

**Meeting Summary**  
**Upper Mississippi River Hazardous Spills Coordination Group**  
**February 28-March 1, 2006**  
**Moline, Illinois**

John Whitaker, Chair of the Upper Mississippi River (UMR) Hazardous Spills Coordination Group, called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm on Tuesday, February 28th. The following UMR Spills Group and UMR Water Suppliers Coalition members were in attendance:

John Whitaker	Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Jim Silver	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7
John Punkiewicz	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District
Frank Catalano	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District
Roger Lauder	Illinois EPA, Emergency Response
Tim Ganz	American Water Company
Greg Swanson*	City of Moline Water Department
Steve Faryan	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5
Ryan Schuler	American Water Company
Rodney Tucker	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Jim MacDonald	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7
LTjg James Peeler	U.S. Coast Guard
Scott Pettis	U.S. Coast Guard
David Morrison	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
Tom Morgan	FEMA, Region 7
Ann Whelan	U.S. EPA, Region 5
Gary Haden	McKinzie Environmental
Tom Kendzierski	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Patrick Cuty	U.S. Coast Guard, District 8
Dave Owens*	City of Moline Water Department
Satyajyoti Debchoudhury*	City of Moline Water Department
Ginger Molitor**	US Fish and Wildlife Service
Dave Hokanson	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association

\*February 28<sup>th</sup> only.

\*\*March 1<sup>st</sup> only.

(Note: In the meeting summary, follow-up action items are shown in *italics*.)

**Welcome & Introductions**

Whitaker welcomed all in attendance. All individuals present introduced themselves.

**Minutes of the October Meeting**

Whitaker and Dave Hokanson provided opportunity for comment and correction of the minutes of the October 20, 2005 UMR Hazardous Spills Coordination Group conference call. Hearing no comments or corrections, minutes were considered to be final.

## **UMR Early Warning Monitoring Network/Pilot Probe at Lock and Dam 15**

Tim Ganz provided an update on the operation of the early warning monitoring network (EWMN) pilot probe located at Lock & Dam 15. In particular, he noted the ongoing work by Dave Kull of Iowa-American Water to correct drift in turbidity readings and calibration of chlorophyll measurements. He also noted that a potential relocation of the probe to Iowa American's plant in Davenport remained a possibility. This relocation would provide easier access to the probe by Iowa-American Water staff.

Jim Silver asked what the purpose of the chlorophyll readings was. Ganz responded that this is an indicator of the level of nutrients present in the river.

Greg Swanson indicated that the temperature, turbidity, and pH readings at the probe have been tracking pretty well with what he is seeing at the Moline plant. He further noted that a probe located at Lock & Dam 14 may be most beneficial to all the water supplies in the Quad Cities. He did, however, support the move of the probe to the Iowa-American Water (Davenport) location.

Ann Whelan indicated that EPA is comfortable with a relocation of the probe.

Hokanson asked whether there were any further thoughts at this time regarding the notification element of the EWMN system. *Whelan indicated she could look into the possibilities at EPA. Hokanson said he would follow up with Clint Beckert regarding role for USACE.*

Hokanson asked whether the funds proposed for EPA's "WaterSentinel" program could be used to support the EWMN on the UMR. Whelan and Steve Faryan indicated that they had done some initial investigation of this funding source, and that it is largely intended to support monitoring for intentional contamination & comparatively exotic compounds. However, Faryan indicated that he would continue to investigate possibilities with EPA Office of Research and Development (ORD). *Faryan also indicated that he would provide a report to Hokanson for distribution to the group regarding early warning monitoring systems (Faryan subsequently provided this information to Hokanson, who distributed to the group).*

There was general agreement among the group that alternate/additional sources of potential funding should be pursued to support the EWMN project.

Ganz inquired regarding the applicability and opportunities related to EPA's "Coastal Monitoring Network". Whelan replied that this network was geared primarily towards oceans (and the Great Lakes) and relied on data from existing monitoring networks. She suggested checking with Stuart Eddy (of the Great Lakes Commission) for more information.

