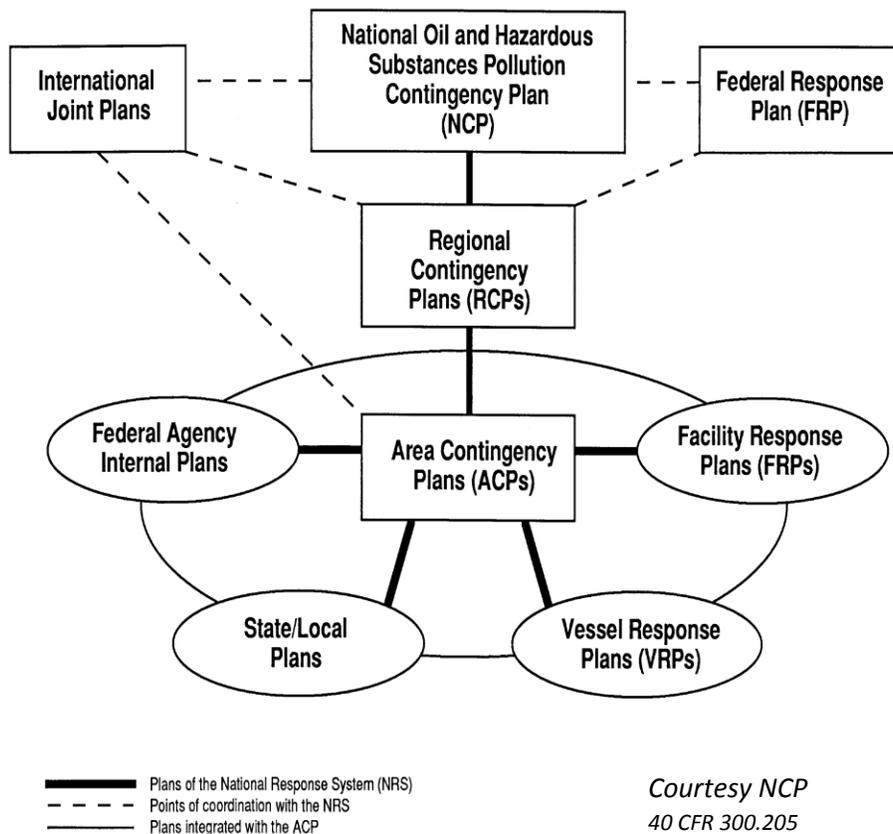
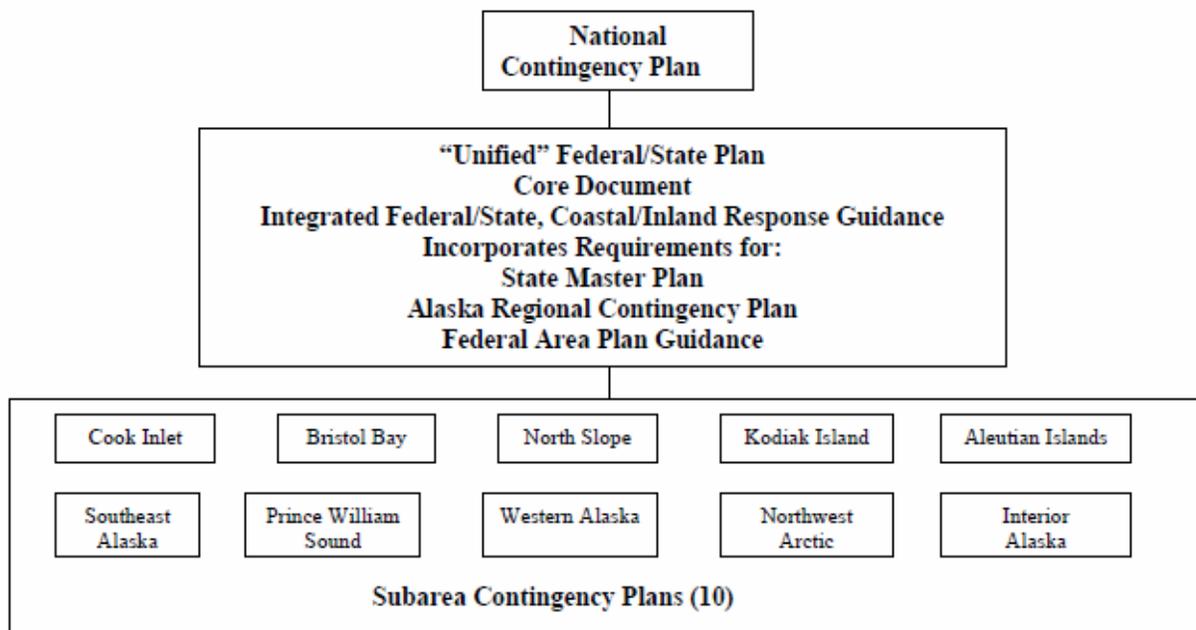


