



## Upper Narragansett Bay/Providence River Geographic Response Plan (GRP) Project

December 11, 2008, 1:00 p.m.

RI DEM

235 Promenade Street  
Providence, RI 02908

Project website: <http://rigrp.nukaresearch.com>

### Attendees

James Ball – RI DEM	Josh Hill - Promet Marine Services, Inc.
Jennifer Bothwell – Motiva Enterprises	Scott Metzger – Clean Harbors
Tom Campbell – RI DEM	Mike Popovich - USCG
Stuart Cornell - Coastline Service	Sanne Schneider - Nuka Research
Joseph Crowshaw - EPVD Fire Dept.	Todd Turcotte - Capital
Elise DeCola - Nuka Research	John Whyte - Clean Harbors
Kerri Dunning - USCG	

### Introduction & Opening Comments

Elise DeCola welcomed the group and thanked Jim Ball for hosting the meeting at the RIDEM. She explained that this would be the last meeting of the workgroup, and that the purpose of the meeting was to review and discuss the revised GRPs, and to review the outcome of the deployment tests.

### Summary of Activities Since Last Meeting

Deployment tests were completed in September and October for 10 of the 24 GRP sites. Elise DeCola thanked all of the people present for their involvement in the drills; as observers, evaluators, and participants. DeCola stated that a summary of the Deployment Tests was on the website as well as the GRPs. She urged all of the workgroup members to review them and return any comments to her by December 31, 2008. Nuka will make any revisions and then turn them over to RIDEM so that they are ready to submit to the Area Committee meeting in March.

Jim Ball joined in to thank everyone for their assistance and response to the need for participants, observers, and evaluators to make the Deployment Tests run smoothly and effectively. He stated that a lot was learned and that it will be put to good use.

### Deployment Testing Summary

Elise DeCola, John Whyte, and Stu Cornell were present at all the 10 sites tested. Clean Harbors and Coastline alternated taking the lead on certain dates, and the other was there for backup. Observers and evaluators from the terminals, agencies, and towns rotated throughout the deployment tests. Fire departments from Providence, East Providence, and Cranston also took part, and used the opportunity to operate their newly purchase response boats.

DeCola said that the objective was to start by looking at the GRP and determine which strategies were effective in actual use. There were many modifications and corrections made during the Deployment tests. Documentation was made on how long it took to deploy boom, how many people were needed to move and set boom, how much boom was needed



at each site, and how the boom was configured and anchors. Some sites had good access while others lacked boat ramps or other suitable infrastructure to unload the trailers. There were pluses and minuses noted at every staging site. DeCola reiterated that all this information is on the website for review.

Stu Cornell found the Deployments tests to be very informative because they were conducted at a range of locations in the upper bay, as opposed to in the Port of Providence, where they usually work. He stated that it would be helpful for the people deploying the boom to have more input at the initial stages of GRP development. It was beneficial to have shorter pieces of boom and to move the boom by water for multiple deployments. This taught them more about what they could do in the event of a spill.

Jim Ball noted that the GRPs are an invaluable tool and they should be used, not shelved and forgotten. He suggested that the East Providence Fire Department could do some practice drills in the next year, thereby increasing the visibility and validating the need for having a plan in place.

Joe Crowshaw asked if terminals have certain requirements for training and Todd Turcotte replied in the affirmative. Todd stated that the USCG and the EPA both have drills in which a certain amount of boom needs to be deployed within in a certain time period. However, it was noted that these drills are typically focused on straight compliance with the Facility Response Plan rather than with trying to identify new protection strategies. Cornell reiterated that less boom is more useful in protecting many shoreline sites. John Whyte suggested that one of the agency representatives approach the EPA and ask if it was possible to drill with other criteria, in order to broaden response capacities. Scott Metzger said that it depended on the plan in place with each terminal, but Elise DeCola supposed that it is a mindset that could be changing. Jim Ball stated that it was important to do the training and drilling as often as feasible. Mike Popovich raised the point that drill requirements are in case of emergencies while GRPs are used in advance of a spill. There should be training for both emergency and defensive booming.

