

# 2018 Oil Spill Response Exercises Lessons Learned

**Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation  
Division of Spill Prevention and Response**



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# Introduction

- ADEC is sharing selected significant lessons learned from oil spill response exercises in 2018 to encourage continual improvement
- These lessons learned are based on the most common & broadly applicable observations
- All exercises have lessons to be learned
- Intent is to encourage improvement in oil spill response

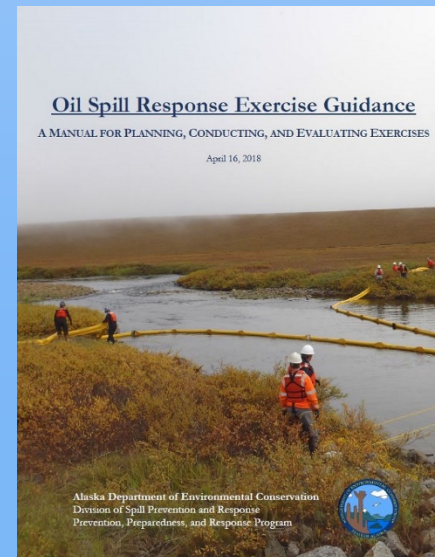
# 2018 Exercises



- ADEC participated in 31 exercises where Lessons learned were gathered from ADEC after the exercise
- 2016 & 2017 lessons learned were also found to be recurring in 2018
- 2016 & 2017 lessons learned continue to be important considerations for improvement planning

# 2018 Notable Improvement

- Many ODPCP holders notified ADEC of exercises earlier  
Early notification provides ADEC the opportunity to:
  - Participate in joint exercise planning
  - Provide guidance on exercise design toward meeting 18 AAC 75.485
- Some ODPCP holders began using the ADEC Oil Spill Response Exercise Guidance



# Top Lessons Learned

These common & broadly applicable lessons learned from 2016-2017 were also found in 2018:

- Exercise Planning could be improved:
  - Involve ADEC in exercise planning from the beginning
  - Consider exercising both IMT & field response at the same time
  - Establish robust MSEL & SimCell for IMT exercises
- Players could be more familiar with the ODPCP
  - Specifically: notification procedures, contact info, emergency action checklists, facility diagrams, & available equipment
- Players could use additional IMT training
  - Who should communicate with whom in the IMT
  - Filling out ICS forms & QA/QC of forms
- Players could use additional training in deploying response equipment & adjusting tactics to be effective
- Consider fully deploying & running response equipment

For more details please view the 2016 & 2017 Lessons Learned at <http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/ppr/prevention-preparedness/exercises/>

# Additional Lessons Learned from 2018

- Exercise design
  - Scope: IMT & field response connection
  - MSEL & SimCell for IMT exercises
- ICS processes: ICS 234 – ICS 215 – ICS 204

# Exercise Design – Exercise Scope

- Few exercises in 2018 included concurrent IMT & field activities
- Generally, those exercises:
  - Demonstrated significant communications and/or management gaps
  - Often included too few field components to demonstrate ODPCP holder capabilities
- ADEC encourages Exercise Design Teams to include concurrent IMT & associated field deployments in their exercises
- For larger exercises, ADEC does not expect all field units to be deployed, but enough to demonstrate:
  - Communications flows both ways between Ops and the field
  - That Ops can adequately manage field operations
  - That field responders can implement direction from Ops and contain & control the spill

