

Deepwater Horizon Lessons Learned Workshop
Improving Safety & Health Training for Disaster Cleanup Workers
Overview

Purpose of the Meeting:

- *To examine the training-related Deepwater Horizon oil spill response activities*
 - We will hear from individuals who were on the ground as trainers and workers regarding their experiences.
 - We will also hear a presentation regarding the training evaluation being conducted by Sue Ann Sarpy, Sarpy and Associates/Tulane University
 - We expect that by examining the training that was provided compared to our more traditional view of what training disaster cleanup workers should have we can begin to develop more effective guidance on training requirements for future experiences.

- *To establish consensus about the appropriate elements of pre-incident and deployment-phase training for support personnel performing cleanup work*
 - Training requirements to perform cleanup tasks in the event of an oil spill must be clear to all participating federal agencies, employers/contractors and to the employees performing the work. While some federal guidance exists the need for more specificity with respect to general and site specific training has become clear as result of the Gulf Oil Spill Response.
 - Training Marine Oil Spill Response Workers under OSHA's Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Standard <http://www.osha.gov/Publications/3172/3172.html>, last revised in 2001. There is a need for clarification as to the HAZWOPER Training Requirements and the limitation of any “exceptions” to those requirements.

- *To agree on a proposed policy to best ensure that workers receive that training (in a language and a literacy level they understand) before being deployed to work.*
 - Unless there is an agreed upon framework for determining what training credentials a cleanup worker must have prior to being deployed and receiving site specific training, unprepared workers will continue to be put at risk at disaster response sites. While some workers will have the required training when they are hired for a disaster site cleanup job, in other circumstances, they will not. For example, a commitment to employ the local/impacted community in the cleanup work often results in undertrained people performing dangerous

cleanup work without experience. The majority of the fisherman employed following the Deepwater Horizon oil spill had no prior experience or training in oil spill cleanup or working with hazardous materials. Numerous day laborers employed in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina had no training in working with hazardous materials.

Key issues:

- How were training decisions made during the oil spill?
- How should training decisions get made in future disasters? (protocols, MOU, contract language)
- What was the basis for training being done the way it was?
- Why does preparedness training happen after the fact?
- Are there minimum federal training requirements for disaster site cleanup workers (topics to be covered)?
 - Experienced cleanup workers vs. local residents with no prior experience
- How does quality control of worker training happen during an incident response?