Swanson indicated that monitoring for additional parameters (beyond what is currently measured by the probe) is very important. An additional benefit of broadening out parameters monitoring would be to potentially bring in additional sources of funding. *He indicated that Satyajyoti Debchoudhury would be providing information to the group on additional monitoring parameters.*

Ganz mentioned that American Water staff had visited a treatment plant in Evansville, Indiana that is conducting early warning monitoring in cooperation with the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO). Ganz has contact information if the group would like to investigate further (Ganz subsequently provided contact information to Hokanson).

*The group also agreed that a dedicated meeting or conference call to discuss the EWMN was needed. Hokanson indicated he would arrange such as discussion.*

### **U.S. Coast Guard Re-Organization (presented by Patrick Cuty)**

Patrick Cuty provided a brief update on reorganization within the U.S. Coast Guard. He indicated that the Coast Guard is moving towards a (geographic) sector structure, as opposed to the current, mission-based approach. Cuty emphasized that, especially during the transition period, individuals should continue to contact their local USCG staff and ask to be referred to the proper person/location. He suggested relying on these existing and personal contacts as an interim strategy while the re-organization unfolds.

Frank Catalano asked what was behind the re-organization. Cuty replied that, initially, it was related post-9/11 security concerns but more recently has been driven by Hurricane Katrina.

Tom Morgan commented that the reorganization would likely not be as problematic on the UMR, as compared to coastal areas, as there were not as many transition he issues on the river. He further noted that a command center will be located in St. Louis. James Peeler added that this would mean that additional units would be located in St. Louis.

Rodney Tucker noted that the reorganization has not resulted in the loss of any individuals. Whelan, however, commented that response to spills of less than 500 gallons would be lost. Tucker responded that, technically, a response from USCG would not be required – but in reality a response would likely happen.

### **Hurricane Katrina Response – Report from the Field (presented by Patrick Cuty)**

Cuty presented his experiences, both as a responder to Hurricane Katrina and as an individual directly impacted by the storm. The following are summarized highlights from his comments:

- Communications were adversely affected and were a major issue in the response effort. Examples of this included:
  - IMT temporarily unable to communicate due to server failure.
  - Only short range FM transmitters working initially.
  - Satellite phones were in conflict with transmissions from news trucks. Depending on the service provider, news truck signals would bump responders trying to communicate.
  - Initially, public phone access sites had to be guarded – due to demand and lack of phone service otherwise available to the public.
  - One communications success story was the distribution of inexpensive transistor radios to citizens.
- Main drivers in the response effort were:
  - Safety (both of victims and responders)
  - Search & Rescue

- Most official response vehicles were destroyed. Responders had to use unmarked vehicles, which led to safety concerns.
- Transportation was another major issue, including the following:
  - Bridge crossings were generally impassable.
  - Most roads were impassable due to debris.
  - Flat tires were a common problem, due to the amount of debris on roads.
  - There was no air traffic control system, but many helicopters aloft.
- Hazardous materials issues included the following:
  - Thousands of damaged tanks and containers with hazardous materials.
  - Displaced and damaged large propane tanks were common.
  - Underground storage tanks filled up with water.
  - Needed to remove large volumes of fuel from grounded boats.
  - Due to the number of homes destroyed, a large volume of household hazardous waste was created.
  - Collecting hazardous materials from debris piles is a challenge. There is a need to sort and segregate debris.
  - Many abandoned and/or destroyed vehicles were full of gas and oil.

Jim MacDonald asked whether any changes in land use were likely to occur as a result of Katrina. Cuty felt that the area is not adjusting its practices and is largely “rebuilding for disaster”.

Frank Catalano noted that debris clearance and removal is currently the largest mission in the area, and that there are a variety of issues related to the debris created by homes such as asbestos and buried tanks. He also noted that unsegregated debris can be a problem during disposal.

Cuty noted the following factors as contributing to the Katrina’s impact: 1) geographic scope of the storm, 2) lack of building codes in the affected area, 3) generally poor construction methods, and 4) structures built to withstand wind, but not water.

