

APPENDIX ? : HAZMAT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), Division of Spill Prevention and Response (SPAR) facilitated the planning and execution of the Alaska Shield 2014 Hazmat Symposium and Field Exercise in Kodiak, AK from April 1-3, 2014. This Hazmat component of Alaska Shield was sponsored by the Statewide Hazardous Materials Response Team, DEC, and the Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM), co-sponsored by Alaska West Express, and hosted by the City of Kodiak Fire Department.

The theme for this year's event was the 50th anniversary of the 1964 Alaska Earthquake. The symposium portion was held at the Kodiak Harbor Convention Center on April 1–2, and the functional field exercise was held at the Kodiak City Dock on April 3. Over 70 people attended the symposium which provided classroom style presentations regarding hazmat team activation, hazmat size-up, pre-entry hazmat sampling refresher, intermodal tanks, a panel discussion on hazmat fires, and a full day of Ammonia Awareness/Response training. The topics were presented through lectures, interactive activities, and demonstrations.

For the field exercise, the Statewide Hazmat Response Teams from Anchorage, Fairbanks, Kodiak, Juneau, Ketchikan, and support teams from Sitka, Mat-Su, 103rd Civil Support Team (CST), and EPA responded in Level A suits (fully encapsulated chemical protective suit with supplied air) to three separate simulated releases of extremely hazardous substances from a catastrophic earthquake. Other participants included the 85th CST from Utah, the Kodiak Coast Guard, Kodiak Fire Department, and staff from DEC and DHS&EM. Three hazmat vendors also attended the event. Presentations, photos, and other meeting materials will be available soon at the DEC Hazmat website: <http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/perp/hazmat.htm>

Background of Statewide Hazmat Response Team:

In 1996, DEC initiated a hazmat planning effort by forming a work group to develop a statewide Level A response capability in order to maintain and expand oil and hazardous substance spill response capabilities throughout Alaska. The primary members to the work group included the Municipality of Anchorage, the Fairbanks North Star Borough, and DEC. The efforts of the group resulted in the formation of a Regional Hazmat Response Team consisting of the Anchorage and Fairbanks Hazmat Teams. Formal local response agreements were negotiated so that both teams were capable of responding beyond their jurisdictional boundaries at the direction of the DEC State On-Scene Coordinator (SOSC). The regional team has expanded and is now called the Statewide Hazardous Materials Response Team and consists of five community Level A response teams from Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Ketchikan, and Kodiak, and other response partners including the 103rd Civil Support Team (CST), the EPA Response Team, and numerous local fire departments that support the Level A teams. The five community teams are all deployable by the DEC SOSC to any location within the State of Alaska that would require a Level A response.

The Statewide Hazmat Response Work Group has continued to grow and now has over 25 participating entities including local, State, Federal, military, private and industry hazmat response partners. DEC facilitates the work group meetings 3 times per year to discuss and update statewide response capabilities, standardizing operating procedures, lessons learned from recent responses, training, exercises, equipment enhancements, decontamination assets, weapons of mass destruction (WMD) contingencies, funding, and other topics of interest.

DEC and the Statewide Hazmat Response Work Group continues to focus on enhancing the overall hazmat response capability in the State which includes the integration of response teams, training opportunities to work together, promoting coordination for a coherent response effort to any hazmat related incident, sustaining a mass decontamination capability, and to improve the working relationship between all hazmat response partners throughout the State.

The purpose of this executive summary is to provide an overview of Alaska Shield Hazmat results, identify strengths to be maintained, build upon potential areas for improvement, and support the development of corrective actions and the Improvement Plan.

The following objectives were developed by the Hazmat exercise planning team for AS-2014 Symposium and Field Exercise:

Objectives:

- Increase the emergency preparedness level of emergency response personnel.
- Integrate Statewide Hazmat Response Team members in responding to remote EHS releases to test interoperability of resources.
- Provide a joint training opportunity for the Statewide Hazmat Response Team members to work together and further promote close coordination for a coherent response effort.
- Improve working relationships between Statewide Hazmat Response Team members.
- Improve working relationships with Federal and other Hazmat response partners.

Major Strengths:

1. The Hazmat Symposium utilized many in-state instructors with local knowledge, provided course topics that were typical and relevant to Alaska, and included case studies of local incidents for information sharing and learning.
2. Integration of different team members in the field exercise is an invaluable learning tool and relationship builder.
3. The field exercise exposed Hazmat team members to scenarios not common within their home communities, but are common within the State that they could be deployed to when needed.

Major Areas for Improvement:

1. Developing and equipping Statewide Hazmat Response Teams with standardized equipment to be interchangeable with one another.
2. Identify minimum equipment needs for remote deployment to a Hazmat incident.

3. Identify and overcome transportation restrictions and hurdles for Hazmat responder PPE.
4. Communications interoperability between different response and support teams.