the RRT is activated for a response. Participation by RRT member agencies will relate to the technical nature of the incident and its geographic location. The role of the incident-specific teams is determined by the operational requirements of the response to a specific discharge or release. Activation and/or notification of the incident-specific RRT shall be determined by the designated RRT chair for the incident. The incident-specific RRT may be activated by the chair when a discharge or release:
  - a. Exceeds the response capability available to the OSC/RPM in the place where it occurs;
  - b. Transects state boundaries;
  - c. May pose a substantial threat, or potential threat, to the public health or welfare of the U.S. or the environment, or to regionally significant amounts of property;
  - d. Is a worst case discharge, as described within the NCP. RCPs shall specify detailed criteria for activation of RRTs; or
  - e. Upon a request from the OSC/RPM, or from any RRT representative, to the chair of the RRT.

The **standing RRT** shall:

1. Recommend changes in the regional response organization as needed;
2. Revise the RCP as needed;
3. Document and understand the preparedness of the participating agencies;
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of ACPs for the federal response to discharges and releases; and
5. Provide technical assistance for preparedness to the response community.

The **standing RRT** should:

1. Review and comment, to the extent practicable, on local emergency response plans or other issues related to the preparation, implementation, or exercise of such plans upon request of a local

emergency planning committee;

2. Evaluate regional and local response to discharges or releases on a continuing basis, considering available legal remedies, equipment readiness, and coordination among responsible public agencies and private organizations and recommend improvements;
3. Recommend revisions to the NCP to the NRT, based on observations of response operations;
4. Review OSC actions to ensure that RCPs and ACPs are effective in the aftermath of an exercise or incident;
5. Encourage and assist the state and local response community to improve its preparedness for response;
6. In coordination with Area Committees and in accordance with any applicable laws, regulations, or requirements, conduct advance planning for use of dispersants, surface washing agents, surface collecting agents, burning agents, bioremediation agents, or other chemical agents in accordance with Subpart J - "Use of Dispersants and Other Chemicals" of the NCP.
7. Be prepared to provide response resources to major discharges or releases outside the region;
8. Conduct or participate in training and exercises as necessary to encourage and develop preparedness activities of the response community within the region;
9. Meet at least semiannually to carry out the strategies and tactics in this plan, to review response actions carried out during the preceding period, to consider changes in the RCP, and as necessary, to recommend changes to the ACPs;
10. Provide letter reports on RRT activities to the NRT as required, but no less than annually, and no later than January 31. At a minimum, reports should summarize recent activities, organizational changes, operational concerns, and efforts to improve state and local coordination; and
11. Ensure maximum participation in the national exercise program for announced and unannounced exercises.

The **incident-specific RRT** is activated for a discharge or release. Agency representatives shall meet at the call of the chair and may:

1. Monitor and evaluate reports from the OSC/RPM, advise the OSC/RPM on the duration and extent of response, and recommend to the OSC/RPM specific actions to respond to the discharge or



release;

2. Request other federal, state, or local governments, or private agencies, to provide resources under their existing authorities to respond to a discharge or release or to monitor response operations;
3. Help the OSC/RPM prepare information releases for the public and for communication with the NRT.

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**Stakeholder**

Stakeholders are those individuals or organizations that have the most interest in the organization's products and services. In essence, they are the organization's primary customers. The following is a list of primary stakeholders:

- Federal, state, and local On Scene Coordinators (OSCs) and Remedial Project Managers (RPMs)
- State Agencies/Tribes
- National Response Team (NRT)
- Public
- Industry
- Environmental Organizations
- Area Committees
- Natural Resource Trustees
- Responsible Parties
- Responders
- Local Response Team/Unit
- Emergency Managers
- Elected Officials
- LEPCs/SERCs
- RRT Members both Primary/Alternate
- Media

**Feasibility**

After identifying objectives, strategies, and stakeholders, it was recognized that practical limitations of funding, personnel, and time must be considered during further strategic planning activities.

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**The Model**

The following components will be included in RRT IV's Strategic Plan:

**Vision:** The conception of how the organization will meet its mission in the future. The vision describes how the organization will look and behave in the future.

**Objectives:** The primary purpose of the organization; reason for the organization's existence. NOTE: For a government organization, the objectives define the value provided to the public.

**Strategies:** Statements of broad tasks to be accomplished over a five year time period. Strategies should be challenging, but achievable. Strategies will ensure fulfillment of the objectives and realization of the vision.