### **EPA Response to Hurricane Katrina (presented by Jim Silver)**

Jim Silver of U.S. EPA Region 7 presented a summary of EPA’s involvement in the response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

### **Hurricane Response: Lessons Learned and Implications for Response Planning**

Ann Whelan led a discussion regarding the implications for response planning resulting from the 2005 hurricanes. Whelan noted that now is a good time to address these issues, as we are generally past the emotional portion of the hurricane response and can now review events from a more analytical perspective. In general, Whelan had identified two areas that should be addressed in considering the 2005 hurricane responses: 1) Data Management, and 2) Experts.

#### *Data Management*

Whelan noted that a number of issues related to the collection of data and use of collected data arose during hurricane response as follows:

- Mapping is extremely important and it is essential to make sure that map requestors are given clear and defined choices about what is available in map products.

- Access to information was a problem, but also a challenge was a lack of familiarity with available resources (especially electronic resources).
- A list of appropriate persons to contact for specific types of data was needed.
- Multiple databases with non-matching descriptors of facilities was a big issue. One result was a duplication of effort, with a single facilities being inspected multiple times under various programs and permits.
- Data needs to be in a common database, or in a database at all (many sources described as “databases” were just spreadsheets or other electronic records).
- Common descriptions and terminology are needed within databases.
- Enhanced connectivity between state and federal programs is needed.
- The UMR Spills Plan and/or Area Plans could be venues in which to improve data sharing.
- There were issues in the transmission of sample data. Samples would be collected and then “disappear” until transmitted back at a different organizational level and not necessarily back to the collector. There needs to be an “off ramp” to get the data back to the collector as soon as possible.

Silver commented on the disconnect between sampler collectors and sample results. He noted the frustration that collectors did not see their results promptly and moreover, that these sample results could have been used in making decisions about how to ensure safety of staff in the field.

Cuty also commented on the struggles with mapping issues. He noted that a contractor ended up doing the best work on mapping issues in the area where he was working. He also highlighted a digital camera that included a GPS receiver, allowing for the collection of both visual and geographic information at the same time.

Whelan noted that there were delays in the processing of data and mapping. Therefore, a need exists to clean up data in advance to minimize dealing with bad data during a response.

#### *Experts*

Whelan further noted the following in relation to the role of “experts” in a response:

- Many technical experts were brought into the situation.
- It may be beneficial to identify key experts in advance for the UMR.
- Experts are needed in a variety of disciplines. Also, need the list of experts to be more than “one deep”, as designated experts will be in high demand and will need to have options of individuals to contact.
- Additionally, there is a need to have regional distribution of experts – i.e. experts in each UMR state.
- The role of experts needs to be considered in the planning process.
- There should be some incorporation of the experts issue into the UMR Spills Plan/Manual.

In summary, Whelan made the following points:

- There is a need to identify both sources of information and contact persons, including experts, in advance of an event.
- There is a need to be able to map dynamically to respond to changes in geography and the overall “lay of the land”.

### **Inland Sensitivity Atlas Update**

Hokanson provided a brief update on the status of the Region 5 Inland Sensitivity Atlas. He noted that updates are now being done on a statewide basis, rather than according to previously used mapping areas. Currently, anticipate that the ongoing update to the state of Minnesota should be completed by approximately June 1, 2006. Hokanson also noted that the updates will incorporate a new hazardous materials layer, which will include nuclear power plants and extremely hazardous substances (EHS). Hokanson set up a laptop and hard copy excerpts from the atlas for individuals to view at their convenience.

*Meeting adjourned for the day at 5:00 pm. Reconvened at 8:00 am on Wednesday, March 1<sup>st</sup>.*

### **Spill of National Significance (SONS) Exercise Planning**

Whelan provided a brief summary of the recently completed SONS 07 initial planning conference (IPC) held in Memphis on February 21-23, 2006. She noted that there was large degree of participation from state emergency management staff and more interest overall in participation since Hurricane Katrina. Whelan noted that a “catastrophic planning initiative” was a focus of the Memphis IPC. She stated that availability of grants from Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to fund state participation and the grant deadline was an issue at the IPC. U.S. Coast Guard followed up with DHS and grants of \$150,000 per state are available to support SONS participation. Whelan further noted that state emergency management programs have, in general, been facing funding problems due to the diversion of funds to designated state administrative agencies (SAAs). This diversion may result in a net loss of funds available for emergency response. Finally, she noted that there were some problems in Region 5 breakout as related to the Great Lakes portion of the exercise.

