

Environmental Protection Agency

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alternates to ensure representation, as agency resources permit. The NRT will consider requests for membership on the NRT from other agencies. Other agencies may request membership by forwarding such requests to the chair of the NRT.

(b) The chair of the NRT shall be the representative of EPA and the vice chair shall be the representative of the USCG, with the exception of periods of activation because of response action. During activation, the chair shall be the member agency providing the OSC/RPM. The vice chair shall maintain records of NRT activities along with national, regional, and area plans for response actions.

(c) While the NRT desires to achieve a consensus on all matters brought before it, certain matters may prove unresolvable by this means. In such cases, each agency serving as a participating agency on the NRT may be accorded one vote in NRT proceedings.

(d) The NRT may establish such by-laws and committees as it deems appropriate to further the purposes for which it is established.

(e) The NRT shall evaluate methods of responding to discharges or releases; shall recommend any changes needed in the response organization; and shall recommend to the Administrator of EPA changes to the NCP designed to improve the effectiveness of the national response system, including drafting of regulatory language.

(f) The NRT shall provide policy and program direction to the RRTs.

(g) The NRT may consider and make recommendations to appropriate agencies on the training, equipping, and protection of response teams and necessary research, development, demonstration, and evaluation to improve response capabilities.

(h) Direct planning and preparedness responsibilities of the NRT include:

(1) Maintaining national preparedness to respond to a major discharge of oil or release of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant that is beyond regional capabilities;

(2) Publishing guidance documents for preparation and implementation of SARA Title III local emergency response plans;

(3) Monitoring incoming reports from all RRTs and activating for a response action, when necessary;

(4) Coordinating a national program to assist member agencies in preparedness planning and response, and enhancing coordination of member agency preparedness programs;

(5) Developing procedures, in coordination with the NSFCC, as appropriate, to ensure the coordination of federal, state, and local governments, and private response to oil discharges and releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants;

(6) Monitoring response-related research and development, testing, and evaluation activities of NRT agencies to enhance coordination, avoid duplication of effort, and facilitate research in support of response activities;

(7) Developing recommendations for response training and for enhancing the coordination of available resources among agencies with training responsibilities under the NCP;

(8) Reviewing regional responses to oil discharges and hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant releases, including an evaluation of equipment readiness and coordination among responsible public agencies and private organizations; and

(9) Assisting in developing a national exercise program, in coordination with the NSFCC, to ensure preparedness and coordination nationwide.

(i) The NRT will consider matters referred to it for advice or resolution by an RRT.

(j) The NRT should be activated as an emergency response team:

(1) When an oil discharge or hazardous substance release:

(i) Exceeds the response capability of the region in which it occurs;

(ii) Transects regional boundaries; or

(iii) Involves a substantial threat to the public health or welfare of the United States or the environment, substantial amounts of property, or substantial threats to natural resources;

(2) If requested by any NRT member.

(k) When activated for a response action, the NRT shall meet at the call of the chair and may:

(1) Monitor and evaluate reports from the OSC/RPM and recommend to the

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OSC/RPM, through the RRT, actions to combat the discharge or release;

(2) Request other federal, state, and local governments, or private agencies, to provide resources under their existing authorities to combat a discharge or release, or to monitor response operations; and

(3) Coordinate the supply of equipment, personnel, or technical advice to the affected region from other regions or districts.

§ 300.115 Regional Response Teams.

(a) Regional planning and coordination of preparedness and response actions is accomplished through the RRT. In the case of a discharge of oil, preparedness activities will be carried out in conjunction with Area Committees, as appropriate. The RRT agency membership parallels that of the NRT, as described in § 300.110, but also includes state and local representation. 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 OSC/RPM during such response actions; and

(2) Guidance to Area Committees, as appropriate, to ensure inter-area consistency and consistency of individual ACPs with the RCP and NCP.

(b) The two principal components of the RRT mechanism are a standing team, which consists of designated representatives from each participating federal agency, state governments, and local governments (as agreed upon by the states); and incident-specific teams formed from the standing team when the RRT is activated for a response. On incident-specific teams, participation by the RRT member agencies will relate to the technical nature of the incident and its geographic location.

(1) The standing team's jurisdiction corresponds to the standard federal regions, except for Alaska, Oceania in the Pacific, and the Caribbean area, each of which has a separate standing RRT. The role of the standing RRT includes communications systems and procedures, planning, coordination, training, evaluation, preparedness, and related matters on a regionwide basis.

It also includes coordination of Area Committees for these functions in areas within their respective regions, as appropriate.

(2) The role of the incident-specific team is determined by the operational requirements of the response to a specific discharge or release. Appropriate levels of activation and/or notification of the incident-specific RRT, including participation by state and local governments, shall be determined by the designated RRT chair for the incident, based on the RCP. The incident-specific RRT supports the designated OSC/RPM. The designated OSC/RPM directs response efforts and coordinates all other efforts at the scene of a discharge or release.

(c) The representatives of EPA and the USCG shall act as co-chairs of RRTs except when the RRT is activated. When the RRT is activated for response actions, the chair shall be the member agency providing the OSC/RPM.

(d) Each participating agency should designate one member and at least one alternate member to the RRT. Agencies whose regional subdivisions do not correspond to the standard federal regions may designate additional representatives to the standing RRT to ensure appropriate coverage of the standard federal region. Participating states may also designate one member and at least one alternate member to the RRT. Indian tribal governments may arrange for representation with the RRT appropriate to their geographical location. All agencies and states may also provide additional representatives as observers to meetings of the RRT.

(e) RRT members should designate representatives and alternates from their agencies as resource personnel for RRT activities, including RRT work planning, and membership on incident-specific teams in support of the OSCs/RPMs.

(f) Federal RRT members or their representatives should provide OSCs/RPMs with assistance from their respective federal agencies commensurate with agency responsibilities, resources, and capabilities within the region. During a response action, the members of the RRT should seek to