



Alaska Regional and Area Planning Frequently Asked Questions

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Area Committee Questions

What is the Planning Framework for Alaska?

Alaska planning framework is consistent with the [National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan](#) (NCP).

Alaska Regional Contingency Plan (RCP): As required by 40 CFR 300.210, the Alaska RCP must follow the format of the NCP, delineate between Coast Guard and EPA jurisdictions, and contain any agreements preauthorizing the use of chemical dispersants and use of other chemical agents.

As required by Alaska Statute 46.04.200, the Statewide Master Plan (referred to in this document as the Alaska RCP) must take into consideration the elements of an oil discharge prevention and contingency plan, include incident command systems that clarify and specify the respective responsibilities, and identify actions necessary to reduce the likelihood of discharges of oil or releases of hazardous substances. As required by Alaska Statute 46.04.210, Regional Master Plans (referred to in this document as Area Contingency Plans[ACP]), must identify the area covered by the plan. A public review of the plan will be conducted when substantive revisions are made to either RCP/ACPs.

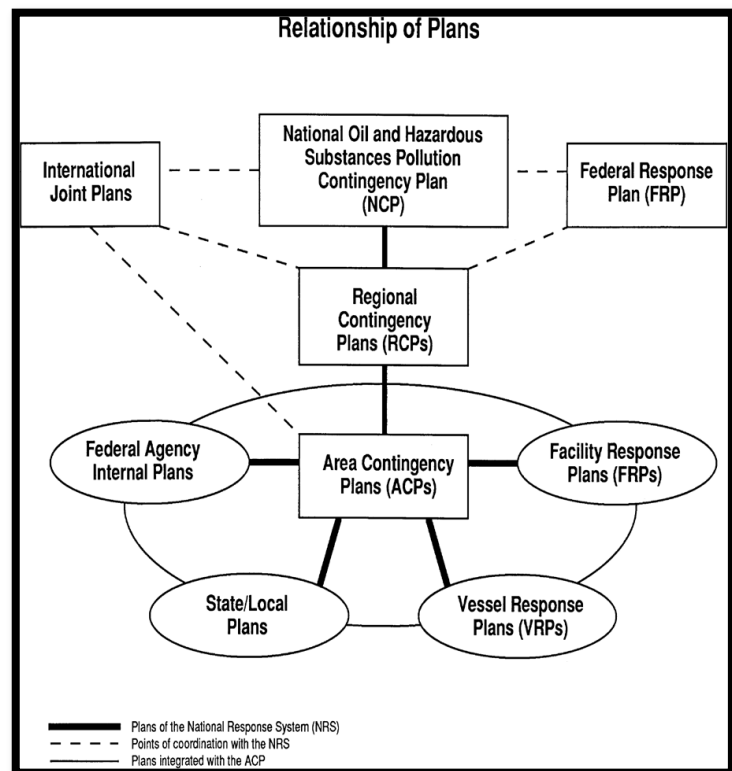
How does the Area Committee work within the National Response System (NRS)?

The Area Committee is part of a large system known as the NRS. Specific components of the NRS are the Federal On-Scene Coordinators (FOSCs), State On-Scene Coordinators (SOSCs), Local On-Scene Coordinator (LOSC), Tribal On-Scene Coordinators (TOSC), Area Committees (ACs), Regional Response Teams (RRTs), State Emergency Response Commissions (SERC), Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs), and the National Response Center (NRC). These components are responsible for leading contingency planning efforts that ultimately guide response activities.

The NRS provides a framework for coordination to respond effectively and efficiently to oil discharges, radiological substance releases, and releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants.

What is an Area Committee?

The Clean Water Act, as amended by the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, and the NCP mandate that an Area Committee must:



- prepare an Area Contingency Plan (ACP) for the Captain of the Port zone;
- work with federal, state, local, and tribal officials to enhance the contingency planning of those officials and to assure preplanning of joint response efforts (joint planning without joint plans), including appropriate procedures for mechanical recovery, alternative response techniques, shoreline cleanup, protection of sensitive environmental areas, and protection, rescue and rehabilitation of fisheries and wildlife; and
- work with federal, state, local, and tribal officials to expedite decisions for the use of dispersants and other mitigating substances and devices and alternative response techniques.

Additional Area Committee activities include but are not limited to: ACP updates; education and outreach; net environmental benefit analysis coordination; and ACP based drills, exercises, and training.

What specific geographic areas of Alaska do the Alaska Area Committees cover?

There are four areas covered by Alaska Area Committees: Arctic and Western Alaska Area (AWA), Prince William Sound (PWS) Area, Southeast Alaska (SEAK) Area, and Alaska Inland Area. These areas mimic the Coast Guard COTP zones and extends seaward 200 nautical miles to include the Exclusive Economic Zone. The delineation between the coastal and inland zones are in the RCP and in a publicly available GIS layer. In general, the inland area extends from the coastal areas beginning 1,000 yards inland from shore. Follow this link to see the Alaska RCP:



<http://www.alaskarrt.org/>

Where can you obtain more information about Area Committees, meetings, and activities?