Silver mentioned that the concept of “exercises within the exercise” was frequently discussed at Memphis – meaning that individual agencies may choose to exercise various capacities within the scope of the overall exercise.

Whalen stated that it is becoming clearer which states are planning to participate and how they plan to participate. She noted that evacuation may be part of the exercise, as people are likely to evacuate, if only because their utility services are knocked out. She mentioned that the federal government participants were interested in evacuation as part of the exercise. Whalen informed the group that, currently, 13 states and 25 federal agencies were planning to participate in the exercise.

Rodney Tucker made the observation that SONS 07 has gone beyond a spill scenario to become a catastrophic event exercise.

Tom Morgan asked whether the White House’s “Lessons Learned” from Katrina was being considered as part of the SONS 07 planning process. Whelan responded that Cmdr. Doug

Eames was considering this in the development of the exercise. Further, she expected that the National Response Plan would be re-written based on the Katrina experience.

In response to a question from Hokanson, Whelan explained how the SONS 07 has evolved in scope. She noted that its initial scope was expanded to dovetail with an existing requirement for an earthquake drill and further expanded subsequent to 2005 hurricane responses.

Whelan stated that a specific date needed to be established for the October 2006 mid planning conference (MPC) as soon as possible (note: UMRBA is currently in the process of helping arrange for next SONS meeting). She noted that this meeting will get into planning details to a greater extent and will address simulation cells. She also noted discussion from IPC regarding the use of actual vs. “canned” weather in the exercise.

Roger Lauder commented that real weather should be used during the exercise to avoid confusion. He noted that flooding is going to result regardless of the weather situation and there is no need to create “additional” mistakes related to confusion over weather – enough mistakes will occur, anyway. Lauder further noted that the interstate interaction was improved at the IPC (as compared to the November 2005 Concept Development Conference).

Lauder provided historical information related to the 1811 New Madrid earthquake. He highlighted the extended duration of the event (3 months total, including aftershocks) and the catastrophic nature of the event overall. In terms of the exercise, he stated that a 7.7 magnitude earthquake is going to be catastrophic regardless of the other parameters of the exercise.

Whelan noted that an earthquake would lead to a lot of subsidence along the river – and resulting damage to levees, pipelines, and docks. She raised the concern that pipeline shut-offs may not be operable to responds to such as situation.

Scott Pettis noted that, under the SONS scenario, there would likely be suspension of shipping on the UMR and that water intakes could be affected.

Whelan commented that river crossings would likely be knocked out, further complicating evacuation and response.

Catalano noted the “cold start” nature of the earthquake – as compared to the advanced warning of a hurricane – that would be response even more difficult.

Whitaker asked how local responders were being involved in the exercise and whether it was the states’ job to bring in the locals. Whelan replied that the states do need to help bring in local responders.

Lauder commented that testing out local capabilities, as well as those of individual facilities, would be important.

Whelan asked whether there were any specific goals that the UMR Spills Group has for the SONS exercise. Whitaker replied that he would like to see that the exercise tests out the UMR spills plan, and perhaps allows us to add to the plan. Whelan suggested that any redrafting of the plan be completed by June 2007 to allow for it to be exercised during SONS.

James Peeler asked whether USACE had considered looking at the potential impact on the locks and dams under the SONS earthquake scenario. John Punkiewicz responded that he was not aware of any such consideration to date.

## **Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC)**

David Morrison presented background information related to Minnesota's participation in EMAC and offered a possible role in EMAC both for exercises and actual event. Gary Haden noted that EMAC will be important in situations such as what is being exercised in SONS 07 – as local response teams will be decimated by such an event.