How does the Alaska system for emergency planning differ from the National Contingency Plan model?

Before 1993, the State of Alaska managed Emergency Response for oil spills and hazardous materials releases by use of the Alaska *State Master Plan*. The *State Master Plan* was a standalone plan solely managed by the state of Alaska. In an effort to be better prepared for emergencies, the state, United States Coast Guard and the Environmental Protection Agency, decided to develop a jointly managed *Unified Plan* (UP). The Unified Plan encompasses not only state requirements for preparing for and responding to oil spills and hazardous materials releases, but also encompassed federal requirements as well. The Unified Plan differs from the *National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan* (NCP) in that the NCP model is based on *Area Contingency Plans* (ACPs) that are managed by *On Scene Coordinators* (OSCs). In most areas of the country ACPs are based on U.S. Coast Guard Captain of the Port areas of responsibility (COTP AOR). In Alaska, the COTP AOR for Western Alaska is divided up into eight *Sub Areas*. This division creates confusion in many responders who respond to events in Alaska but are from other areas of the country.

Relationship of Plans





Courtesy [Unified Plan](#)

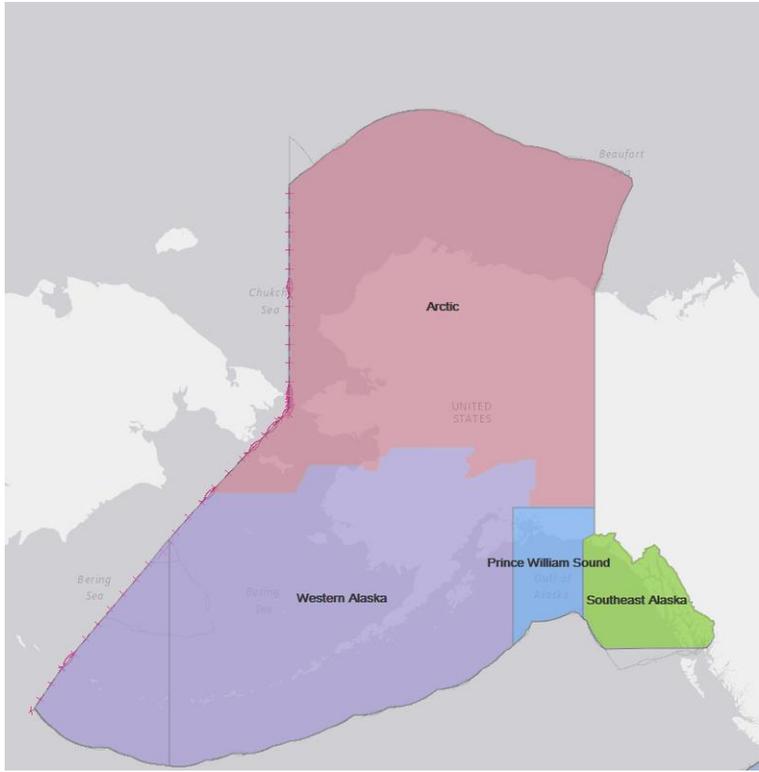
What is the difference between an *Area Committee* and a *Sub Area Committee*?

