

Council Briefs

The Quarterly Newsletter of the
Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council

www.circac.org

Second Quarter 2004

Change of Command RADM Olson Returns to 17th USCG District

When Rear Admiral James W. Underwood recently handed over command of the Seventeenth Coast Guard District and other duties to Rear Admiral James C. Olson, he passed along responsibilities for personnel patrolling over 3.8 million square miles of ocean and 45,000 miles of tidal shoreline.

That's greater than the area of the entire United States, including Alaska, and more than half its total shoreline. That's a big office.

The area includes what has become the world's second most popular cruise destination with 700,000 passengers each year, the sometimes contentious 200-mile Economic Exclusion Zone and a larger area in the North Pacific to stop illegal, large-scale high seas drift netting, and top it all off with the Port of Valdez where 18 percent of the America's oil production begins its maritime journey.

RADM Underwood's career began in 1968 when he entered the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. He later earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of

Government. His career has taken him around the country on posts in Long Beach, CA, Coos Bay, OR, Cordova, AK, Charleston, SC, Port Canaveral and Miami, FL, and other locations.

New locations often meant new assignments and he has held positions ranging from Public Affairs Officer to vessel Commander to Chief of Intelligence and Investigations where he directed operations at the Maritime Intelligence Center in Miami.

Like RADM Underwood, RADM Olson also served in Miami and directed the intelligence center there. He returns to Alaska having commanded the Air Station at Kodiak on a previous tour. A pilot with over 5000 accident-free hours in various helicopters, RADM Olson has served as Director of Operations and Capability as well as other posts in Oregon, New York, Sitka, Seattle, and Massachusetts.

CIRCAC Executive Director Michael Munger and Board President Doug Jones attended the Change of Command ceremonies in Juneau last month.



Rear Admiral
James C. Olson

Firefighting Manual Online

Developed through the PROPS committee, the Marine Firefighting Manual Project assumes that a major marine fire, particularly a vessel fire, may require resources beyond those locally available and that effective response will require resource deployment coordination among a broad range of organizations. The entire manual is also available on the web at www.imcnw.com/%7Ecookinletmff/.

Like contingency planning, the firefighting manual identifies the means and methods necessary to access federal, state, and local resources. Like GRS, the process is workgroup driven and CIRCAC has submitted the product to the Cook Inlet Committee for Oil and Hazardous Materials Contingency Plan and will ultimately be included in addition to the Cook Inlet Subarea Plan.

The firefighting manual provides for a coordinated response by the U.S. Coast Guard and other federal, state, local, and civilian responders to fires onboard vessels or at waterfront facilities. CIRCAC and the workgroup integrated into the manual relevant policies, responsibilities, and procedures for coordination of on-scene responders including community profiles and capabilities, response resources, command and control, initial response actions and several other areas of concern.

The second phase of the project, scheduled for completion in 2005, will address the same concerns for the Kodiak Island Subarea.

Events

- August 19: PWS Presentation on NIS; Islands and Ocean Ctr., Homer
- August 23: EVOS Trustee Council Mtg.; Anchorage
- August 28: Industry Appreciation Day, at Noon; Kenai
- August 30: Vancouver Is. First Nations Visit; Soldotna
- September 6: Labor Day (Office Closed)

Find more events and meetings at http://www.circac.org/calendar_aug.html

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Looking to Enhance Response, CIRCAC Launches Permit Project

During an incident, responders file dozens of documents for a broad range of activities from accessing roads to crossing streams to establishing mooring buoys. State and federal laws, regu-



PAPER CHASE
Responders navigate a formidable paper process during incident responses. The ConocoPhillips crew shown here recently participated in a response drill in Valdez.

lations, and agency policy require as many as 136 different permits or applications as noted in the Unified Plan.

CIRCAC proposed the Spill Response Permits Project as a way to facilitate identifying, completing, and filing the forms and permits required to carry out an effective spill response.

Our objectives for the project are to identify all applicable permits, forms, and applications related to oil spill response in Alaska; to update and revise state permits as needed to streamline content and ensure that the information collected is necessary and appropriate to the permit's intended purpose; to remove redundant permit requirements; to centralize all such permits in an easily searched computer-based organization system made accessible through the Internet and also distributed on CD-ROM.

CIRCAC ultimately expects the product to be included in the Alaska Federal/State Preparedness Plan for Response to Oil and Hazardous Substance Discharges/Releases Unified Plan.

DR&R Review

Addressing its OPA90 mandates, CIRCAC reviews the longevity of facilities including plans for removing them and restoring the environment when their usefulness has ended, a process commonly known as DR&R.

To better understand this terminal phase of development, CIRCAC began reviewing state and federal regulations, pollution laws, lease stipulations, and jurisdictional, permitting, and oversight authority. CIRCAC is especially interested in the specific steps that responsible parties must take as well as avenues for public participation.

The final report will include a map of all facilities and associated pipeline infrastructure, a dossier on each offshore facility in Cook Inlet describing its site topography and geology, age, production status, lease stipulations, ownership history, and DR&R status. CIRCAC will also summarize relevant Alaska attorney general opinions regarding DR&R liability as part of the report.

More Cook Inlet RCAC news -

Ballast Water Survey & Non-Indigenous Species

CIRCAC provided detailed comments in response to the U.S. Coast Guard proposed rulemaking for a mandatory ballast water management program affecting ships entering U.S. waters from outside the EEZ.

As part of these comments, we supplied the results of a ballast water survey for Cook Inlet prepared for CIRCAC by Robertson and Crews (2003) titled "Gross estimates of ballast water discharges into Cook Inlet, Alaska." The report summarized ballast management data for ships entering Cook Inlet based in part on the U.S. Coast Guard and Smithsonian Research Center's ballast water management reporting data.

CIRCAC is also finalizing an agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife

Service to coordinate studies relating to Non-Indigenous Species and Ballast Water Management for ships entering Cook Inlet.

Saupe Presents in Japan

The Japan Science and Technology Agency invited CIRCAC's Director of Science and Research to present a paper at the first Professional Meeting on the Oil Spill Preparedness and Environmental Protection Okhotsk Sea. Her presentation provided information on environmental monitoring, habitat mapping, and other issues related to Cook Inlet's oil infrastructure. The conference addressed Japanese agency and fishermen concerns for potential impacts downstream of Sakhalin oil fields development. They also sought information on appropriate prevention and response measures for seasonally ice-covered seas in Sakhalin.

Shippers Receive Legacy Award for Spill Prevention

The BC/Pacific States Task Force honored the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Trade Shippers recently with the Legacy Award for their efforts at spill prevention in the region. The trade shippers, Tesoro Maritime/Seabulk Tankers; ConocoPhillips/PolarTankers; SeaRiver Maritime; and the Alaska Tanker Co. moved approximately 330 million barrels of Alaska North Slope crude oil from the Valdez Marine Terminal to various refineries on the West Coast without spilling oil into Alaskan waters.

Presenters noted that the tanker operators have also had no spills in British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, California, or Hawaii, although transporting the crude oil required approximately 452 tanker loads.