



REGIONAL STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE SUGGESTIONS FOR THE LIAISON OFFICER

What does the Liaison Officer need to know?

A Liaison Officer coming from outside Alaska will bring experience that complements that of a typical RSC member. While RSC members may not be familiar with the Incident Command System (ICS), the many acronyms, and other aspects of a spill response operations, the Liaison Officer may be new to Prince William Sound and many aspects of local knowledge context. It is possible that both the Liaison Officer and most RSC members will be learning the RSC process as they go.

The Liaison Officer is critical to the RSC process. An effectively activated and supported RSC can bring great value to the response while also protecting the public's interests, building trust, and fostering a positive public perception of the response.

Suggestions from Past Exercises

PWSRCAC offers the following suggestions for the Liaison Officer to consider based on exercise reports, interviews with past RSC participants, and our own experience with the RSC in exercises:

1. Set up the RSC as early in the response as possible to maximize the benefits it can bring and begin to build trust with and among its members.
2. Provide information to RSC members from the start about what they should expect as far as travel arrangements, accommodations, etc. Many Prince William Sound communities are not connected by road or regular ferry service and will require flights and overnight accommodations.
3. Ensure the RSC receives new information generated by the Incident Management Team (IMT) such as the Incident Action Plan (IAP), updated forms such as 209s, or materials released to the public. Help translate technical jargon as needed.

This document is part of a series of resources to support community members who may be asked to represent their community during an oil spill. More resources for the Regional Stakeholder Committee can be found at: www.pwsrcac.org/rsc

4. Make sure meeting times and locations (or access links, dial-in numbers; see below) are clear to all participants. Plan a method to communicate changes if needed due to the dynamic situation.
5. Try to answer any "easy" questions in advance of the meeting with Unified Command. As the RSC has limited time with the Unified Command, it is very helpful if the Liaison Officer can answer questions, whenever possible, or explain technical items well before the meeting with Unified Command. The table below is from the Prince William Sound Area Contingency Plan and provides a helpful reference.

Type of Information	Coordinators Route to:
Issues of concern	Joint Information Center (JIC), Unified Command, and the Operations and Planning Sections
Resources available	Logistics Section
Resources needed	Operations, Planning, and Logistics Sections
Resources needed - urgent	Operations, Logistics Sections
Cleanup assistance available	Operations, Planning, and Logistics Sections
Cleanup assistance needed	Operations, Planning, and Logistics Sections
Urgent cleanup assistance needed	Operations, Logistics Sections
Sensitive area information	Environmental Unit
Questions and cleanup techniques	JIC, Environmental Unit, Operations Section

Special Considerations for Remote Participation

Convening the RSC provides the best opportunity for effective discussions both among the RSC and with the Unified Command. However, weather, logistics, or other circumstances (such as during a pandemic) may require some remote participation. Ensuring robust and functional *remote* participation requires a few more considerations:

1. Use a video platform that also includes a phone line as an alternative in case of unreliable internet connections. If the platform is new to users, ensure they are able to access and use it before starting a briefing or discussion.
2. Ensure all remote participants have the same information as those in the room.
3. Consider how you will tie remote participants into the meetings with Unified Command, if these will take place in a different location.

What may the RSC need?

As stated in the Prince William Sound Area Contingency Plan, "Supporting the RSC members [and their IMT representatives] in the conduct of their responsibilities is one of the Unified Command's many responsibilities." Within the RSC Toolkit there is a checklist of things that may be needed and useful for the RSC process.