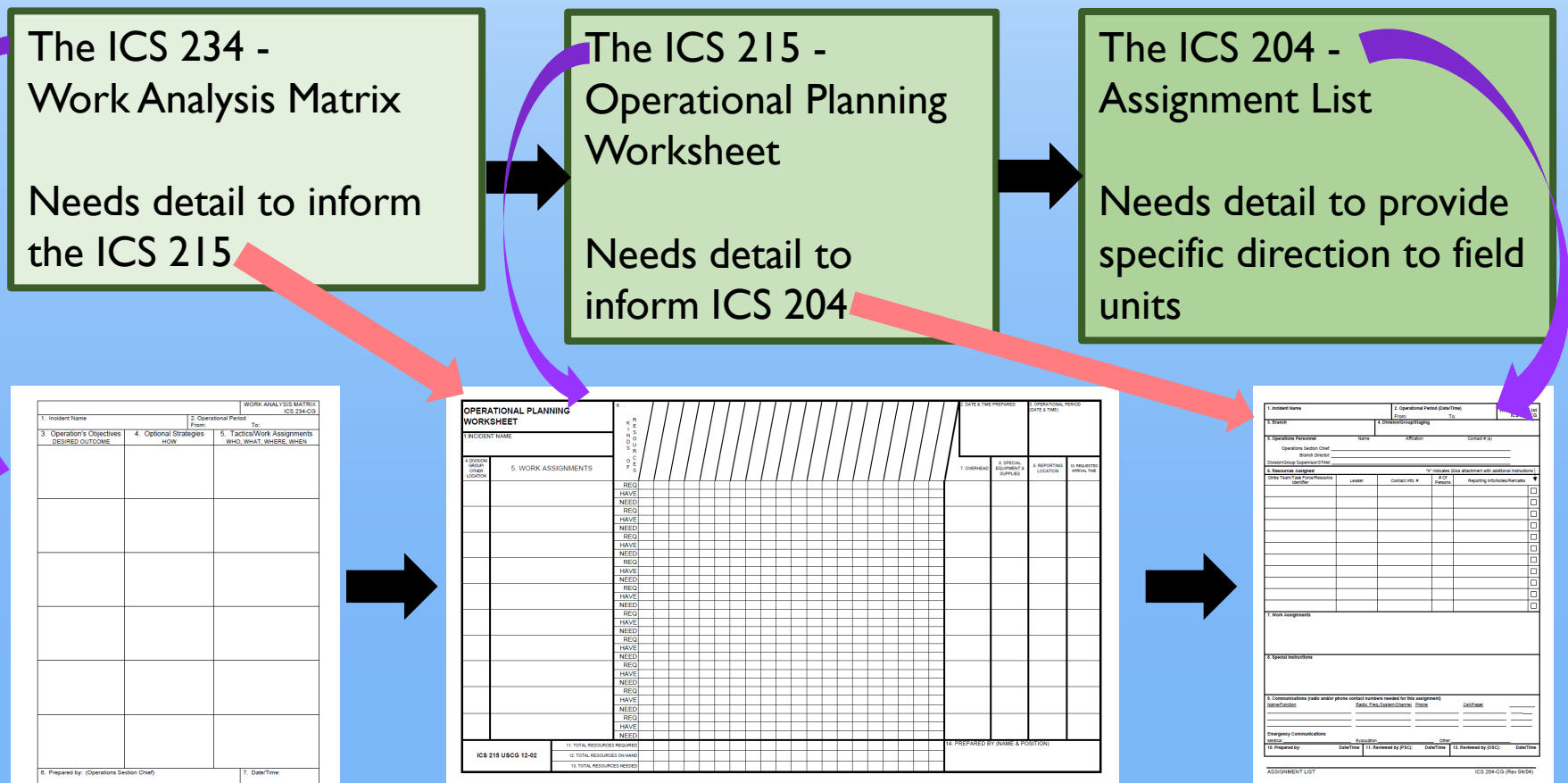
# Exercise Design for Functional Exercises - Simulation

- MSEL Development & Simulation Cell (SimCell) Conduct
  - Many exercises did not adequately simulate non-participating entities communications & actions
  - Exercises with limited or no field activities need to include simulation of communications from the field, stakeholders, media, public, etc...
  - Providing Players with communications simulating field activities & public interest:
    - Gives the IMT something realistic to work with
    - Allows ODPCP holders to demonstrate their capabilities
- Many of these simulations can be developed in a Master Scenario Events List (MSEL) then adjusted & delivered by knowledgeable Simulators in SimCell



# ICS 234 – ICS 215 – ICS 204 Process

In Functional Exercises, Ops Sections often struggled with this process



# Recommendations

- Refer to ADEC's Oil Spill Response Exercise Guidance when planning exercises
- Including ADEC in exercise planning from the very beginning allows ADEC to provide guidance on meeting 18 AAC 75.485
  - This includes development of the scope of the exercise and choosing the date of the exercise
- Consider exercising both Field & IMT together
  - Reduces effort needed to develop simulations
  - Increases reality & allows players to react realistically
  - Increases effectiveness of the exercise
- Objectives and evaluation criteria should be specific to the ODPCP and scenario being exercised
- Functional & Full Scale exercises should have a robust MSEL & SimCell
  - Provides the field & other inputs to mimic a real response
  - Provides info Players need to work in their roles
  - Allow Players to demonstrate their response capabilities
- ODPCP holders could consider conducting additional IMT training & practice to ensure IMT staff understand ICS processes



# Questions?

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