

**Minutes of the
Upper Mississippi River
Hazardous Spills Coordination Group Meeting**

October 19-20, 2004

**Mark of the Quad Cities
Moline, Illinois**

John Whitaker of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources called the meeting to order at 1:40 p.m. on October 19, 2004. The following Spills Group members and observers were present:

Roger Lauder	Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Day 2)
Rodney Tucker	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
John Whitaker	Missouri Department of Natural Resources
John Grump	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
John Punkiewicz	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District
Rus Jackson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District (Day 1)
Dave Varner	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District (Day 1)
Patrick Cuty	U.S. Coast Guard, District 8 New Orleans
Collin Fagan	U.S. Coast Guard, MSO St. Louis
Steve Faryan	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5
Ann Whelan	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5
Barbi Lee	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5 (Day 2)
Joe Davis	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7
Gary Haden	McKinzie Environmental
Barb Naramore	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association

Minutes of the April Meeting

The minutes of the April 20-21, 2004 UMR Spills Group meeting were approved as written.

Net Environmental Benefits Analysis

Ann Whelan briefly described three recent Net Environmental Benefits Analysis (NEBA) workshops focused on freshwater environments, including Isle Royale (January 2004), UMR Pool 7 (March 2004), and UMR Pool 19 (April 2004). NEBA is a structured way of bringing responders and resource experts together to examine the ecological consequences of various response options in a particular area. Whelan noted that NEBA has been employed extensively on the nation's coasts, but had not previously been used in the inland zone.

The scenario for the Pool 7 workshop involved a canola oil spill from a train that affected the Lake Onalaska area near La Crosse, Wisconsin. The Pool 19 workshop considered the impacts of a pipeline release of Texas light crude from Fort Madison to Keokuk, Iowa. Both scenarios involved releases during the autumn, when concentrations of migratory waterfowl would be

present. In both UMR workshops, a “no action” alternative was examined to identify baseline environmental impacts. These were then compared with the anticipated impacts if mechanical removal or *in situ* burning were employed.

According to Whelan, consensus highlights from the two UMR NEBA workshops included the following:

- There are tremendous ecological resources at risk on the UMR, including migratory waterfowl, mussels, and other significant populations.
- The sources of risk on the UMR are quite diverse, both in terms of type and spatial distribution.
- Response options and capabilities on the UMR are limited, due to the nature of the river and to the availability of response equipment in the region.
- The Corps has a limited, but potentially important, ability to affect river conditions through its operation of the navigation system. OSCs should coordinate with the Corps regarding operational changes that could facilitate response. The UMR Spill Plan includes a protocol for such coordination.

Whelan identified several potential next steps for NEBA on the UMR, including an intent expressed by Illinois DNR to apply NEBA to the Illinois River. While some workshop participants recommended a NEBA workshop for each pool of the UMR, Whelan said this would not be feasible. However, she said EPA is very interested in using NEBA to identify insights applicable to the entire system. In addition to its use in spill response planning, Whelan suggested that NEBA holds promise for Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA), post-spill restoration, and actual spill response (in a streamlined application). A draft report summarizing the two UMR workshops is currently under review.

Whelan said EPA, the Coast Guard, and others are also discussing how to proceed with NEBA in the inland zone. One task will involve producing some basic information that can be used to support future NEBA workshops for inland lakes and rivers. She noted that dispersant use is not considered a viable option in freshwater environments, eliminating a major source of controversy that has characterized the coastal NEBAs. This lack of polarization regarding basic response options allowed participants in the two UMR workshops to delve further into specific planning needs. Based on these more in depth discussions, Whelan said needs on the UMR seem to include:

- A bird hazing plan — In discussing the possibility of such a plan, Spills Group members highlighted a range of issues that it would need to address, including the target species’ habitat preferences and behavioral patterns, human health and safety, compatibility with response operations, anticipated effectiveness, etc.
- Guidelines for *in situ* burning on big rivers — Whelan said that discussion at the Pool 19 workshop illustrated the need for such guidelines, explaining that some participants advocated for burning uncontained product in the main channel of the river.
- Increased understanding of the Corps’ flexibility in operating the river system — Whelan noted that Bill Koellner of the Corps’ Rock Island District made an excellent

presentation on this topic at a Spills Group meeting a few years back. She suggested documenting the information he provided for each pool, and expanding it as needed to cover the entire system. Dave Varner explained that operations on the Illinois River differ markedly from those on the UMR, noting that a large part of the Illinois River is in open river conditions routinely during high water.