**Tactics:** Specific means to achieve the strategies; output-oriented actions, plans, programs, procedures, and initiatives. Tactics represent pieces of a strategy that can be accomplished within one year.

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**Plan Status**

The Standing RRT completed a review of this document in February 2007. The Vision Statement, Objectives, and Strategies are included. They will provide the background necessary for the development of Tactics and for future strategic planning activities. The Tactics identified for each strategy, will fulfill the concept of an RRT work/action plan.

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**Future Plans**

The next step for the RRT is to take all of the information contained within this Strategic Plan and develop workable, specific Tactics to be accomplished. The development of this RRT Tactics (work or action plan) sets the project/issue priorities for the organization. These may be subdivided into smaller tasks so that progressive steps may be taken to accomplish the overall task at hand. The Tactics are generated based on:

- Setting a priority to the issues or projects having the greatest need to be addressed by the RRT;
- The issues or projects should be within the RRT's administrative or operational span of control;
- The issues or projects addressed need to be doable by the RRT based on member agency work load, funding, and expertise.

Objective development and establishment of Tactics marks the final phase of the RRT's continuous strategic planning process.

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**Management Committee**

The RRT Region IV Management Committee will provide oversight, initial development, and management of the RRT Region IV Strategic Plan and subsequent Tactics.

The RRT Region IV Management Committee is comprised of the following members:

- USEPA and USCG Co-Chairs
  - USEPA and USCG Alternate Co-Chairs
  - USEPA and USCG RRT Coordinators
  - RRT Committee Chairpersons (Training/Education, Response Technologies, & State Committees)
  - Trustee Representative (representing all trustee agencies)
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**Plan  
Reevaluation**

The Management Committee and RRT member agencies will reevaluate our Objectives every five years, our Strategies every three years and our Tactics annually.

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**Measuring  
Effectiveness**

**Purpose.** After the RRT has made changes to the items we look at during our various activities or have completed certain Tactics (work items) in support of our Strategies, we need to measure progress toward our Objectives to see if our efforts are working.

**Background.** To do this we must collect updated measurement data and compare it to our original baseline measure (or the condition that existed before the change was made or task completed). If we have made progress, fine, but don't become complacent. Keep reassessing progress toward the Strategies. Could we be more effective? Is the Strategy realistic for the RRT and region? This process is not stationary. It must become part of the RRT's concept of operations.

**Procedures.** "Measures of Effectiveness (MOE)" should be developed for each of our Strategies. Based on the initial MOE assessment a baseline measure identifying the historical and current condition will be defined for each goal. A MOE reassessment should be conducted when instituting a process change and when completing Tactics in support of our Strategies.

**Action.** The Management Committee will develop "Measures of Effectiveness (MOE)" for each of our Strategies. The baseline measure or historical/current condition will be defined for each Strategy. The Management Committee will conduct a MOE reassessment when instituting a process change. The Management Committee will also work with the committee, agency, or entity completing Tactics in support of our Strategies to develop a MOE reassessment for those projects.

**Conclusions.** As the RRT analyzes the data as it applies to each Strategic Plan Strategy, keep the following concepts in mind:

- Once the Strategy is reached, adjust the Strategy to make more progress;
- Progress becomes more difficult as you get closer to the Strategy;
- Some Strategies will effect each other;
- Beware of unusual incidents that can inordinately skew statistics;
- Don't be "ruled" by statistics; they may go against common sense; and
- Remember getting results is the goal; this is just the beginning.

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## **RRT IV SPECIFIC TACTICS ALIGNED WITH STRATEGIES**

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### **1. We will enhance the quality and utility of the Federal Region IV Regional Contingency Plan.**

- We will identify actual sitting members of the RRT and their alternates. Letters will be sent to the State governments and to the respective federal agencies to determine the right representative.
- We will involve the NRT to assist in gaining the participation of absent agencies and a member of the NRT to routinely attend RRT meetings.
- We will amend the RCP to incorporate RRT outputs, as well as, changes in membership, procedures, and requirements since the last update of the RCP.
- We will revise the RCP to address inland Area concerns and ensure inter-area consistency within the region every five years, or more often, as required.
- We will encourage State and RRT member agency participation in the

development of the RCP.

- We will review significant lessons learned to identify those that should be incorporated into the RCP, into guidance to Area Committees, and into drills/exercises.

