
Strategic Plan for the Port of New York/New Jersey Area Committee

This document sets out a strategic plan for the Port of New York/New Jersey and Port of Albany Area Committee. It reviews strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities; presents a series of statements relating to the Area Committee's vision, mission, values and objectives; and sets out its proposed strategies and goals.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats, & Opportunities

This strategic plan addresses the following key strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities for the Port of New York/New Jersey and Port of Albany Area Committee:

Strengths:

- The Area Committee is a representative body under the direction of the Captain of the Port of New York.
- Membership is derived from the maritime environmental prevention and response community.
- The Area Committee is a single-forum link between local and national stakeholders.
- The Area Committee addresses issues directly related to maritime environmental protection.
- Laws and regulations currently exist to support the environmental protection mission.

Weaknesses:

- The Area Committee's area of responsibility covers two states: New Jersey and New York.
- Area Committee membership is not as robust as desired.
- Jurisdictions in the port are overlapping.

Threats:

- Our port is vulnerable to oil discharges and hazmat releases due to the sheer volume of maritime traffic in and out of the port.
- Pollution incidents may occur without warning.
- Environmentally sensitive areas including ports, waterways, and coastal areas are particularly vulnerable to pollution.

Opportunities:

- The Area Committee, under the leadership of the Captain of the Port, has the opportunity to develop and exercise a vibrant Area Contingency Plan.
- The Area Committee has the opportunity to provide a framework to communicate, identify risks, and coordinate resources to mitigate threats and consequences.

- The Area Committee has the opportunity to cooperate to detect, deter, prevent, and respond to pollution incidents.

Vision

The vision of the Port of New York/New Jersey and Port of Albany Area Committee in three years time is:

The complexity, scope, and potential consequences of an environmental threat or incident due to an oil discharge or hazmat release requires that there be a coordinated effort between all port users and environmental response agencies. This effort requires open communication and enhanced awareness. It will also require all those involved to fully understand their roles. The Captain of the Port and the Area Committee will create a partnership of industry, government, and other stakeholders to enhance preparedness for an effective and efficient response through an updated Area Contingency Plan and through outreach programs.

Mission Statement

The central purpose and role of the Port of New York/New Jersey and Port of Albany Area Committee is defined as follows:

The Area Committee is composed of government agencies, commercial entities, and other groups or individuals interested in preserving and improving the environmental response capabilities of our shared waterfront areas and coastal zone. The Area Contingency Plan will capture the information necessary to coordinate and communicate prevention and response procedures. The plan's goal is to prepare, train, and exercise the response community, coordinate resources and activities, and foster prevention activities. The Area Contingency Plan will complement other existing plans, such as the National Contingency Plan and National Response Plan. Because the Area Contingency Plan's purpose is prevention and response to environmental incidents, it must also integrate with existing plans for response and consequence management when incident response and consequence management are necessary.

Corporate Values

The corporate values governing the Port of New York/New Jersey and Port of Albany Area Committee are:

The concept of local area coordination for planning, prevention, and response has been practiced with great success by Coast Guard Captains of the Port. The Area Committee will expand on this proven concept to continuously learn, assess, and enhance processes based on ours and others' experiences; utilize innovative technologies and techniques; educate government officials, environmental groups, industry, and the public and media; and establish work groups to accomplish the mission.

Major Goals

The Port of New York/New Jersey and Port of Albany Area Committee will achieve the following key targets over the next three years:

- Build environmental preparedness awareness
- Ensure coordinated responses of pollution incidents
- Enhance prevention and response capabilities
- Increase local outreach
- Provide updates to ensure a comprehensive Area Contingency Plan

Strategic Actions

The following strategic actions will be implemented:

- Complete and update sensitive area information, including historically, culturally, economically, and ecologically sensitive areas.
- Develop specific strategies for hazardous substance response.
- Evaluate and exercise the current state of preparedness throughout the coastal area.
- Ensure continuing relationships and communications with local, state, federal, and private stakeholders.
- Develop mechanisms and strategies to further enhance the preparedness of the response community.
- Develop a media handout and a strategy to integrate the media in our efforts. [This strategy should foster a positive relationship not only during responses (Joint Information Centers), but also during day-to-day operations].
- Develop a pamphlet about the Area Committee for distribution during annual events like Earth Day and during speaking engagements.
- Conduct exercises with federal, state, local, and private stakeholder organizations and disseminate information to the Area Committee members about upcoming drills and exercises.
- Establish a recurring training program for Area Committee members, potential responsible parties, and responders that will ensure effective implementation of ICS/UCS and decision-making.
- Ensure the use of electronic bulletin boards to disseminate information before, during, and after a response.