Rodney Tucker said he was impressed at the Pool 19 workshop with the participants' willingness to work together. He noted that the resource managers and scientists brought considerable site-specific knowledge to the table. Barb Naramore suggested that the diversity of perspectives and expertise among resource managers should be a lesson to responders — i.e., don't consult just one natural resource person on a spill and expect that person to provide a complete picture regarding potential impacts.

Follow-Up to UMR Spill Plan Review

Emergency Action Field Guide

John Whitaker recounted that the UMR Spill Plan Review Subcommittee had previously recommended developing an emergency field action guide. The objective was to have a concise document that could be broadly distributed to various private and public sector people working on the river, as well as members of the public. The contents would include basic information on notification and reporting, as well as special river-related considerations. Barb Naramore further explained that the full Spills Group endorsed the concept at its April 2004 meeting and asked the Plan Review Subcommittee to draft the guide. In response, UMRBA staff developed a draft that the Subcommittee reviewed during two conference calls. The draft provided for the Spills Group's consideration at the current meeting reflects the input of the Subcommittee members.

Ann Whelan noted that the Region 5 RRT has a pocket size field guide that might serve as a useful template. John Punkiewicz suggested that the emergency action guide could be included in materials distributed to recreational boaters. He noted that boating safety classes would be a good distribution mechanism. Patrick Cuty recommended trying to incorporate the emergency action field guide information into existing publications.

Cuty said the guide should define reportable quantities. Joe Davis agreed. Naramore responded that this would be difficult to do for the UMR in such a brief document, given the multiple jurisdictions. Moreover, the document is not really intended to provide responsible parties with all of the information they need to comply with the law. Instead, it is designed to convey basic, awareness-level information to a much broader, more diverse audience. Naramore also explained that Eddie McGlasson on the Plan Review Subcommittee had suggested developing a web page with the basic state and federal reporting requirements and links to the relevant statutes and regulations. This could be patterned on a page that EPA Region 7 has developed (<http://www.epa.gov/region7/toxics/factsht.htm>), but would include information for all five states as well. Moreover, it would focus exclusively on requirements related to releases affecting or potentially affecting water. The Region 7 site is multi-media in scope. After further discussion, Spills Group members concurred with McGlasson's suggestion and agreed to provide Naramore with any suggestions regarding format after reviewing the

Region 7 site. Moreover, the state Spills Group members agreed to forward their reporting requirements and links to Naramore for use in developing the web page.

Spills Group members discussed a variety of format and content options for the emergency action field guide. Format options included small cards, bookmarks, booklets, posters, and an online version, as well as the double-sided single page approach reflected in the Subcommittee's draft. Naramore emphasized that several of these format options would require reducing the amount of text in the draft, but noted that most of the changes recommended during the preceding discussion would involve adding text. There was general agreement that multiple formats might allow the broadest distribution and greatest efficacy. For example, the online version could include active links. Members also concurred that using color ink and lamination would result in more appealing and durable materials. Steve Faryan offered the services of an EPA graphics person. Cuty said the Coast Guard might be able to help defray printing costs. Naramore noted that more formats would mean more initial work and greater subsequent maintenance effort.

Faryan asked how the action guide would be distributed. John Grump said fisheries managers and conservation wardens could be quite helpful in this regard. Punkiewicz said the Corps' recreational ramp operators could also help. Naramore said she envisioned mailing the guide to operators of river terminals, intakes, storage facilities, commercial vessels, and marinas. Other suggestions offered included marina associations, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, and state boating safety instructors.

Spills Group members agreed to consider the format options further and provide Naramore with their input on this question, as well as any further suggestions on the content of the draft.