To obtain information about the date, time and location of the Alaska Area Committees, please visit website: <http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/ppr/contingency-plans/response-plans/regional-area-planning/>

Who may attend Area Committee Meetings?

Everyone is welcome to attend Area Committee meetings! This is the public's opportunity to provide real-time feedback to the Area's On-Scene Coordinators. Area Committee information and finalized work products are made available to the public via the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) Area and reference and tools webpage at <https://dec.alaska.gov/spar/ppr/contingency-plans/response-plans/tools/>.

Who may serve on an Area Committee?

Individuals may participate in the Area Committee(s) in one of three ways:

Members: These are federal, state, local, and tribal government employees appointed by the FOSC and the SOSC and represent the interests of the government agencies that employ them.

Members-at-large: These individuals are representatives from industry, environmental stakeholders, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), primary response action contractors (PRAC) and oil spill removal organizations (OSROs). These members are limited in the positions they may serve within the Area Committee organizational structure.

Observers: These individuals make up a broad spectrum of interests not already represented above. They are members of the public and individuals that have a specific interest relevant to any given Area Committee topic. These members are limited in the positions they may serve within the Area Committee organizational structure.

What are the active sub-committees and work groups and how do I get involved?

A subcommittee is generally a standing committee composed of some members of the Area Committee to accomplish specific tasking. Each Area Committee has different active subcommittees. For a complete list of subcommittees visit the appropriate ADEC Area Committee webpage. Workgroups are typically convened for a defined project (work with a specific objective and time limit) whose work product is managed under a subcommittee or overall area committee.

Who are the points of contact for the Area committee and the subcommittees?

The Area Committee secretary and planner for each Area Committee are listed on the ADEC Area Committee webpage. For questions regarding Alaska state public comment use this email decsparplanning@alaska.gov.

What is the difference between the Area Committees and the Alaska RRT?

ARRT	AREA COMMITTEE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support to FOSCs and SOSCs• Incident- specific activations or as required by the NCP• Spill planning policy• Strategic direction for Area Planners/Secretaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Co-Chaired by FOSCs and SOSCs• Review of ACPs• Outreach to public; state, tribal, and local responders, and other stakeholders• Ensuring benefit of local and traditional knowledge in our plans• GRS management• Training and exercises• Coordination with Resource Trustees

Area Contingency Plan

What is an Area Contingency Plan (ACP)?

Also required by the Clean Water Act, as amended by the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, and the NCP, ACPs are government managed plans which address oil and hazardous substance response planning. ACPs contain area specific oil and hazardous substance spill response, incident management, and all-hazards preparedness tactics that provide effective implementation of response actions.

Additionally, ACPs describe the strategy for the FOSC and SOSC to achieve a unified and coordinated response with Federal, State, local, and tribal representatives, as well as the responsible party and other stakeholders. FOSCs and SOSCs have the responsibility of overseeing the development of the ACPs. In turn, they work together with their Area Committee secretaries and planners to maintain, review, and test the ACP. EPA is the predesignated FOSC for inland areas and the USCG for coastal areas. ADEC is the predesignated SOSC for all areas of the state.

How is this different from All-Hazards Mitigation Plans?

An All-Hazards Mitigation Plan focuses on a broad spectrum of natural disasters and emergencies. All-Hazards Mitigation Plans aim to reduce the long-term risk caused by disasters and support communities in becoming disaster resilient. ACPs focus on planning, preparedness, and specific response tactics for responders to use in an oil and hazardous substance spill response, consistent with the NCP.

How is this different from an All-Hazards Emergency Operation Plan?

These plans are intended to address response of local/tribal government level personnel to hazards such as natural disasters, fires, hazardous material spills, and active shooters. The goal of these plans is to provide a response roadmap for local/tribal government level personnel as well as ensure citizenry in the immediate area to safety as quickly as possible.

How is this different from an industry response plan?

Various federal and state spill prevention, preparedness and response regulations require the regulated community to have spill response contingency plans that must be consistent with the relevant ACP. Depending on the type of facility or transportation mode (vessel, truck, rail, pipeline, platform, or facility) various federal and state representatives conduct routine compliance reviews. Industry plans are managed by a private entity, reviewed by regulatory personnel, and often tested via federal and state plan exercise requirements.

How does the ACP differ from the traditional emergency management response system?

The Area Committee and the ACP focus on planning, preparedness and response activities associated with oil discharges and hazardous substances releases. The NCP via the NRS ensures a system of preparedness and response that connects at various levels to traditional natural disaster emergency response managed by federal, state, tribal, and local emergency management agencies.

Why do we review the plan annually?

