

Region 7 Regional Response Team

Standing Operating Procedures (SOP)

U. S. Environmental
Protection Agency

U.S. Coast Guard

Federal Emergency
Management
Agency

Department of
Defense

Department of
Energy

U.S. Department of
Agriculture

Department of
Commerce
(NOAA)

Department of
Health and
Human Services

Department of the
Interior

Department of
Transportation

Department of State

Nuclear Regulatory
Commission

General Services
Administration

Department of
Justice

Department of Labor

State of Iowa

State of Kansas

State of Missouri

State of Nebraska



Region 7 Regional Response Team

(RRT-7)

Standard Operating Procedures

(SOP)

January 17, 2020

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Section 1: Name

The name of the organization shall be the Region 7 Regional Response Team (RRT-7).

Section 2: Authority

The Region 7 Regional Response Team (RRT-7) derives its framework for policy and program direction from Executive Order [12580](#) and [12777](#) the [National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan \(NCP\)](#), and the [Region 7 Regional Integrated Contingency Plan \(RICP\)](#). The RRT develops its program initiatives from the membership with guidance from the [National Response Team \(NRT\)](#).

Section 3: Purpose

The purpose of the NCP is to provide the organizational structure and procedures for preparing for and responding to discharges of oil and releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants.

The RRT provides 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 Project Manager (FOSC/RPM) during such response actions; and provide guidance to Area Committees, as appropriate, to ensure inter-area consistency, and conformity of Subarea Contingency Plans with the RICP and NCP.

Section 4: Organization

A. RRT Membership

RRT-7 is comprised of members from fifteen federal departments and agencies having representatives on the NRT, plus four regional State government representatives from the states of Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska.

Federal member agencies have duties established by statute, executive order, or Presidential directive which may apply to federal response actions following, or in prevention of, the discharge of oil or release of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.

Some of these agencies also have duties relating to the restoration, rehabilitation, replacement, or acquisition of equivalent natural resources injured or lost as a result of such discharge or release.

A complete roster of RRT members can be found on the RRT webpage at <https://www.rrt7.nrt.org/>. RRT members are as follows:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Department of Homeland Security (DHS):
 - a. U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)
 - b. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
 - c. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)

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- Department of Commerce (DOC):
 - a. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- Department of Agriculture (USDA):
 - a. United States Forest Service (USFS)
 - b. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)
- Department of Labor (DOL):
 - a. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
- Department of Defense (DOD):
 - a. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
 - b. U.S. Navy (USN)
 - c. Defense Coordinating Element (DCE)
- General Services Administration (GSA)
- Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS):
 - a. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention / Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (CDC/ATSDR)
- Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)
- Department of Energy (DOE)
 - a. National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA)
- Department of Transportation (DOT):
 - a. Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA)
- Department of the Interior (DOI):
 - a. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
 - b. National Park Service (NPS)
- Department of Justice (DOJ)
- Department of State (DOS)
- State of Iowa
- State of Kansas
- State of Missouri
- State of Nebraska

Tribes (incident specific):

- a. Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska
- b. Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas
- c. Meskwaki Nation (Sac & Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa)
- d. Omaha Tribe of Nebraska and Iowa
- e. Ponca Tribe of Nebraska
- f. Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation
- g. Sac & Fox Nation of Missouri in Kansas & Nebraska
- h. Santee Sioux Nation
- i. Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska

Each participating federal agency shall designate one member and at least one alternate member to the RRT. Agencies whose regional subdivisions do not correspond to EPA Region 7 may designate additional representatives to the standing RRT to ensure appropriate coverage.