UMR Planning and Response CD

Whitaker reported that the Plan Review Subcommittee has also recommended a special UMR response CD, which would include the UMR Plan, the three existing sub-area plans for portions of the UMR (i.e., Twin Cities, Quad Cities, and St. Louis), and the Inland Sensitivity Atlas PDF maps and tables for the UMR corridor. Only those maps that include the river itself (i.e., not all maps for the border counties) would be included under this recommendation. Whelan suggested also including the Tri-State Hazmat Group's plan. Grump said he would confer with Lois Ristow about this possibility. In response to a question from Whelan, Naramore said that she did not know whether all of the proposed contents would fit on a single CD. If the files are too large, alternatives would include a multi-volume CD set, or a single DVD.

Whelan advocated also including information on the Corps' operating flexibility and constraints. She suggested that this could be done by documenting the information that Bill Koellner previously presented to the Spills Group, and supplementing it as needed to ensure coverage of the entire system. Whelan and Faryan said they would review the information from Koellner's presentation and recommend what to include on the UMR CD.

Grump asked about plans for maintaining and updating the proposed UMR CD/DVD over time. He noted that the plans and other material contained on it will not all be updated on the same schedule. Gary Haden reported that the Quad Cities and St. Louis plans' resource lists need

updating. He agreed to provide updated versions of the two plans for inclusion on the CD/DVD.

After further discussion, Spills Group members endorsed the Plan Review Subcommittee's recommendation to develop a UMR CD/DVD. They also agreed with the Subcommittee's recommended contents. Regarding distribution, Spills Group members concluded that the CD/DVD should be limited to public and private sector planners and responders. This will include facility operators as well as their contractors.

UMR Plan Updates

Patrick Cuty reported that he has started working on a revised response equipment list for the UMR Plan. He expressed interest in expanding the range of equipment that is included in the list. Noting the labor involved in updating the list and the dynamic nature of equipment inventories, Cuty also said he would like to streamline future updates, perhaps by collecting e-mail addresses and links to web sites for current information, where applicable. He identified the Oil Spill Response Organizations' mandatory reporting to the Coast Guard Strike Force as another source for maintaining the list.

Regarding Cuty's suggestion to expand the range of equipment in the list, Faryan cautioned that such an expansion would increase the updating burden. Cuty said he would work with Naramore on his ideas for modifying the list and then present his proposal for a revised format and/or content to the Spills Group for its consideration.

Naramore explained that the UMR Plan's list of dischargers to the river has not been comprehensively updated since the plan's original publication in 1990. The list was compiled from the five states' National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit databases. The challenge to updating this list is that the state NPDES databases do not include the river mile location of the discharge points on the UMR. Each state originally estimated the river miles using other locational information. Naramore said she has asked each state Spills Group member to investigate options for updating this list, but has not yet heard back. John Whitaker said he still needs to check with others in his agency. Grump said Wisconsin has river mile locations for facilities on the UMR good to one tenth of a mile. However, the facilities may or may not be located adjacent to their discharge point. Rodney Tucker said he has made inquiries with Iowa DNR's NPDES program staff, but has not yet heard back. Faryan said he would check into the availability of such information from U.S. EPA.

Naramore said Stan Smith had requested that the UMR Plan's notification call roster be revised to reflect changes in the way the Fish and Wildlife Service works with the Department of the Interior's Regional Environmental Officers (REOs). Smith has said that all notification calls, regardless of time of day or day of week, should go to the appropriate REO. The Service's Region 3 Division of Environmental Contaminants will no longer be taking these calls during business hours. Whelan expressed concern about the compatibility of this change with the REO-initiated requirements that federal agencies contact the Service directly for Endangered Species Act (ESA) consultations. She suggested adding a caveat regarding this issue to the UMR Plan. Naramore agreed to explore the issue further with Smith, if Whelan would provide further details regarding the REOs' stand.

Training and Outreach

Whitaker said that the new emergency action field guide and UMR CD/DVD should be useful outreach and education tools. He noted that Missouri DNR has increased its visits to regulated facilities and local emergency planning committees and said he intends to distribute the field guide and CD/DVD as appropriate when making these contacts. He encouraged Spills Group members to identify other training and outreach opportunities. Grump suggested that the other states include Level B hazmat teams in their future distribution of the UMR Spill Plan. Grump also noted that there will be many outreach opportunities associated with distribution of the field guide. With respect to the possibility of renewed training efforts, Grump recommended coordinating with the Tri-State Group where possible.