U.S. Coast Guard policy requires annual review of coastal ACPs. In the spirit of interagency coordination, EPA and ADEC have agreed to review all ACPs annually as well. This is consistent with Alaska's overall desire to continue joint planning without joint plans. For more information on the annual plan review process for Alaska Area and Regional planners, see the Plan Review Guidance Presentation on the ADEC Reference and Tools webpage

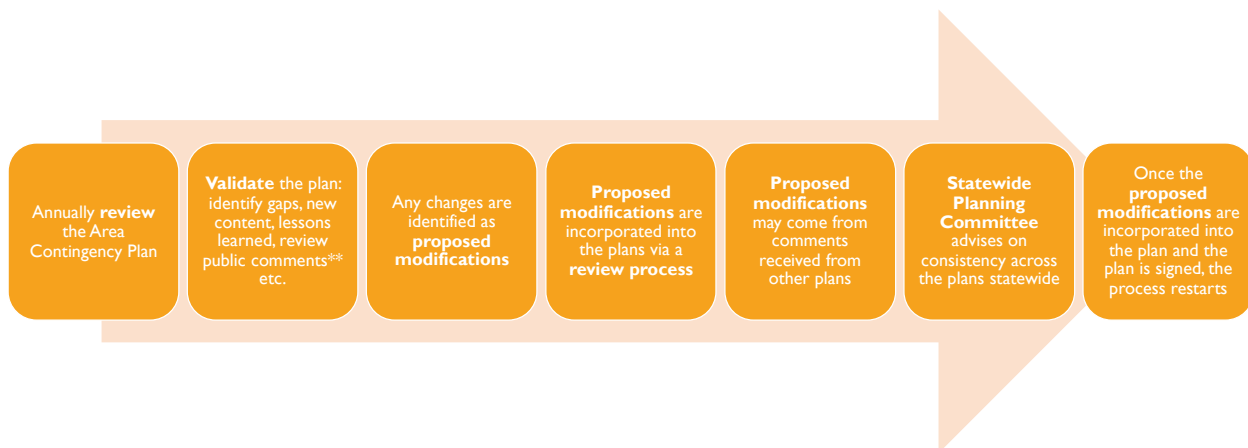
Agency	Review Cycle	Public Review/ Outreach Requirements
USCG	Annual Review	Contingency Planning requires invitation for Tribal Coordination
	5-Year National Review Board	Internal metric to USCG, looking for plan progression
EPA	None specified	Engagement of Federally Recognized Tribes per EPA Region 10 Tribal Consultation And Coordination Procedures
ADEC	In accordance with State of Alaska Statutes & Regulations	Mandated public review process when substantive revisions are required to the Regional or Area Contingency Plan.

How do I make suggested updates to the plan?

Attend Area Committee meetings and participate in the annual review process.

What is the annual review process timeline?

The diagram below is pulled directly from the annual plan review process for Alaska Area and Regional planners, which is part of the Plan Review Guidance Presentation in Reference and tools. Please refer to that presentation for more details.



Note: **Those taking the time to respond to the state’s request for public comment, should be encouraged to help with plan review and write the proposed modifications in the first place via Area Committee administrative subcommittees and workgroups.

How can I use the ACP?

The current ACP format is optimized for more efficient use by responders and is consistent with the requirements outlined in the NCP. At the start of the RCP and ACPs is a “How to use the Plan” section which outlines the use and provides responder guidance. This plan is intended to be responder friendly. To accomplish this a few assumptions and administrative decisions on the layout and content were made.

The plan is organized according to Incident Command System (ICS). The primary ICS chapters are generic to all responses. The hazardous substances section is intended to only address issues specific to these types of responses.

An acronym and abbreviation list and glossary of terms is provided in the plan. This list includes acronyms and abbreviations used in the plan or that are often used in a response. This list is considered “first use” of the term and are not spelled out in later sections of the plan, with a few exceptions.

With a few exceptions, hyperlinks are not imbedded in the plan. Most of these resources are available via the [ADEC References and Tools webpage](#) which is organized by ICS section and by subject. In the plan, the hyperlink refers plan-users to the ADEC References and Tools webpage. The bold heading inside the reference and tools box refers to the categories on the ADEC webpage with this information, although it is not comprehensive. Additional resources that may not be included on the ADEC References and Tools webpage may also be listed in the References and Tools box.

Most hyperlinks were removed from the plan to facilitate hyperlink maintenance. Broken links in previous plan versions were a persistent problem. Also, by consolidating all links in one location, it facilitates the ability of responders to download all applicable files. Attempts have been made to format the ACP files to enhance its usefulness in an electronic format on a computer, tablet, or smartphone.

Notes for the Area Contingency Plan User

This plan is an operational plan for trained responders. This plan is not intended to provide training. Content that was appropriate for prevention, preparedness, or general background has been removed. Content available in previous plan versions that was focused on training vs. operations has been removed. This plan is intended for multi-agency use. In general, agency-specific guidance is not included in the plan but is listed in the “References and Tools” box at the top of each chapter and/or sections and available on the ADEC References and Tools webpage.