Area Committees and Subarea Committees are managed by the state and federal OSCs who are responsible for emergency planning in those areas. The main difference between Area Committees and Subarea Committees is the area size of responsibility. The Area Committees are larger than those of the subareas. Kodiak for example, is currently considered its own subarea. Under the Area Committee process of the NCP, Kodiak would be joined with other areas of similar geography, climate, economy, cultures, environmental threats and resources. Therefore, the response tactics and emergency management will also be similar.

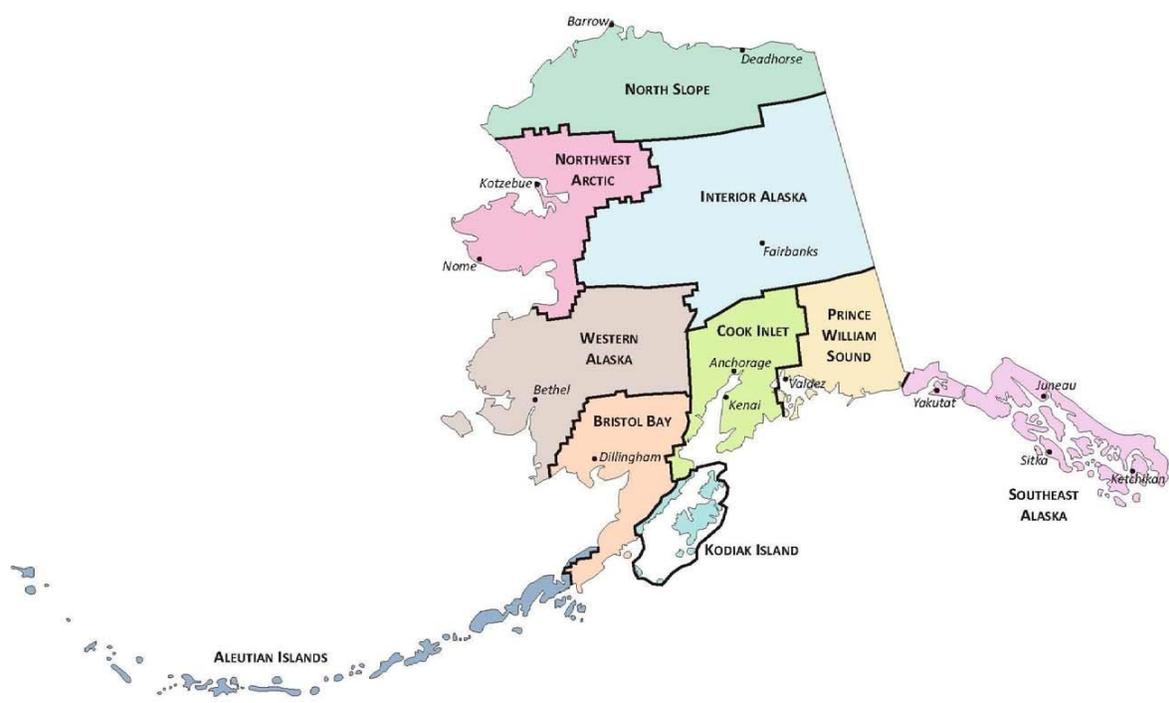
How many *Area Committees* will be in Alaska under the proposed system?

Currently, Alaska's emergency management is based on ten subareas. Under the proposal there will be four Area Committees, each assigned an area of responsibility (or Area Plan). The committees' areas of responsibility will be similar to the U.S. Coast Guard's Captain of the Port Areas of Responsibility or Zones, with the exception of the Arctic Area Committee.

Proposed Areas



Current Sub Areas



Will my community still be able to participate in *Area Planning*?

Yes. Under the Area planning model, communities will have a greater opportunity to participate. Whereas Subareas were generally only active every five-years during a plan update period, Area Committees are intended to be standing bodies with dedicated membership. This consistent committee activity will provide more opportunities for greater community input than the current model.