Cuty reported that the Coast Guard is developing new training for its personnel. Within the past few months, the Coast Guard has held two classes for its pollution investigators and OSCs. He said the UMR Plan could readily be incorporated into the class for OSCs. While acknowledging that the Coast Guard rarely supplies the FOSC for the inland zone, Cuty said he frequently invites private industry and the states to send their staff to the Coast Guard's OSC training, when space permits. He said it might be possible to extend this practice a bit by having a state request the training for a particular location, with the objective of primarily serving the needs of non-Coast Guard personnel.

Whelan suggested the Coast Guard's Industry Days as a good outreach opportunity. Collin Fagan said there is no fixed schedule for when the event is held in St. Louis. Whelan also identified state emergency management conferences as an important forum for outreach efforts.

Cuty said the UMR Plan is useful. However, the Coast Guard's limited response activity on the UMR, combined with its practice of rotating personnel frequently, makes it difficult to keep Coast Guard responders conversant with the plan.

Whitaker observed that river access and suitable vessels are a challenge in the St. Louis area. He said Missouri DNR would like to coordinate further with the Coast Guard and the City of St. Louis on incident investigation and response.

Haden noted that a conference for certified hazardous materials managers is scheduled for St. Louis in 2005. He suggested that this might be an excellent outreach opportunity. John Punkiewicz said special sessions at the lockmasters' annual meetings could help increase their awareness of basic response issues and potential impacts on their operations. Punkiewicz said the lockmasters for each Corps districts typically meet separately.

Joe Davis described the St. Louis Sub-Area Committee's recent river tour as an excellent outreach event. He also said the Trans CAER group's railroad sessions have been quite successful. Davis suggested a one-day training session geared to showing people the equipment that would be involved in river response.

Tucker said Iowa DNR's quarterly field office meetings are a good opportunity for internal outreach and coordination. He cited the Iowa SERC and a regularly scheduled hazmat symposium as possibilities for broader outreach. He also noted Iowa's hazmat teams meet

twice per year through a Hazmat Task Force. Cuty mentioned that the spill association on the Gulf of Mexico almost always focuses on a plan during its annual conference. He suggested working with similar groups on the UMR to increase awareness of the UMR Plan. Whelan said the LEPCs and state emergency management conferences would be most nearly comparable to the event Cuty referenced. She also suggested statewide conferences as a way of reaching fire chiefs, but said individual department's training and that offered by the Association of Fire Trainers would be better ways of connecting with frontline firefighters.

Naramore thanked the Spills Group members for their excellent suggestions and said it is clear the diverse target audiences necessitate a multi-faceted training and outreach strategy. However, she also emphasized that need for the Spills Group to articulate an overall strategy that identifies how the different opportunities will work in conjunction. Naramore said the Spills Group members will then need to assume mutual accountability for executing the strategy in a coordinated fashion. She recommended continuing the training and outreach discussion to the next day in order to allow people to reflect overnight. [Note: On October 20, this item was carried over to the April 2005 meeting due to lack of time.]

The meeting adjourned for the day at 5:30 p.m. and reconvened at 8:05 a.m. on October 20.

Spill of National Significance Exercise

Ann Whelan reported that a spill of national significance (SONS) exercise is planned for the inland rivers/Great Lakes region in 2007. SONS exercises are held approximately every three years, pursuant to the National Contingency Plan. The Coast Guard has led the previous SONS, which have all taken place on the coasts. EPA and the Coast Guard will co-lead the inland SONS in 2007. Whelan also noted that the SONS may be coordinated with a central region earthquake exercise that FEMA is planning for 2007. The FEMA exercise will involve an event on the New Madrid fault.