Morrison stated that, in terms of SONS, planners should consider whether or not EMAC will be incorporated. *He will provide to the group a web page showing how to connect with Minnesota EMAC. Morrison subsequently provided EMAC web site:*  
<http://www.emacweb.org>.

Silver stated that there needed to be clarification of how state employees would be reimbursed if EMAC was used. Morrison replied that, at least for Minnesota, the state would pay employees' salaries.

Lauder noted that, in Katrina response, there were issues regarding pay differential between salaried and managerial employees.

## **Other Upcoming Exercises/Planning Activities**

Whitaker noted that Missouri is planning an earthquake exercise on September 23, 2006 (though on a smaller scale than SONS). This will take place in Missouri's southeastern counties and will involve an earthquake and building collapse. Scenario is also intended to exercise communications component. Planning meeting scheduled for March 3 in Sikeston.

Lauder outlined upcoming planning meetings being held by Illinois. These include pre-SONS meetings in St. Louis on July 24-26 and in Metropolis on August 17-18. The St. Louis meeting will include the State of Missouri, oil companies, local emergency coordinators, and local responders. The Metropolis meeting will target a localized area along the Ohio River. The states of Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio have been invited to this meeting, as well as local emergency coordinators and local responders.

Whelan mentioned that US EPA Region 5 is planning 30 unannounced exercises in calendar year 2006.

## **UMR Spills Plan Updates and Spills Plan MOA**

Hokanson indicated that he had been working to update discharger lists within the UMR Spills Plan. He asked the group what level of detail they would like to see in the dischargers list and what would be the best geographic identifier (river mile, lat/long, street address, all of the above).

Whelan stated that more precision and detail was preferred and that we should not attempt to modify the data we receive from the individual states.

Hokanson noted that the Spills Plan MOA is at its final signature point (US Coast Guard) and would be included with the revised plan.

*Hokanson said that he would continue to work on plan, with target completion by the end of March, and distribute as has been done in the past (with direct distribution to Spills Group members, who then carry out any further distribution).*



## **Emergency Action Field Guide and Companion Matrix of Reporting Requirements**

Hokanson distributed recent versions of the emergency action field guide. Group consensus was that most recent draft (with modified order of presentation on 8.5 x 11 paper) was preferred. The group proposed some additional modification in appearance and then recommended that the guide be sent to US EPA Region 5 graphics staff for finalization, with a target date of April 1<sup>st</sup> for completion. *Hokanson agreed to provide an electronic copy of the current draft of the guide to Whelan and Barbi Lee, who would then work with US EPA Region 5 graphics staff.*

*Hokanson also distributed a draft matrix summarizing state reporting requirements and indicated that he would be contacting individual states to verify information.*

## **UMR-Specific Inland Sensitivity Atlas DVD**

The group expressed continuing interest in the development of an Inland Sensitivity Atlas DVD which would provide all data for the UMR on single DVD. Desired contents would include: 1) atlas maps, 2) UMR Spills Plan, 3) sub-area plans.

## **Net Environmental Benefits Analysis (NEBA) Workshop Update**

Ginger Molitor provided a preview of the upcoming NEBA workshop focusing on Pool 12 to be held in Savanna, Illinois on March 8-9. The workshop will seek to bring together natural resource managers and response professionals. She noted that NEBA for the UMR have previously been done for Pools 7 and 19 and that a goal of the current NEBA is to work towards completion of NEBAs for all US Fish and Wildlife Service districts.

Whelan noted that the term “NEBA” is roughly equivalent to the “Environmental Risk Assessment (ERA)” done by the Coast Guard. She saw the need for a contingency plan for the refuges that could be annexed to the UMR Spills Plan.

## **Agency Updates**

### *Missouri-John Whitaker*

Whitaker stated that there were no spills of note to report. He did mention the recent release of a large amount of water that affected a State Park.

### *USFWS-Ginger Molitor*

No report beyond NEBA update provided earlier.

### *USACE-John Punkiewicz and Frank Catalano*

Punkiewicz noted a recently reported spill at Saylorville Lake. He referred to Iowa DNR for a more detailed report. Catalano indicated that there were no spills of note to report.