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Each state is responsible for identifying the agency/organization with primary statutory responsibility over a particular contingency; e.g., oil, hazardous substances, etc., to act as the lead state agency. This designated state agency will represent their state during incident-specific activations. Other state agencies who desire to participate in RRT activities are welcome. State or tribal agencies who desire can support efforts of the RRT in developing a RICP and/or relevant Subarea plans; to plan for, make available, and coordinate state or tribal resources; and to serve as the point of contact for coordination of response objectives and actions with local governments. The two principal components of the RRT mechanism are a standing team, which consists of designated representatives from each participating federal, state, and local agency, and an incident-specific team, where participation will relate to the technical nature of the incident and its geographic location.

B. The Standing RRT

Refer to RICP, Section: Subpart B; 300.115

C. The Incident-Specific RRT

Refer to RICP, Section: Subpart B; 300.115

D. Chair of the RRT and RRT Coordinators

The RRT is co-chaired by the following positions within EPA Region 7 and the USCG Eighth District.

Whenever the RRT is activated for response, the Chair shall be the EPA or USCG representative, depending on what agency is providing the FOSC for the response.

Refer to Responsibilities of an RRT Co-Chair, Alternate Co-Chair and Coordinator in the Regional Response Team Job Aid, May, 2012 for information on the responsibilities of the RRT Coordinators.

	EPA	USCG
Co-Chairs:	Chief, Assessment, Emergency Response and Removal Branch	Incident Management and Preparedness Advisor
Alternate Co-Chairs:	Chief, Response and Removal Emergency Preparedness Section	District Response Advisory Team Supervisor

Both EPA and USCG also have designated RRT Coordinator positions.

E. RRT Activation Procedures

Refer to RICP, Section: Subpart B; 300.115

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F. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee provides administrative management of the RRT and oversight of the RRT process and structure.

The membership of the Executive Committee shall consist of the EPA and USCG RRT Co-Chairs, Alternate Co-Chairs, with appropriate support staff (RRT Coordinators for each agency).

Executive Committee meetings, referred to as Executive Meetings, will be held as needed, but at a minimum before each meeting of the Standing RRT. Regularly scheduled teleconferences with the Executive Committee will be conducted for review and updating of RRT priorities.

On matters of policy and initiatives involving the RRT, the Executive Committee will prepare, review and provide an executive summary to the RRT membership for decision. The Executive Committee will be responsible for ensuring the implementation of RRT approved policies and initiatives.

Attendance at the Executive Meetings shall be restricted to the Executive Committee members and other individuals as deemed appropriate to the subject(s) to be discussed.

The Executive Committee, through the RRT Coordinators, will liaise with the NRT Executive Secretariat.

Section 5: Voting and Quorum

A quorum shall consist of those RRT members who attend the meeting (in person or remotely using available technology). Each designated federal department/agency and state member on the RRT, as identified in the RICP, Appendix D.3, is accorded one vote.

Should a state or federal organization have more than one designated agency represented on the RRT, it is their responsibility to come to their own consensus on the issue at hand and cast a single vote accordingly. Usually, this vote should be cast by the agency/organization with primary state or federal statutory responsibility. Votes will only be conducted on matters when 100 percent consensus on the issue does not exist among RRT members.

A two-thirds vote of the members voting will constitute passage or rejection of the matter. If a vote is requested via e-mail or fax, a two-thirds vote of the members voting will constitute acceptance or rejection.

Upon the activation of an Incident-Specific RRT in response to a discharge or release, a quorum will consist of those members notified and participating, either on-scene or by telephone. Passage of a motion requires a two-thirds majority vote of the Incident-Specific RRT. Incident-Specific decisions will likely be urgent or time-sensitive. It will be the responsibility of the notified agencies to participate in discussions and decisions at times specified.

Decisions on preauthorizations and/or use of alternative response technologies in an incident-specific response shall be in accordance with Subpart J of the NCP.

Section 6: Meetings

Regular meetings of the Standing RRT, which also serves as the Area Committee, will be convened at least semi-annually, and shall be predominantly “open meetings.” There may be portions of the meeting that involve matters of regulatory enforcement that may not be open to full participation. The meetings will be hosted by the RRT-7 Co-Chairs and the Region 7 Area

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Committee Chair. The RRT Coordinators will notify members not later than 60 days prior to the next RRT meeting announcing the location, dates, and other appropriate information.