Whelan emphasized that the 2007 SONS will not have a terrorism focus because terrorism has been a significant element of all other major exercises since 2001. She said an earthquake-related scenario would allow a wide range of players to participate. The Coast Guard has indicated that it would like this SONS to involve both the Great Lakes and the inland rivers. Whelan suggested that an earthquake-caused power outage could be one way of driving impacts to the Great Lakes.

EPA and the Coast Guard will be initiating scoping and planning for the exercise in the near future. Whelan said she would like to see a 5 to 10 day rolling exercise, with different people involved over the course of the event, reflecting the natural evolution of a real event. This would be in contrast to other major exercises, which have typically not looked beyond the first few days. As a result, Whelan said, those other exercises have tended to focus largely on emergency response and the role of local responders. They have not been as successful exploring the major environmental issues that do not really emerge until well into an event. Whelan also emphasized the need to scale the exercise appropriately, so that search and rescue issues associated with the earthquake element do not overwhelm the environmental issues.

As for schedule, Whelan said EPA, the Coast Guard, and their partners will scope the exercise in 2005, with more intensive planning taking place in 2006. The SONS itself will be held in

the late spring or early summer of 2007. Whelan encouraged early input from Spills Group members regarding the schedule and basic parameters for the exercise, as well as more specific scoping ideas.

Roger Lauder asked about the level and nature of state involvement that is being sought. Patrick Cuty said that the states have been active players in the previous SONS exercises with which he is familiar. Cuty said the states' roles have been determined by their level of interest. Whelan concurred, noting that EPA and the Coast Guard have neither the means nor interest to compel others' involvement. However, she said the federal agencies will participate at a high level. Whelan said all 10 of EPA's regions will play in various capacities. Lauder observed that the election cycle may affect some state agencies' level of interest and ability to make commitments in advance of the exercise. Whelan acknowledged this issue, but noted that exercises of this scale require significant advance planning.

Cuty asked whether corporate sponsors have been identified. Whelan replied that the Coast Guard typically works through the American Petroleum Institute (API) to get a corporate volunteer to play the responsible party (RP). She said scenario planning is not sufficiently advanced yet to know whether an RP will be required for the 2007 exercise. Cuty observed that industry can bring a lot to the table, both as a sponsor and as a player. Whelan agreed, and distinguished between the sponsor and player roles. She noted that industry sponsors often incur significant expenses associated with equipment deployment and that this deployment often ends up being ancillary to what happens in the command center. She expressed hope that any large scale deployment in the 2007 exercise could be made more realistic by deploying the equipment closer to when it would arrive in an actual incident, rather than at the outset of the exercise.

Citgo's Bettendorf Exercise

Barbi Lee reported on the May 18-20, 2004 exercise that Citgo held involving its Bettendorf facility. Citgo coordinated with the Quad Cities Sub-Area Committee in planning and holding the event, which included an incident command system (ICS) training session as well as a tabletop exercise. According to Lee, the training and exercise involved Citgo employees from many levels of the organization, as well as company contractors. The company's objectives included practicing unified command, response under high water conditions, evacuations, and ICS, as well as exploring potential environmental impacts in the area. The Sub-Area Committee's objectives included determining how its plan would be used during a spill, whether notification procedures would be followed, and whether its identified response strategies would be used.

The scenario was designed as a worst case discharge for Citgo's Bettendorf facility. It began as a barge release of 1,200 barrels of diesel at the facility's dock. This release was used to drive the training session on May 18. The incident then escalated with a tank and dike failure, which released 24,000 barrels, with product reaching the river under high water conditions.

According to Lee, lessons learned for the Sub-Area Committee included that the Sub-Area Plan and response strategies were not used as extensively as committee members anticipated. Lee said Citgo primarily relied on its own plans and documents. Citgo's facility response plan

(FRP) for the Bettendorf site includes some specific response strategies. Lee noted that a few inaccuracies and omissions were also identified in the Quad Cities plan and response strategies.

Gary Haden said he intends to compare the response strategies in all Quad Cities area FRPs with the strategies that the Sub-Area Committee developed. Barb Naramore suggested that Haden might also want to compare the Quad Cities Sub-Area Plan with the UMR Plan and the inland sensitivity maps for the area as a cross-reference to avoid omissions.

