



Canada / United States Great Lakes CANUSLAK Joint Response Team (JRT)



Annual Meeting Minutes • January 25, 2021

Participants

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Jean-Francois Joly | CCG Central & Arctic Region |
| Martin Blouin | CCG Central & Arctic Region |
| Amanda Greer | CCG Central & Arctic Region |
| Peter Knight | CCG Central & Arctic Region |
| Joanne Munroe | Canada Energy Regulator |
| David Irwin | Transport Canada |
| Lisa Perusse | Environment Canada |
| Lisa Tulen | Environment Canada |
| LT Rachel Pryor | U. S. NOAA Scientific Support Coordinator |
| Eddie Murphy | U. S. DOT PHMSA |
| CAPT Craig Massello | USCG Ninth District |
| Jerry Popiel | USCG Ninth District |
| TJ Mangoni | USCG Ninth District |
| Bob Allen | USCG Ninth District |
| CAPT Brad Kelly | USCG Sector Detroit |
| CAPT Meridena Kaufmann | USCG Sector Detroit |
| CDR Stacey Crecy | USCG Sector Detroit |
| Brian Streichert | USCG Sector Sault Ste. Marie |
| Steve Keck | USCG Sector Sault Ste. Marie |
| CDR Frances Smith | USCG MSU Duluth |
| Keiton Moore | USCG MSU Duluth |
| Rob Zappia | USCG MSU Duluth |
| Carl Pellegrino | USEPA Region 2 |
| Barbi Lee | USEPA Region 5 |
| Kim Churchill | USEPA Region 5 |

Welcome and Introductions. Per section 304.2 of the Canada-U.S. Joint Marine Contingency Plan, the 2019 CANUSLAK JRT Meeting was held on the afternoon of January 25, 2021, conducted virtually using Adobe Connect and a conference voice line. Mr. Joly, Canadian Coast Guard Co-Chair, and Mr. Popiel, U. S. Coast Guard Co-Chair, provided opening comments welcoming the participants.

Agency Updates

CCG.

- Amanda Greer provided the Canadian Coast Guard update. They have a new hire in Peter Knight, who has already been working collaboratively with the USCG.
- CCG had a busy CANUSLAK year in 2020 with six responses involving CANUS areas. The P/V ISLAND DUCHESS and M/V HARVEST SPIRIT were the two most significant.
- Currently working on a document addressing binational firefighting and marine salvage.

Transport Canada

- David Irwin provided the Transport Canada update. David has replaced Shannon Seko, who is now Regional Director.
- COVID-19 has had impacts on Transport Canada's operations, changing how they do business but not what services are offered. While non-urgent travel is still being curtailed, focus has been on making sure that response capability does not diminish. The province of Ontario is still under an overall travel lockdown, but responders can travel in case of emergency.

Environment Canada

- Lisa Perusse provided the Environment Canada update. Environment Canada has been working to establish a new response structure and an emergency operations center in Montreal. The center is not yet fully staffed, currently two people.
- They are working on honing internal protocols for streamlining and improving response.

Canada Energy Regulator

- Joanne Munroe provided the Canada Energy Regulator update. She confirmed that she is the only CER response officer in Ontario. Paul-Emile Auger is based out of Montreal, but will likely not have much involvement in the Ontario region.
- Similar travel impacts from COVID-19 as other agencies, but Joanne has been working 100% virtual for long term so no impact on day-to-day operations. Inspections and responses are all still happening as needed.
- Primary recent activity has been in western Canada.
- Working on using MS Teams for use as virtual EOC.

U. S. National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration

- LT Rachel Pryor provided the NOAA update. Steve Lehmann, longtime NOAA Scientific Support Coordinator and representative to U. S. RRT 5 retired last year. NOAA is currently working through final stages of replacement hiring.
- Similar COVID-19 impacts as other agencies, but all critical tasks are being accomplished.
- New U. S. legislation has directed NOAA to update Environmental Sensitivity Index (ESI) charts every seven years. Expecting to complete St. Marys River and St. Lawrence Seaway ESIs in 2021. Future funding for the seven-year updates is not yet clear.

U.S. EPA Region 2

- Carl Pellegrino provided the US EPA Region 2 update. Region 2 has been engaged with Environmental Sensitivity Index work in the Lake Champlain area.

U.S. EPA Region 5

- Barbi Lee provided the US EPA Region 5 update. EPA Region 5 and RRT 5 are putting on a PFAS/PFOA-focused meeting to address emerging response issues around the region.
- Next RRT 5 meeting is in April.

USCG.