What are the reasons for the change in planning models?

The current system in place is unique to Alaska. All other states use the standard format described in the National Contingency Plan. In an effort to increase the effectiveness of all available resources during a major spill or release, the Alaska DEC, EPA and U.S. Coast Guard emergency managers feel that a common structure and management process is essential in a smooth inclusion of emergency responders from around the country.

What will happen to the Unified Plan?

The Unified Plan, the Alaska Federal/State Preparedness Plan for Response to Oil and Hazardous Substance Discharges/Releases, will be replaced by the *Alaska Regional Plan* and will contain information relating to maintaining statewide consistency of emergency response management issues.

<http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/PPR/plans/uc.htm>

Where can I find information on the National Contingency Plan, Area Planning?

40 CFR Part 300

[National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan](#)

What will happen to the Current Subarea Plans?

The current Subarea Plans contain a wealth of information relating to the specific local area, Geographical Response Strategies (GRS), Potential Places of Refuge (PPoR), local resources and local contact information. The Subarea Plans will become an Annex to the Area Plans and continue to contain valuable specific area information.

What is the seaward boundary of the *Area Plans*?

The seaward boundary of *Area Plans* will include the Federal Economic Exclusion Zone (EEZ), which extends 200 miles offshore from the Alaska Coastline.

How does the state of Alaska participate in *Area Planning* that extends outside of its regulatory three-mile seaward boundary?

Alaska Statutes sec 46.03.010, sec 46.03.040 and sec 46.03.865 assign the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) with the responsibility to develop emergency response plans together with the federal and local governments, tribes, other public or private organizations, and concerned individuals in efforts to protect the public health and safety, quality of the environment, and natural resources of the state from threats to state waters and lands. Activities regulated by the federal

government outside of the three mile state-owned tide and submerged lands, can threaten Alaska's resources, environment, economy, cultural heritage, and residents. For example, a sinking tanker that releases oil 4 miles off the shore of Alaska will likely impact the public health and safety, quality of the environment, and natural resources of Alaska; therefore, the state has an obligation to participate in joint state and federal contingency planning.

How can I participate in the development of *Area Planning* in Alaska?

As the process moves forward, the Regional Planning Proposal Website (http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/PPR/plans/regional_plan.htm) will be updated to reflect progress and changes in the projected timeline. We are currently only in the notification phase of this process. Once we have draft plans, we will begin soliciting comments from agencies, tribes, stakeholders and the general public. You can further influence the Area Plan Contents by being an active participant in Area Committee meetings and activities. Meeting and activity dates will be added to the Regional Planning Proposal Website as they become available.

Is the goal of this effort to reduce the number of Subareas currently in the state?

The purpose of the proposed change is to align Alaska spill-response plans with the statutory and regulatory requirements of the National Contingency Plan (40 CFR Part 300) and the National Response Framework (<http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/32230?id=7371>). One of the challenges of living and working in a land as vast as Alaska is that government spill response planners have difficulty bringing together enough responders and stakeholders to serve on standing Subarea Committees. Further, staff time, travel costs, and administrative cost associated with participating in these committees can be burdensome to participants. Active, ongoing participation is needed to maintain plans that are sufficiently effective and robust to guide and assist responders in an emergency incident. The proposal seeks to consolidate existing subarea committees into a system consistent with the planning framework in use in the rest of the United States. The proposal does not eliminate the subarea contingency plans, but rather converts them to annexes to be found within larger Area Contingency Plans. It is the intent of the response agencies to reduce the burden on responders and stakeholders, and lower the threshold of effort required to participate in area planning activities. As an example, the information currently contained within the subarea contingency plans for Cook Inlet, Kodiak Island, Bristol Bay, The Aleutian Islands, and Western Alaska would be consolidated into the Western Alaska Area Plan, which would contain geographical annexes with information (resources, sensitive areas, etc.) specific to each of those planning subareas.