Lee noted that Richard Wingrove participated in the exercise and provided NOAA modeling on fate and transport. Rodney Tucker praised the exercise, noting that it gave agency staff excellent exposure to riverine response issues. Haden expressed regret that the exercise did not explore questions related to cross-river coordination in the event of a major spill. Lee agreed, noting that the scale of local participation in the exercise did not permit this.

Haden cautioned that exercise participants made a common, but potentially problematic, assumption — i.e., that they would be able to communicate via cell phone during the response. Communication alternatives were not explored. In a real disaster, Haden said there is a very real possibility cell towers might not be functioning. In response to a question from Steve Faryan, Roger Lauder noted that many counties and cities in Illinois have been addressing joint communications with federal anti-terrorism funding. This has included developing dedicated computer networks for emergency communication and improving countywide communications with new antennae. While acknowledging that progress has been made within some counties, Haden said broad interoperability through a common radio frequency and compatible equipment has not yet been achieved. Haden said he would check with a St. Louis Sub-Area Committee member who has considerable expertise on these matters to determine the current status of national and regional efforts.

Faryan asked whether the unified command functioned effectively in the exercise. Lee said things went fairly smoothly, with differences of opinion over issues like evacuations resulting in good discussions. However, Lee noted that there was not much local government participation in the exercise. She said this is particularly unfortunate, given that local responders would take the lead in decisions such as evacuation, in the event of an actual incident.

Early Warning Monitoring Network

Steve Faryan briefly summarized the background on the UMR early warning monitoring (EWM) effort, explaining that various entities had contributed significant effort to exploring the potential for a UMR EWM system through a Scoping Group. The efforts of that group led to the October 2003 establishment of a pilot station at Lock and Dam 15 (L&D 15), using equipment on loan from its manufacturer, YSI. The monitoring equipment was to be operated by the City of Rock Island's drinking water staff. Faryan said the Corps' Rock Island District has been tremendously helpful in supporting the pilot station, clearing placement of the equipment at their facility, providing data logging and telemetry equipment, and offering training assistance to the City of Rock Island staff. However, Faryan said that keeping the city's staff engaged has been an issue. In addition, he noted that American Water's leadership on this effort has diminished.

According to Faryan, sources of additional EPA funding to support the UMR EWM effort are not currently promising. EPA is focusing some work on water security issues, but the parameters are quite different and the focus is more on distribution systems and less on source water. However, he said some of this research may still provide useful insights.

In response to a question from Roger Lauder, Barb Naramore described the difference between the laboratory-based monitoring system on the Ohio River and the real-time monitoring approach envisioned for the UMR. She explained that the UMR equipment in the pilot station measures very basic parameters (i.e., water temperature, conductivity, dissolved oxygen, pH, oxidation reduction potential, turbidity, and chlorophyll). The goal is to see if continuous measurement of these parameters could provide timely indications of contamination events. Unlike the more sophisticated equipment on the Ohio River, the L&D 15 station is not designed to identify specific contaminants. On the other hand, by taking multiple measurements per hour rather than one reading per day, it is capable of providing more timely information. Moreover, the equipment is less expensive, does not need to be based at a lab, and does not require advanced skills for operation.

Collin Fagan suggested port security grants as one potential source of funding to support EWM. Naramore urged that basic operating issues be resolved before any additional funding is sought. Since the L&D 15 equipment was deployed in October 2003, due to various internal factors, the City of Rock Island's water treatment plant staff has not assumed responsibility for calibrating and maintaining the equipment as originally planned. Corps staff has calibrated the equipment occasionally in an effort to prevent damage, but little insight regarding operating requirements or the equipment's suitability for spill detection has been gained over the past year.

Whelan said that, with the City of Rock Island not maintaining the equipment and the UMR Water Suppliers Coalition no longer an active presence, there are very real questions about whether and how to proceed with the EWM effort. Lauder said Governor Blagojevich's homeland security initiative with Illinois' water intakes may elicit interest from another supplier.