**2.**

**We will develop and implement policy regarding the RRT's relationship with Area Committees and SERCs.**

- We will provide oversight of Area Contingency Plans and the Regional Contingency Plan. This includes review for consistency.
- We will share RRT information and products with Area Committees and SERCs.
- We will pursue RRT involvement in the PREP exercise program and encourage participation from members.
- We will encourage direct RRT support to Area Committee efforts.

**3.**

**We will enhance the means to facilitate information management and provide effective/decisive support to an OSC/RPM during an environmental response and develop procedures for evaluating significant responses. We will also improve networking and communications between the RRT, its members, and the OSCs/RPMs.**

- We will initiate and conduct a needs assessment of the OSCs/RPMs.
- We will act as a policy body to address regional issues.
- We will seek to provide decisive support to the OSCs/RPMs during each pollution incident.
- We will develop an OSC Report initiation/review protocol and develop/identify a medium of dissemination to effectively evaluate response actions during significant incidents.
- We will develop an effective coordination policy with Federal Regions bordering our area of responsibility.
- We will support hazardous material response issues resulting from WMD and/or Homeland Security issues facing the response community.
- We will maintain an information management system (within the RRT's internet home page) which, through the most efficient means, keeps all parties timely and accurately informed of all necessary information, documents, and notices.

- We will determine an appropriate communications program which effectively integrates communications between all responder organizations during pollution response activities and develop a plan.
- We will meet two times per year to review response actions carried out during the proceeding period, consider changes to the RCP, recommend changes to the ACPs, and assess progress on Tactics and Strategies..
- We will provide an annual report to the NRT detailing the RRT activities during the previous period.

**4.**

**We will develop and provide spill countermeasures strategies, guidance, and agreements to assist the OSC/RPM and response community in the preparedness for pollution response.**

- We will provide and maintain/update pre-approved plans for Region IV.
- We will evaluate and educate members and others on alternative spill countermeasures within Region IV.
- We will identify new high risk areas or issues for the OSC/RPM.
- We will identify areas for additional pre-approval agreements/LOAs/MOAs, etc.

**5.**

**We will continually develop working relationships, partnerships, and consensus building with OSCs/RPMs, RRT member agencies, industry, the private sector, political entities, media, environmentalists, academia, and the response community.**

- We will pursue identifying and adopting an equitable position, including stakeholder input, in addressing oil/hazmat issues where possible.
- We will support efforts to enhance partnerships and relationships with our customers/stakeholders.
- We will enhance inter-agency training efforts and share information on available training opportunities.
- We will maintain an informational package for use by our members which explains RRT roles, responsibilities, and accomplishments.
- We will identify for RRT members the source of lessons learned distributed after each major drill/exercise/spill.
- We will identify potential sources of funding to accomplish the RRT mission.

- We will conduct a tabletop exercise during a regular scheduled meeting to drill notification, conferencing, response, and decision making procedures.
- We will document the role of the RRT in supporting a response under the National Response Plan (NRP).
- We will identify the needs of the RRT member agencies and entities.

**6. We will make the RRT more user friendly for the OSCs on incident specific activations.**

- We will initiate outreach to OSCs on what the RRT can do for you.
- We will request that RRT members identify after hours contacts and mechanism on how personnel can be reached.
- We will arrange for RRT members to have the capability of incident specific immediate deployment.

**RRT IV TACTICS/WORK PLAN**

**Purpose** RRT Tactics indicate the specific task or work items that the RRT will address, initiate, or develop. This plan will set the priorities of the RRT based on the limited administrative and operational resources available to the RRT.

**Plan Contents** RRT Tactics will include the following information:

- The specific Tactic or work item;
- Who will address, initiate, or develop the Tactic or work item (i.e. committee, agency, individual, etc.); and
- When the specific Tactic or work item is expected to be completed (i.e. target, deadline, etc.).

**Plan Development** The development of the RRT Tactics or work items set the project/issue priorities for the organization. The Tactics or work items are generated based on:

- Setting a priority to the issues or projects having the greatest need to

be addressed by the RRT

- The issues or projects should be within the RRT's administrative or operational span of control
- The issues or projects addressed need to be doable by the RRT based on member agency work load, funding, and expertise
- The Tactic or work item list is a living document. The issues or projects addressed by the RRT may be adjusted or changed at any time by the RRT or Management Committee based on the changing needs of the response community

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**Plan Cycle**  
**Time**

The RRT will review the status of Tactics or work items at each meeting. This will permit the RRT to adjust timelines and/or provide assistance as may be required and available.