- Jerry Popiel provided the U.S. Coast Guard update. Included a brief overview of USCG fiscal year 2020 oil spill statistics and response measures.
- Efforts are continuing to expand D9's unmanned aerial system (UAS) program for use in MER cases.
- D9 is continuing the Endangered Species Act compliance project for the U.S. portion of the Great Lakes. It is a regional attempt to create a Biological Evaluation that the U.S. services (U. S. Fish and Wildlife) may analyze to determine the impacts of spill response activities on endangered species. Goal is to use best practices to minimize adverse effects of response to endangered species.
- D9 has removed Spilled Oil Removal Systems (SORS) from the 225' buoytenders located on the Great Lakes. Replacement capability will be provided via U. S. Navy SUPSALV.
- Continuing a regional emphasis on area contingency plans (ACP). The USCG third annual ACP national review panel was held in July and Sector Buffalo's ACP was one of the ones evaluated.

- Management of COVID-19 impacts continues. Most travel is curtailed, but all critical mission requirements continue to be met.

Recent incidents – case debrief of P/V ISLAND DUCHESS response

- TJ Mangoni and Amanda Greer led a case debrief of the P/V ISLAND DUCHESS response
- On August 21, 2020, Sector Buffalo, MSD Massena, Canadian Coast Guard and other partners responded to a reported mass rescue, oil spill response and vessel salvage of the P/V ISLAND DUCHESS on the St. Lawrence Seaway. Through the efforts of the involved response agencies and the CANUSLAK response framework, the effort resulted in 134 passengers and 5 crew lives saved, responded to the release of at least 1,200 gallons of diesel fuel into an environmentally sensitive area, and saved the total loss of a Coast Guard-inspected vessel estimated to be worth nearly one million dollars.
- In the course of this challenging incident, responders coordinated numerous local, regional, and international resources, including a Royal Canadian Air Force Hercules aircraft that dropped pumps to a responding Canadian Coast Guard rescue boat, three fire departments with marine rescue boats, and crews from Clayton, Hammond, and Alexandria Bay, NY, and pollution response teams from Sector Buffalo and MSD Massena.
- NOAA’s Great Lakes Scientific Support Coordinator, Environment and Climate Change Canada, and State of NY Department of Environmental Conservation developed oil spill trajectories and evaluated all potential impacts and prioritized environmental resources at risk. Pollution responders from the U.S. Coast Guard, Coast Guard Auxiliary, and Response Officers from the Canadian Coast Guard acted as a coordinated response team to search for collectible diesel fuel in prioritized sensitive areas, finding only minor sheening. All together, the team members put forth remarkable effort in protecting the people, property, and the environment during this incident.



Proposed changes to the CANUSLAK Annex

- The JRT attendees conducted a high-level review of the CANUSLAK Annex to identify possible updates needed. The entire CANUSLAK Annex was re-signed in 2016 and is overall still valid in most respects other than correction of certain contact information.
- Need to update the contacts section with the correct region POC names..
- Will evaluate the need for a risk assessment section in the Annex, requesting guidance at the national level how detailed this is envisioned.

International Coordinating Officer (ICO) Overview

- TJ Mangoni provided an overview of the ICO position. Provided background on the development of the position, the subsequent adoption of the ICO concept into the main bi-national JCP agreement and use in recent responses.
- Outlined differences between ICO and ICS liaison officer or agency representative.
- Discussed successful use of ICO during response to M/V RT HON PAUL J MARTIN, M/V TECUMSEH and T/V ARGO cases.

Ship Refloating Guide

- Martin Blouin led a discussion about the inclusion of the Refloating Plan Guide for Masters, Ship Operators and Salvage Corporations in the CANUSLAK annex. The document was last revised in 2007, as a joint product of CCG and TC. Since then, it has been successfully used in a number of responses in the region.
- Consensus was that this document, perhaps refreshed or updated, would be an appropriate appendix to the CANUSLAK Annex.

Exercise Schedule

- Bob Allen led the exercise schedule discussion. Next up is the Duluth full-scale exercise in May. A vessel collision scenario impacting Isle Royale and other sensitive areas. Some CANUS interaction may be notional or simulated.
- A Detroit full-scale exercise is scheduled for August 18 near St. Clair Flats. It will be a grounding scenario, equipment deployment including EPA's M/V LAKE GUARDIAN and UAS.
- A St. Lawrence Seaway full-scale exercise is scheduled for August 31. It is a maritime transportation system disruption scenario, with some MER impacts. Some CANUS interaction may be notional or simulated.

Next meeting

- To be determined.