

ANNEX V: VOLUNTEERS

The use of volunteers has been an item of increasing interest following several incidents of note in the United States.

The possible use of volunteers is recognized in 40 CFR 300 (the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan [NCP]), part 185 (c) as follows: Area Contingency Plans (ACPs) shall establish procedures to allow for well-organized, worthwhile, and safe use of volunteers, including compliance with 300.150 regarding worker health and safety. ACPs should provide for the direction of volunteers by the on-scene coordinator, remedial project manager, or by other federal, state, or local officials knowledgeable in contingency operations and capable of providing leadership. ACPs also should identify specific areas in which volunteers can be used, such as beach surveillance, logistical support, or bird and wildlife treatment. The definitions section of the NCP includes “volunteer” as follows: **Volunteer** means any individual accepted to perform services by the lead agency that has authority to accept volunteer services (examples: See 16 U.S.C. 742f(c)). A volunteer is subject to the provisions of the authorizing statute and the NCP.

Within the State of Alaska, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) does not embrace the concept of the use of volunteers for oil and hazardous substance response for a number of reasons, including insurance and liability issues and general accountability (the need for a dedicated work force to meet specified performance standards, availability to work as scheduled, and not as time permits, etc.).

In the case of a major spill event, the ADEC will direct the responsible party (RP) to train and hire an additional work force (volunteers may be considered, but will be hired only as paid employees) as necessary. If no RP exists (or the RP refuses to hire needed additional workers), then the ADEC will use its term contractors and proceed with emergency hiring of additional workers, as necessary. The agency will bill the RP and cost recover for any and all costs involved in the response, including the agency’s costs to bring on additional workers (e.g., paid employees, not volunteers).

General Guidelines on the Use of Volunteers:

The National Response Team is developing guidelines for the use of volunteers in support on an oil or hazardous substance response.

The Pacific States/British Columbia Task Force for Oil Spills has developed a document entitled *Planning Guidelines for Convergent Volunteer Management*, which may be viewed at the following website:

http://www.oilspilltaskforce.org/docs/planning_for_volunteer_management.pdf

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