### *Iowa DNR-Rodney Tucker*

Tucker provided a summary of the Saylorville Lake spill report, which in the end could not be verified in the field upon inspection. Although originally thought to be a possible gasoline tank leak, no spill was observed in the field nor could a source be identified. The situation could have been the result of a bilge pump-out, or no actual spill whatsoever. Tucker commented that this

incident highlighted problems in communication and spill reporting. Tucker further commented that there were no spills of note on the UMR.

*USEPA Region 5 – Steve Faryan*

Faryan noted that he would provide an electronic copy of a report on early warning monitoring detection systems to Hokanson, who could then distribute to the UMR Spills Group. Faryan also indicated that anyone who was interested could contact him to get access to NRC spills reports online.

*USCG – James Peeler*

Peeler stated that any recently reported spills have been very small. Peeler further noted that sector-based reorganization would become effective in Rock Island on April 27<sup>th</sup>. He also mentioned that Keokuk staff would be moving – which would result in a change in phone numbers.

*FEMA Region 7 – Tom Morgan*

Morgan indicated that FEMA would be re-organizing in the near future and that this would impact both FEMA HQ and FEMA regions.

*USEPA Region 7 – Jim MacDonald and Jim Silver*

Jim Silver reported that there had been an oil spill near St. Genevieve. MacDonald indicated that there was no further report from EPA Region 7.

*Illinois EPA – Roger Lauder*

Lauder reported that Illinois is interviewing for a new response manager. He further noted that a couple incidents have occurred on the Ohio River which could potentially affect the Mississippi below the Ohio.

*Minnesota PCA-David Morrison*

Morrison noted that many spills in Minnesota are associated with transportation located near water. He also noted that Minnesota deals with many issues in accuracy of reporting. He mentioned a salt spill last year on the St. Croix River which resulted in a significant mussel kill. Morrison also described Wakota CAER's efforts to establish an 800 MHz radio system that would tie in with local responders.

*McKenzie Environmental-Gary Haden*

Haden noted that completion of sub-area contingency plans in Region 7 was on hold due to changes in NIMS and NRP. He commented that local partners have been seeking ways to make plans shorter and more accessible, but it is not clear if this can be done by annexing to local plans. In the interim, work is being done to standardize the plans. He noted that the biggest issue in the plans is communications.

*Wisconsin DNR- Tom Kendzierski*

Kendzierski described a fertilizer spill near Winona, where a transport tanker spill occurred along a roadway on slough on the Wisconsin side of the river. He noted that the City of Winona provided equipment to assist in spill response. Kendzierski further noted that Roxanne Chronert is now the Wisconsin DNR spill team response leader.

*USCG, District 8 – Patrick Cuty*

Cuty stated that some Coast Guard equipment (trailers w/boom) was available for “loan” under an MOU. He indicated that anyone interested in the equipment should contact him, as the equipment is now under his control. Jim MacDonald indicated that sub-regions were interested in the trailers and boom. Catalano questioned whether the boom (18 inch) would be appropriate for use on the UMR. Cuty felt that boom could be useful, as long as angle of use was properly adjusted. Catalano commented that perhaps marinas could use this boom. Cuty replied that the boom could not be given, at least directly, to a private entity. Faryan commented that this type of boom could be used in protection of backwaters.

**Upcoming Change in Chair**

Whitaker mentioned that the group should begin to consider a change in chair, as he would like to move out of the chair position in the near future. He suggested that the rotation of the chair between states should be considered and that the group should address further at its next meeting.

**Next Meeting**

The relationship of the next UMR Spills Group meeting to the SONS mid planning conference (to be held in October 2006) was discussed. In general, the group preferred that the UMR Spill Group meet after the SONS conference. Federal representatives suggested avoiding the first week of October, both for SONS and UMR Spills Group, as it is the beginning of the federal fiscal year. It was also suggested to avoid 10/26 and 10/27 due to an Iowa hazmat program.

**Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at noon on Wednesday, March 1<sup>st</sup>.