



Arctic and Western Alaska Area Committee: Geographic Response Strategies (GRS) Subcommittee

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The purpose of the Arctic and Western Alaska (AWA) Area Committee's (AC) Geographic Response Strategies (GRS) Subcommittee is to serve as an advisory body and workgroup of subject matter experts on all matters related to the development, evaluation, strategic and tactical planning, and management of GRSs within the AWA jurisdiction. This subcommittee reports directly to the AWA AC Steering Committee via the Area Committee Secretary or his/her designee. As such, the subcommittee:

- Represents the entire AWA AC in the conduct of their work; and
- Is responsible to the Steering Committee in terms of defining the work to be conducted, informing the Area Secretary regarding progress and unanticipated challenges, and reporting back subcommittee findings in a timely fashion.

In addition to accomplishing the tasks defined for the subcommittee, subcommittee work will have the broader goal of enhancing the knowledge base of team members around the critical issue areas on which they are working.

A. Subcommittee Objectives

Primary Objectives:

- Conduct timely administrative reviews of both newly proposed GRSs and proposed updates to existing ACP GRSs and provide recommendations to the AC Steering Committee for acceptance or rejection.
- Provide strategic guidance, recommendations, and feedback on the GRS program, with the goal of continual improvement and meeting the needs of responders and planners.

Sub-Objectives:

- Develop a process for prioritizing GRSs for validation based on oil spill risk assessment, environmental sensitivity, tactical feasibility, site accessibility, validation history, logistical considerations, and any other criteria established by the Subcommittee, and conduct this prioritization process annually prior to field season.
- Develop and/or refine protocols and data entry forms for Tier I-IV GRS validation based on overarching guidance in the national GRS validation framework (Table 5-1 in U.S. Coast Guard Marine Environmental Response and Preparedness Manual, COMDTINST M16000.14B, March 2025).
- Review industry plans and NGO-developed/updated GRSs for consistency with ACP GRSs and integrate into the ACP if appropriate.
- Communicate with industry exercise planners to validate ACP GRSs and if necessary, incorporate any updates.
- Identify proposed areas for new GRS development and establish working group(s), as appropriate.



- Coordinate with other AWA Subcommittees, including the Exercise and Training, Regulator Coordination Advisory and ACP Administration Subcommittees, as well as the Prince William Sound and Southeast Alaska GRS Subcommittees, as appropriate.

B. Subcommittee Membership, Organization, Roles, and Responsibilities

Membership:

Subcommittee membership shall be comprised of both permanent [required] agency members and additional [non-required] member-at-large agencies, organizations, and individuals. There is no set number of Subcommittee members. The AWA AC Steering Committee shall approve all Subcommittee membership requests, and membership will be reviewed and validated annually. Individual members are requested to serve a term of two years; there are no term limits for member organizations or individuals.

Any individual from any organization or member of the public may attend GRS Subcommittee meetings (e.g., for observational, informational or specific advisory purposes), but will not be considered members and will not be eligible to vote on internal decisions or recommendations made to the AWA AC Steering Committee by the Subcommittee.

Organization:

The Subcommittee shall be led by a Chair and Vice Chair. The Chair must be a member of the AWA AC. The Vice Chair may be a member of the AWA AC or a member-at-large. The Chair and Vice Chair shall be appointed in writing by the AWA AC Steering Committee. To the extent practicable, the Chair and Vice Chair shall have pre-existing knowledge, expertise, or experience in GRSs (or equivalent).

Roles and Responsibilities:

Chair:

- Lead the Subcommittee in the execution of its mandate, including planning and oversight of Subcommittee's priority objectives and sub-objectives.
- Attend AWA AC meetings and report to the Area Committee.
- Work with Area Planners and Subcommittee members to schedule Subcommittee meetings.
- Develop AC and Subcommittee meeting agendas and post-meeting minutes.
- Distribute meeting agendas, associated materials, and minutes to Subcommittee members and Area Planners at least one week prior to Subcommittee meetings.
- Lead Subcommittee meetings.
- Keep Subcommittee documents organized, up to date, and accessible to Subcommittee members.
- Facilitate and track progress of Subcommittee assignments.
- Transmit official Subcommittee recommendations and approval requests to the AWA AC for consideration.
- Communicate and collaborate with the Vice Chair on all significant issues, assignments, strategic planning, and public presentations.
- Periodically review this Charter to maintain currency and relevance; advance any proposed Charter updates to the AWA Steering Committee for consideration.
- Delegate duties to Vice Chair, as necessary.

Vice Chair:

- Attend AWA AC meetings in support of the Chair.
- Assist the Chair in execution of their duties, as requested and delegated.



Permanent Subcommittee Member agencies:

- Advance qualified candidates for Chair and Vice Chair positions.
- Provide adequate staff time to Chair/Vice Chair for successful execution of their duties.
- Provide material and administrative support for the Subcommittee.
- Provide a note-taker for Subcommittee meetings and/or provide software for real-time transcription.

Additional Subcommittee Members:

- Share knowledge, experience, expertise, and insight.
- Provide guidance and recommendations.
- Maintain good attendance at meetings.
- Complete assigned reading and reviews prior to meetings.

C. Subcommittee Meetings

Meeting Schedule and Process:

The subcommittee will meet quarterly, at a minimum, to accomplish established objectives within timelines set by AWA AC steering committee. Ad-hoc, dedicated meetings may also be scheduled to address specific tasks outside the scope of regularly scheduled meetings, such as reviewing new GRSs or proposed GRS updates. Subcommittee meetings do not require a quorum. As a rule, meetings will be recorded and summarized in meeting minutes, which will be distributed within one week of the meeting. The Chair and Vice Chair shall maintain awareness of the subcommittee's progress and any issues regarding project advancement. Subcommittees should attempt to reach consensus on subcommittee activities. If consensus cannot be reached, the subcommittee chair will forward the issue with a recommendation, along with the other options for resolution of the issue, to the AWA AC Steering Committee via the Area Committee Secretary for final decision. The Chair shall brief on progress towards assigned tasking at any scheduled AWA steering committee meeting.

Example Quarterly Meeting Agenda:

Subcommittees establish their own agenda or follow the agenda outlined below:

- Introductions (if new members/attendees are present).
- Introductory items, such as corrections/acceptance of previous meeting minutes, meeting/project objectives review.
- Review project(s) status and timeline.
- Conduct/initiate subcommittee activities.
- Review progress and summarize new action items following the current subcommittee meeting.
- Identify, clarify, and document "parking lot" issues (tangential issues identified during the meeting that are worthy of subsequent discussion).
- Plans, date, and location for the next meeting.