Naramore said there appear to be three basic options at this point, assuming the Spills Group concurs that the status quo is unacceptable. These options are to:

1. establish an absolute deadline for the City of Rock Island to establish and maintain a viable calibration and maintenance schedule,
2. look immediately for another partner to assume calibration and maintenance responsibilities, or
3. pull the equipment from the water and return it to the manufacturer.

Naramore urged that the first of these options only be chosen if the group is also prepared to move immediately to one of the other two options in the event that Rock Island does not demonstrate a clear capacity to operate the station. After some further discussion, Spills Group members concurred that the YSI multi-parameter sonde should be withdrawn and returned to the manufacturer unless:

1. the City of Rock Island water treatment staff establishes and maintains a viable calibration and maintenance schedule, starting immediately; or
2. an alternative partner is found in the near future to operate the equipment.

Members further agreed that deployment of the previously planned fluorescence detector should be deferred until at least such time as a reliable mechanism is established to operate the current equipment.

UMR Plan Notification Protocol

John Whitaker briefly summarized the Spills Group's recent discussions concerning implementation of the UMR Spill Plan's notification protocol. Following failures to fully implement the protocol during incidents on the UMR, Spills Group members agreed at their October 2003 meeting to conduct unannounced notification drills. Ann Whelan and John Grump volunteered to take the lead in initiating and evaluating drills. Two drills were held, in December 2003 and February 2004, with mixed success. According to Whitaker, it was clear that there was room for improvement within all signatory agencies. At their April 2004 meeting, Spills Group members agreed to halt the unannounced drills through the summer, during which time members were asked to work internally to ensure that all relevant staff were familiar with the protocol and prepared to implement it. Unannounced drills were then to resume in the fall.

Several Spills Group members described their own agency or state's procedures for receiving and disseminating spill notifications, as well as efforts they made to increase competency with the UMR Plan's protocol. Steve Faryan and Joe Davis indicated that the National Response Center (NRC) notifies the EPA duty officers. Those duty officers pass the reports along to the on-duty OSCs, who can follow-up with the NRC by phone to obtain additional information. It was acknowledged that the NRC's practice of simply sending faxes to the states can result in delays because those faxes are generally not seen by response personnel outside of regular business hours. However, the states have their own reporting requirements and 24-hour duty officers to receive notifications directly from responsible parties and others. Various options for increasing the states' access to the federal information system were discussed, including allowing the states to log on to a web-based EOC, which includes updated information as incidents unfold.

John Grump reported on the most recent unannounced UMR notification drill, which was initiated at 1:15 p.m. on October 14 with a call to Iowa's 24-hour number. The drill involved a release from the Jet Gas facility in Fort Madison, Iowa. Grump said he was transferred to an Iowa DNR field office, where the person with whom he spoke was not clear on how to proceed. With some prompting, the field office contacted DNR headquarters in Des Moines and the appropriate contacts were then made to Illinois and Missouri as potentially affected states. Grump says that the fact that this was a drill appeared to influence people's follow through. He emphasized that all agency personnel need to proceed with notifications as if the drills were real incidents.

Grump encouraged the Spills Group to continue with the unannounced drills, noting that they do not require much effort and are the best way to increase the signatory agencies' competency

with the notification protocol. He said he has asked Whelan to conduct an unannounced drill where Wisconsin will be the first-aware state.

Roger Lauder asked whether Illinois could include multiple notification numbers in the UMR Plan. Grump said this would be acceptable if this is what the state needs, but stressed that Illinois would need to make it clear how the various numbers are to be used.

Rodney Tucker supported Grump's recommendation to continue the notification drills. He attributed the confusion at Iowa DNR's field office to the fact that the person reached is fourth in line to receive notifications. Tucker said he is striving to ensure that all personnel are familiar with the plan. He also reported that Iowa DNR had some difficulty notifying the Fish and Wildlife Service of the incident using the coordination office number. Naramore noted that Stan Smith recently informed her that all notifications to the Service should go through the Interior Department's Regional Environmental Officers [see previous discussion under UMR Plan updates]. John Punkiewicz asked whether the Corps was notified during the October 14 drill. Grump said that the Corps should have been notified, but was not.