The Standing RRT shall meet to review response actions carried out since the preceding meeting. Additionally, reports from the RRT federal and state members will be presented.

New initiatives introduced will be discussed by the membership and may be assigned to an ad-hoc workgroup for further review. Presentations and discussions by RRT members or invited participants and guests concerning programs and initiatives within the region will be scheduled.

Section 7: RRT Reports

A. Annual RRT Report

The RRT shall provide an annual report to the NRT concerning its activities and leadership position changes, as required by the NCP.

B. OSC Reports

The NCP requires that OSC Reports be prepared "as requested by the NRT or RRT." OSCs may, of course, also issue OSC Reports on their own initiative, independent of a RRT or NRT request. The RRT should consider requesting an OSC Report when the pollution response involved results in:

- an unusual challenge;
- a unique or complex issue (e.g., intergovernmental coordination, use of a new technology, etc.);
- a decision that may create a precedent;
- a lesson learned or potential best practice that should be made known regionally or nationally; or
- additional information is needed that is not already available in the pollution report or incident situation report.

C. Incident-Specific RRT Reports

The Incident-Specific RRT Chair will document (e.g., email, report) activation to include a log of RRT activities and a chronological sequence of events.

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Section 8: External Coordination

A. Coordination with Other RRTs

The RRT-7 seeks to maximize its participation with neighboring RRTs. As such, neighboring RRT Co-Chairs or their designees will be invited to attend all RRT-7 meetings and will be given agenda time for presentations upon request.

When appropriate, the RRT-7 will seek to hold a joint meeting or exercise with a neighboring RRT. The RRT-7 will also, upon invitation from a neighboring RRT, provide a representative to attend their meetings as a means of facilitating inter-regional cooperation, building and strengthening useful relationships, and exchanging ideas.

B. Coordination with Tribal, State, and Local Governments

A major function of the RRT is to encourage tribal, state, and local response agencies to improve their preparedness for response by providing technical assistance and training. All requests to the RRT for such assistance should be made through the designated state member or tribal participant to the RRT.

In the event a RRT member agency receives a request for assistance directly from a state or local agency, the recipient should contact a RRT Coordinator or member of the Executive Committee.

C. RRT Internet Homepage

The RRT-7 has developed the use of the RRT-7 Internet homepage which can be found at <https://www.rrt7.nrt.org/> or it can be accessed through the NRT homepage (<https://nrt.org/>). The RRT-7 homepage offers electronic versions of meeting agendas, reports, link to the RICP, and other appropriate documents relevant to the RRT-7.

Anyone wishing to post material to the RRT-7 homepage shall submit the same to either the EPA or USCG RRT Coordinator. The EPA RRT Coordinator shall serve as the clearinghouse and means of approval for all materials wishing to be placed on the RRT-7 homepage.

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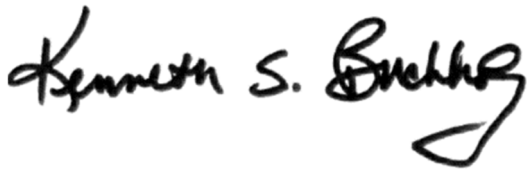
Section 9: Revisions

The Executive Committee is responsible for maintaining and revising this SOP. As necessary, the Executive Committee will submit revised SOP to the RRT membership for review and vote.

A two-thirds (2/3) vote by the RRT membership will be required for approval of the proposed changes or revisions.

The Region 7 Regional Response Team SOP is approved by the membership as affirmed by the signatures of the Region 7 Regional Response Team Co-Chairs.

Date: January 17, 2020



Kenneth S. Buchholz
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Regional Response Team 7 Co-Chair



Michael K. Sams
U.S. Coast Guard
Regional Response Team 7 Co-Chair