Coordination of Incident Response and Natural Resource Damage Assessment

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Consequences of Coordination Problems

- NRDA field personnel denied access to areas to collect ephemeral data
- Response actions caused avoidable injuries
- Duplication of efforts
- Difficulty getting needed assets for NRDA field work
- Opportunities for emergency restoration missed
- Response statements undermined the Trustees’ case
Response-caused Injuries

2007 Cosco Busan oil spill
San Francisco Bay
Response-caused Injuries

2007 Cosco Busan oil spill
San Francisco Bay

Sand Berms, Louisiana, 2010 BP Spill
Lessons Learned
(from ICS 100 Course)
http://training.fema.gov/IS/NIMS.asp

Weaknesses in incident management are often due to:

• Lack of accountability, including unclear chains of command

• Poor communication: inefficient uses of available communications systems and conflicting codes and terminology

• Lack of a systematic planning process

• No common, flexible, predesigned management structure that enabled commanders to delegate responsibilities and manage work efficiently

• No predefined methods to integrate interagency requirements into the management structure and planning process effectively
Goals

• Establish clear lines-of-communication between Unified Command and NRDA
• Assure all NRDA staff have appropriate Health and Safety Training; clearance to enter the field
• Assure response effort provides spill-related information, logistical needs, and source-sampling to support NRDA.
Recommendations for Communication

• **One lead point-of-contact (POC) to UC:** NRDA Representative
  – Other potential POCs: NRDA Safety Officer; NRDA Wildlife Operations Liaison
  – Contact within 24 to 48 hours after spill

• **ICS Form 213 (General Message)**
  – Means of initial contact; whose involved in the NRDA
  – Examples: identifies NRDA Field Team members, level of safety training, deployment areas
Recommended Coordination Points

• Unified Command
  – FOSC, SOSC, RP
• Command Staff (via NRDA Representative)
  – Examples:
    » Liaison: provides initial point of contact for NRDA with UC
    » Information Officer: addresses any press releases or information dissemination related to NRDA
    » Safety Officer: informs NRDA Field Teams re: spill safety plan (via NRDA Representative or NRDA Safety Officer)
Recommended Coordination Points

- Investigations
  - Warden (via NRDA Representative)
    - Example:
      » Assures source sample collected
Recommended Coordination Points

- Operations
  - **Wildlife Branch** (via NRDA Wildlife Operations Liaison)
    - Examples:
      » Search Effort and Recovery Logs
      » Wildlife oiling/mortality observations
Recommended Coordination Points

• Planning
  – Environmental and Situations Units (via NRDA Representative)
    – Examples:
      » Spill volume, trajectory
      » SCAT observations
      » Coordinate NRDA Field Team deployments
Effective communications includes mutual respect

- At an incident you encounter people who look like this…
Effective Communications and Mutual Respect

- When you show up at an incident command post you encounter people who look like this.

- So probably better not to arrive looking like this.
NRDA – Incident Command

Summary of Recommendations:

• All NRDA communications with ICS coordinated through the NRDA Representative (primary point-of-contact)

• NRDA Command Post nearby Incident Command Post

• Establish communications/liaison positions with UC, Safety Officer, Investigations Unit, Environmental Unit, Wildlife Ops.

• Include NRDA within spill drills.