California Department of Fish and Game News Release

December 13, 2012

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ENSURING CALIFORNIA HAS THE BEST: OIL SPILL MANAGEMENT TEAM PERFORMANCE EVALUATED THROUGH NEW PROGRAM

Richmond, Calif. - A first-of-its-kind drill exercise for oil Spill Management Teams (SMT) kicked off today as part of a pilot program designed to evaluate how well these teams operate in California in the event of an oil spill.

Every vessel displacing more than 300 gross tons that enters California must provide an oil spill contingency plan to California Department of Fish and Game's Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR) that includes primary contacts for spill response management. Because many companies do not have these types of specialized teams in house, they often contract for oil spill response management as part of their contingency plans. Currently, 19 spill management teams serve 1,333 companies that operate thousands of vessels calling on California.

The drills focus on critical SMT "initial spill response" activities including making required notifications of an oil spill to federal and state officials; demonstrating proficiency with the Incident Command System and establishing an Unified Command; coordinating with federal and state Incident Commanders; and determining arrival time of the responsible party's Incident Commander. Local industry leader Chevron volunteered to serve as OSPR's partner for the first test of this new program.

"We developed the program for exercising spill management teams to ensure those teams perform optimally during a spill," said Thomas Cullen, Administrator for OSPR. "We learned through past actual spills and drills that a spill management team's skills, abilities and early actions following notification of an event make a significant difference in the success of the response."

OSPR designed the program but wanted to test how well it did in providing an accurate portrait of an SMT's abilities. California law allows OSPR to use unannounced drills to test response companies called Oil Spill Response Organizations (OSRO) which it then rates and lists on the OSPR website. As companies prepare their contingency plans for submission to OSPR, they can review the ratings and select the OSRO that best fits their needs. In addition, should an OSRO fail to meet its response requirements under the drill, OSPR modifies their rating and OSPR notifies all contingency plan holders who have contracted with the OSRO. However, unlike OSROs, California does not have the ability in law to directly evaluate SMTs, so OSPR developed a program to exercise SMTs through the vessel contingency plans. OSPR will then share the

evaluations with the contingency plan holders who contract with the different SMTs as it does with OSROs.

OSPR plans to hold at least 19 drills to cover all of the SMTs during 2013. Four OSPR staff will be needed for the drills: the drill coordinator, drill evaluator, and one or two OSPR "players" for other critical Incident Command System positions that may be needed for the exercise. Additional drills may be held at industry request for revaluation.

"By testing our program with Chevron, we are ensuring that we have designed something that will provide the information we need to fairly evaluate a Spill Management Team's performance," said Christopher Klumpp, who oversees the OSPR preparedness branch. "In the absence of regulation or law, we hope that market pressure will improve any deficient performances."

After the program has been in operation for a cycle or two, OSPR will evaluate the findings to determine if any further action is necessary to improve performance among the SMTs.

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