

Title: Building, leading, and maintaining environmental response readiness

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Extended Abstract (658 wd):

Preparation is the key to successful responses. Preparation can mean having equipment and people ready, trained, and able to be deployed or assist, but that doesn't come without hard work. Successful preparation requires leadership, purpose, and the ability to unite and motivate teams. Without such unification, the ability to respond is hampered.

Chevron structures its emergency response with several specialized corporate teams. Chevron's Environmental Functional Team (EFT) is made of individuals from across the corporation who maintain environmental readiness and respond to incidents globally. The team's mission is to provide expert technical support and strategic assessment of environmental issues that emerge during a spill, in addition to staffing the Environmental Unit under an incident command system (or similar incident management system). The Environmental Unit provides persons with highly technical environmental skill sets, including knowledge of oil properties, fate and effects, impact assessment: economic, ecotoxicology, etc., environmental monitoring and sampling, permitting, spill countermeasures (including in-situ burn and dispersants), shoreline assessment and protection, resources at risk, waste management, and wildlife management. Although this technical knowledge is important, maintaining enthusiasm among the team and with team members, and the ability to work under pressure during times of crisis along with proactive problem solving can be just as important or more important to a successful response.

This presentation demonstrates the strategies the EFT uses to recruit, engage, motivate, and train team members to develop and maintain efficient and effective global response capabilities, in-person and remotely. This includes i) strategic planning, ii) external contracting, iii) creation of an auxiliary team to create flexibility and improve scalability, providing the ability to ramp up and expand responses, these are expanded below.

1. Strategic planning has identified some strategies to improve both our preparedness and response capabilities. This includes the development of a centralized Teams site, scheduling regular meetings, offering external development opportunities, and creating evergreen job aids. Using this structure allows team members to build, capture, and disseminate knowledge among others within the group, supporting local business exercises and potential response. . .
2. External contracting is a practical means by which the EFT can increase numbers and expertise to support Chevron businesses, especially in different regions across the US and globally. As the world enters 2022 the "Great Reshuffle" is occurring among many business sectors, whereby individuals are looking for new opportunities. As such, we find ourselves constantly considering

the breadth and placement of contractors, particularly individuals, and seeking out alternative contracting strategies, such as global networks.

3. Perhaps the most significant change we have implemented internally has been to broaden our view on individuals as contributors to a team. Traditionally EFT has retained a core group of individuals, many of whom have decades of experience. As people have moved or “reshuffled” we have encouraged members to maintain links with the team, even when their primary role or personal situation doesn’t allow for an absolute dedication of time. To this end, we established a secondary auxiliary team, which is a low commitment team in terms of response readiness and day-to-day demand, but these people already have some training and or experience, are included in team communications, and can stand up as additional support if needed.

Changes to work since the beginning of COVID have seen a shift from face-to-face meetings and in-person exercises and responses to virtual meetings and exercises/responses. Although the use of virtual platforms will most likely abate over time, within InterSpill 2022 representing a significant shift back to global meetings in spill response, there is no doubt that the virtual world is here to stay. Leveraging team-building skills, such as defining a group vision, leading through periods of change, engaging across multiple time zones, and building relationships have all been used to create a team that practically has strong bonds despite many members have never met one another. With regular exercise and training, the EFT is “ready to respond”, in-person and or remotely, to multiple scenarios involving oil spills.