Joe Crowshaw suggested that the terminals could simply add another tier to their already established plans, then introduce to the EPA a new strategy for drilling in that manner. There was agreement that there is already some leeway in the EPA's measurement of whether or not a drill is successful. There was discussion regarding funding for drills, availability of and responsibility for boom, and scheduling of drills.

Jim Ball spoke of losing institutional knowledge by losing people (layoffs, retirements, etc.) and Elise DeCola stated that was another reason for involving many people in training, Deployment tests, and putting them on workgroup email lists. The more information that is disseminated the better. There was general agreement that the GRPs should be used in RI DEM planning sessions, referenced in FRPs, and possibly deployed during mobile marine transfers or other incidents where spills are possible.

### **Review of Draft GRPs**

Elise DeCola began by pulling up the full set of GRPs on the overhead for review and discussion. In considering the first GRP site, some general suggestions arose about the overall layout and format. Joe Crowshaw asked that the boom color be changed from red to anything else, because it disappears when the GRPs are viewed with night vision red lights. DeCola indicated that the change had already been made, to yellow. Todd Turcotte mentioned that at one site there were areas where permanent anchorage could be installed and asked if there was funding for this. DeCola referred him to RI DEM and Jim Ball said that they would find out who could do the installations. Stu remarked that there were



plenty of tie-offs at most sites and DeCola followed up, saying that there may be some use for permanent anchors, especially further down the bay. Joe Crowshaw said he would talk to the harbormaster in East Providence about the Bullock Cove site, which was one area where a potential permanent anchor site had been identified.

When attention was on the first GRP, DeCola mentioned that the format had been changed a bit because all information was now generated directly from GIS and the tables were developed in MS Word, so RI DEM can update at will. Some of the visual sophistication had been sacrificed for functionality.

GRP-01 – Patience Island: Scott Metzger asked if the local contacts could be listed on the first page of the GRP. He stated that it was very helpful on some CA GRPs he had worked with to have a point of contact for local knowledge about a particular site, but that it needed to be updated often. Joe Crowshaw suggested that someone from RIDEM Enforcement would know who would be good local contacts (local fishermen, etc.). Jim Ball asked what was being protected with this GRP and DeCola replied that the boom was set to deflect oil, or to keep it in the channel and away from shore. When Ball asked if the oil could get caught in the little cove with a tide shift, Cornell answered that the cove could be closed off if necessary. DeCola reminded them that there was no infrastructure out there to support shoreside recovery. Jim Ball also suggested that the photos of Patience Island all be oriented the same way.

GRP-02 – Mill Creek and Conimicut Point: Ball and DeCola discussed whether the marsh could be closed off with a straight leg rather than a chevron, and the responders in the room noted that a chevron array was better than a straight line due to the shallow water depth – a chevron would allow more of the boom to be floating at low tide. Ball asked that arrows be put on the photos, of the location of the strategies and DeCola stated that she could do a rudimentary marking, but explained that some of the graphics capabilities had been lost with the change to GIS/Word layout.

GRP-03 – Occupessatuxet Cove: Stu Cornell and Elise DeCola stated that during the Deployment test, the first place boom was set did not work at all and modifications were made (deflection array was removed because it was too shallow in the Green Island area). Ball also noted that there were no driving directions to South Meadow boat ramp and suggested that directions to staging sites/boat ramps be put on all GRPs.

GRP-04 – Pässeonkquis Cove and Gaspee Point: Jim Ball asked about the culvert plugs that were mentioned in the GRP. He wondered if local materials could be used, because RI DEM does not have culvert plugs. DeCola stated that MA DEP has some and Scott Metzger said that Clean Harbors has them as well. Mike Popovich wondered if inflatable dams would work and who manufactures them. It was agreed that the GRP would allow for flexibility depending upon available materials to block the culvert.

GRP-05 – Pawtuxet Cove: Cornell stated there were good tie-offs at the site.

GRP-06 – Stillhouse Cove to Fields Point: Ball suggested a note to also consider booming off the two large conduits that run between the road and the water near the Yacht Club, to prevent oil from entering Stillhouse Cove.

GRP-07 – Lower Port of Providence: No comments.