Whitaker asked whether the UMR notification protocol should be modified to include having the first-aware state notify the NRC. Grump said the Corps of Engineers should also be added to the list of primary contacts for first-aware states. After some discussion, Spills Group members agreed to make these changes.

Oil Planning and Mapping Updates

Planning Updates

John Whitaker reported that the St. Louis Sub-Area Committee sponsored a boat trip on Pool 26 in late September, with EPA Region 7 supplying the boat and operator. Participants looked at various river features and facilities and discussed planning issues. Whitaker described the event as a good way to reinvigorate the group. There were 14 participants. Barbi Lee said Jim Silver would send the UMRBA some inland sensitivity map updates that were identified on the trip. Lee also said Jennifer Sweeney of Koch expressed some interest in developing response strategies for the sub-area. Joe Davis and Roger Lauder both said the boat trip was an excellent chance to share information and meet other members of the Sub-Area Committee.

Gary Haden reported on planning and exercise efforts underway for Omaha/Council Bluffs and the Siouxland area. He also said that the Quad Cities Sub-Area Committee is scheduled to meet following today's Spills Group meeting.

Barb Naramore reported that UMRBA staff worked with MPCA, Wisconsin DNR, and Wakota CAER's industry members to extend the Twin Cities response strategies coverage. Strategies were developed for the UMR from Hastings to Red Wing, Minnesota, downstream from the Twin Cities metro area. Small portions of the St. Croix and Vermillion Rivers were also included. John Grump said that, in conjunction with the response strategy effort, Wakota CAER has received permission to establish an equipment cache at Kinnickinnic State Park on the St. Croix River. Grump noted that a large pipeline crosses the St. Croix upstream of the park.

Mapping Updates

Ann Whelan reported that, with the exception of one portion of Ohio, the inland sensitivity maps have been completed for all of EPA Region 5. She expressed appreciation for everyone's contributions to this effort. Whelan said Region 5's management is committed to maintaining the maps, and Minnesota and Michigan will be the first two states updated. The goal is to complete two statewide updates each year. Whelan said Illinois and Wisconsin are in line for updating in FY 06 and 07, respectively.

Major changes in the updated maps will include the addition of protection strategies where they have been developed, the inclusion of data on historic features where available, and the addition of a new hazardous materials data layer. The maps will be packaged on a statewide basis, though sub-divisions may be needed to make the material available to some users. In any event, the current mapping areas will no longer be used. She also reported that the UMRBA and Great Lakes Commission will be assuming the map production duties formerly done at USGS's Upper Midwest Environmental Sciences Center. The discontinuation of USGS's role also necessitates moving the project web site from USGS to EPA. Whelan said there will likely be a transition period during which the maps are not available online.

Agency Updates and Reports on Recent Incidents

John Whitaker said that, other than a few mystery sheens, there have been no recent incidents on the Upper Mississippi or Missouri Rivers in Missouri. He noted that security preparations for the Presidential debate in St. Louis were an enormous undertaking.

Rodney Tucker reported that a tug sank near Cordova. Approximately 50 gallons of motor oil was released, but the 5,000 gallons of diesel fuel on board was successfully pumped off. Tucker also noted that LT Chris Pisares has replaced LT Dave Webb at the Quad Cities MSD.

Patrick Cuty reported that Hurricane Ivan's impacts on the east coast extended well inland. Several vessels sunk in the Pittsburgh area, and some are continuing to create obstructions as salvage work is ongoing. Cuty said he hopes to incorporate some good training opportunities concerning naval architecture, firefighting, and related issues.

Barbi Lee reported that EPA's Environmental Response Team (ERT) gave its fast water boom training class in the Quad Cities in July. There was good local participation in the class, and Lee said it was a useful follow-up activity to Citgo's exercise in May. She said EPA may try to offer the class in St. Louis.

John Grump said there have been no major incidents recently in Wisconsin. He noted that Wisconsin DNR is experiencing layoffs to a degree that Grump has not seen in his 28 years with the agency. Grump announced that he will be retiring in May 2005. With the current staffing situation, Grump said he did not know when his replacement would be named.

Other Business

The next meeting of the UMR Spills Group was set for April 20-21, 2005 in the Quad Cities.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:53 p.m.