

Meeting Summary

Quarterly Response Status Update

8 FEB 2007

USCG MSU Port Arthur, TX

Prepared by ENTRIX - 18 MAY 2007

Attendees:

Steve Lehmann (NOAA SSC)	Amy McElroy (USCG)
Andrew Davis (LLGM/RP)	Rick Falcinelli (K-Sea/RP)
J.T. Ewing (TGLO)	Ross Penton (TGLO)
Ralph Markarian (ENTRIX/RP)	Chris Pfeifer (ENTRIX/RP)
Thomas Sparks (USCG-COTP)	A. Scott Clingenpeel (USCG)
Troy Baker (NOAA Assessment & Restoration)	

- In his opening remarks, Captain of the Port (COTP) Sparks expressed his appreciation of the Responsible Party's (RP) cooperation since the last meeting (30 OCT 06) and was impressed with their timely completion of the action items established at the 30 OCT 06 meeting. He indicated his desire to carefully and deliberately document the response effort and close-out process in order to provide a clear chronology of major events and rationale for key decisions. This effort should also document on-going areas of disagreement (if any) between any of the parties.
- COTP Sparks acknowledged the RP's on-going efforts to initiate recovery of the offshore debris field and realized that lack of available equipment by the RP's salvage company (T&T Marine Salvage) and weather were causing the delay. He encouraged the RP to consider using different equipment or another salvage company if the delay was anticipated to continue for more than several more weeks. The RP agreed to look into other options.
- After COTP Sparks' remarks, ENTRIX delivered a PowerPoint presentation (attached). Highlights from the presentation follow:
 - Completion of action items assigned to the RP at the 30 OCT 06 meeting within the specified time frames was confirmed. Completed action items included:
 - Finalizing "operational draft" documents.
 - Providing a full inventory of samples taken by the RP and all analytical results to the agencies.
 - Establishing provisions for sharing existing data with the agencies (in lieu of agencies reanalyzing splits taken from existing RP samples) and providing the agencies with split samples for all samples collected by the RP after the 30 OCT 06 meeting.

- Enhancing the meeting and call schedule to facilitate more frequent, structured formal communications between the RP and the agencies.
- Developing and implementing a plan for monitoring the bolus.
- ENTRIX summarized the results of the three (3) bolus long-term monitoring (LTM) events conducted since the last meeting. J.T. Ewing (TGLO) requested a map depicting the rig allision location, the drift path of the barge, the capsized location, the "ladder pattern" search area (July towed video survey plan) and the bolus location. The RP agreed to include such a map in the final documentation package, which satisfied TGLO's request.
- ENTRIX went on to report that the no moderate oil was present during the most recent survey (mid-January 2007) and that, overall, bolus LTM observations were consistent with the finding of continued break-up and dissipation of the heavy oil characterizing the bolus in September 2006. No dissenting opinions were raised by any of the agency representatives.
- Fingerprinting by the USCG Marine Safety Lab (MSL) of weathered oil samples collected from VSORS-Light snare confirmed that oil in the vicinity of the bolus originated from the DBL 152. Biomarker analysis of similar samples performed by the RP indicated that oil in the vicinity of bolus was in fact a match with oil from the bolus collected by divers in September 2006, and not just background DBL 152 oil. This conclusion bolstered the position that the bolus was breaking-up and dissipating.
- COTP Sparks asked the RP if, based on all of the survey work completed to date, they were confident that a large accumulation of oil would not have gone unnoticed. ENTRIX responded that preliminary statistical analysis indicated that it was unlikely that a very large accumulation of oil would have remained undetected, and if other undetected accumulations of oil similar to the bolus in size and nature did exist, there is no reason to believe that these also would not be breaking-up and dissipating. COTP Sparks had no further questions on this topic, nor did NOAA or TGLO.
- The RP put forth a recommendation that the Unified Command terminate all further long-term monitoring efforts. This recommendation was agreed to by the USCG, NOAA and TGLO without objection.
- All parties agreed that the next step was to formally close out the response phase through a documentation effort and fully transition the case over into the OPA natural resource damage assessment process (NRDA) under NOAA. The RP proposed the idea of preparing an Environmental Unit Final Report as an information management and documentation tool. Apparently, the agencies envisioned something very similar. The group talked through some general ideas and the types of information that should be included in this report and agreed that the first steps for all parties would entail compiling their respective files and information. A working meeting to compare documentation, identify data gaps, and formulate a general outline for the data report was tentatively scheduled for 10-11 April 2007 at ENTRIX's office in Houston. At a minimum,

- Steve Lehmann (NOAA), Amy McElroy (USCG) and Chris Pfeifer (ENTRIX) would attend.
- Steve Lehmann (NOAA) identified an additional action item required to close out the response phase: completion of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 Consultation. He indicated that this process would be completed by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), with possible involvement of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and would not require RP involvement. His intention is to attempt to satisfy this need through informal discussion among the agencies. Steve Lehman will take the lead on this action item and report back to the RP.
 - Other "punch list" items included:
 - Potentially completing a modeling task examining whether differences in oil density and viscosity among the different oils aboard the DBL 152 could account for the bolus.
 - Potentially convening a technical meeting to reach final consensus on the conceptual model of oil fate & transport.
 - Developing and circulating a draft outline for the Environmental Unit Final Report.
 - Following-up with Caleb Brett regarding the availability of retained shore tank oil samples.