GRP-08 – Upper Port of Providence: There was general discussion regarding access to Collier Park, given the long salvage process for the sunken submarine. Elise DeCola stated that she had a 24-hour phone number for Dominion from Chris O'Connell, which will ensure access.

GRP-09 – Fox Point and the Hurricane Barrier: No comments.

GRP-10 – Woonasquetucket River: DeCola stated that this GRP survey was completed by foot. Metzger suggested that while it would be unlikely for oil to travel this far upriver on the water, it would be good to have the GRP in case of a truck rollover on one of the nearby roadways or bridges. Tom Campbell noted that it would be a good place for a permanent anchor; a slide track on the concrete. Cornell agreed that it would be helpful to have.

GRP-11 – India & Bold Points: This site has a notation of Upper Narragansett Bay Special Management Plan and Ball indicated he would like to know exactly what the concern is. DeCola stated that her understanding was it was a concern of environmental restoration, not contamination. She noted that the SAMP designation was generated by RI CRMC and she would contact them for clarification regarding whether there were particular resources in need of protection here. Joe Crowshaw put in that a quick deployment at the neck would guard the rest of the river.

GRP-12 – Seekonk River: No comments.

GRP-13 – Pawtucket: No comments.

GRP-14 – Watchemoket Cove: No comments.

GRP-15 – Riverside: There was no Deployment test at this site. Access was discussed and determined that Saber Point is a good spot by land, and boats can launch at the end of Beach Road. Otherwise, access would be through private land. DeCola suggested a change from recovery to deflection, or to remove altogether, for the diversion tactic where access was not feasible.

GRP-16 – Bullock Cove: Ball asked that the size of the culvert be noted.

GRP-17 – Drown Cove: No Deployment test was done at this site. No comments.

GRP-18 – Annawamscott & Mussachuck creeks: No comments.

GRP-19 – Smith Cove: DeCola noted there is no shoreside access here for boom deployment or recovery. Boom was towed through Barrington harbor mooring area to reach this site, which had led to a change in the strategy to allow for protection using less boom.

GRP-20 – Warren River: DeCola stated that there is a good recovery area near the Barrington Yacht Club, and that booming on the Barrington side of the river would be nearly impossible due to tidal currents and eddies.

GRP-21 – Barrington River: Jim Ball asked that the exclusion be removed and restated his wish to have arrows on the maps.

GRP-22 – Palmer River: No comments.

GRP-23 – Mill Gut: No Comments.



GRP 24 – Prudence Island: Cornell noted that there is a makeshift boat ramp there.

### **Identify Final Changes/Revisions to GRP**

DeCola noted that the GRPs would be revised and published pending final comments from the work group. The deadline for comments is 12/31/08.

### **Review Action Items**

All workgroup members are encouraged to online and look at the GRPs, make comments/suggestions via email to Elise DeCola by December 31, 2008

- put arrows on maps – Nuka
- put driving directions to boat ramps – Nuka
- put dates on aerial photos – Nuka
- create box for “methodology” on GRPs - Nuka
- make orientation of photos consistent - Nuka
- update GRPs per site-specific suggestions made during meeting
- talk to harbormaster about permanent anchors at Bullock Cove – EPVD Fire

### **Final Comments**

Scott Metzger complimented Nuka Research on the GRPs, saying they would be useful in case of large events. Joe Crowshaw stated the East Providence Fire Department has laptops on their boats and will definitely use the GRPs. Tom Campbell praised the dynamic strategies of the GRPs and Jim Ball said they need to be “truthed”, meaning that all the GRPs should be tested and used and continually updated.

Metzger suggested that the aerial photos be dated and Mike Popovich noted that an area for comments would be helpful on the GRPs that have been tested. Tom Campbell said that if the GRPs are going to be stored electronically, then footnotes could be used for comments.

### **Adjourn**

Jim Ball thanked Nuka Research for creating the GRPs and Motiva for providing the funding. He stated it was valuable information and reiterated that he would like to find a way to do field tests annually at least. Stu Cornell thanked DeCola for the opportunity to get out and practice these tactics.

### **Next Meeting**

There will be a debrief meeting scheduled between Nuka, Motiva, and RIDEM in January. This work group will not reconvene until another GRP project is initiated.