ABSTRACT
Many spill response organizations have encountered problems when requesting personnel resources during a spill event. Besides a HAZWOPER certification, how do you determine the proper training level and communicate this to the outside resource providers?

Alaska Clean Seas developed a simplified categorization for spill response personnel. The categories are:
- General Laborer
- Skilled Technician
- Team Leader
- Vessel Operator-Nearshore
- Vessel Operator-Offshore

Each of these categories have minimum training requirements. The regulatory agencies in Alaska approved the categories for use in describing responder needs in member company contingency plans. The State of Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation adopted the categories in the development of their Spill Tactics for Alaska Responders (STAR) manual. This manual was developed with input from the OSRO’s in Alaska and the categories were approved by all of them.

With these spill responder categories, ACS is able to train the North Slope volunteer spill response teams, the Village Response Teams, and the Auxiliary (contract) Response Teams to these levels to meet member company contingency plan requirements. ACS is also able to request personnel during drills and events in a quick and efficient manner.

Of course, these levels do not meet all the proficiencies needed during an event. ACS has also developed proficiency checks (PC’s) for each piece of equipment. These check lists provide the method for someone to demonstrate they now how to start and operate a piece of equipment such as skimmers, pumps, boom, etc. Some of the equipment is more complicated and requires a higher level of competency such as bobcats, front end loaders, airboats, etc. The PC’s for these types of equipment have 3 levels: Level 1 familiarization; Level 2 competent operator; Level 3 instructor qualified.

Other qualifications are regulatory driven such as Bird Hazing, Bear Hazing, and Wildlife Capture and Stabilization.

With all of these categorizations and tracking, ACS is able to easily identify response personnel for the tasks required.

INTRODUCTION
Alaska Clean Seas (ACS) is the Oil Spill Recovery Organization for the North Slope of Alaska. In this capacity ACS manages and/or trains over 450 volunteer spill responders on the North Slope, over 80 Village Response Team members, and over 200 Auxiliary Contract Response Team members from three companies. ACS tracks all the spill response training for these responders and provides reports to both regulatory agencies and the member companies on their readiness.

In developing contingency plan scenarios, ACS member companies are required to indicate the number of responders necessary for each scenario. The numbers of responders must be divided into qualification levels.

During training or an actual spill event, the Operations Section needs to communicate to the Logistics Section its personnel and equipment needs. The use of common terms assists in this communication. Common qualification levels known by both the Operations and Logistics personnel are necessary.

QUALIFICATIONS
In development of the Alaska Clean Seas Technical Manual, ACS created a responder training qualification system. It needed to be relatively simple but meet the needs of both the contingency planners and response personnel. Five categories were developed with requirements assigned to each one - General Laborer, Skilled Technician, Team Leader, Vessel Operator-Nearshore, and Vessel Operator-Offshore.

A General Laborer is a responder with little or no experience. The qualifications for this category are:
- Current 24 Hour Hazwoper certification
- Current North Slope Training Cooperative Academy. This is a north slope required safety training course.
These vessels are designed to operate in an offshore environment. The qualifications are:

- Minimum training requirements for a General Laborer
- 16 hours of training or equivalent experience in any combination of the following:
  - Response equipment deployment and use
  - Response tactics and equipment requirements
  - Emergency response management (ICS)
  - Staging area management and support
  - Vessel safety, navigation, or operations
  - Contingency plan familiarization
- 16 hours of actual spill response, response exercises, or field deployment time in any combination of the following activities:
  - Operation of recovery equipment systems
  - Operation of transfer and storage systems
  - Deployment and use of containment systems
  - Decontamination procedures
  - Wildlife hazing, capture, and stabilization
- Ten equipment proficiency checks (these will be discussed later in the paper)

A Team Leader is a responder who can fill roles such as Task Force Leader, Containment or Recovery Site Leader, or Staging Area Manager. They have attended additional training in the actions, responsibilities, and task associated with managing portions of an incident. The qualifications are:

- Minimum training requirements for General Laborer
- Minimum training requirements for Skilled Technician
- Current 8 Hour Hazwoper Supervisor certification
- Twenty equipment proficiency checks

Responders qualified as Vessel Operator-Nearshore are tasked with the safe operation of vessels less than 30 feet in length. These vessels are designed to operate primarily in nearshore environments. The qualifications are:

- Minimum training requirements for General Laborer
- Must meet the criteria for any one of the following:
  - Completion of the ACS Captain and Crew or Boat Safety and Handling training programs
  - Completion of 40 hours of equivalent training or experience on vessels, including navigation, charting, vessel electronics, and docking and maneuvering
  - Current USCG Operator Un-inspected Passenger Vessel, or higher, license
- Nearshore vessel proficiency check

Responders qualified as Vessel Operator-Offshore are tasked with the safe operation of vessels larger than 30 feet in length. These vessels are designed to operate in an offshore environment. The qualifications are:

- Minimum training requirements for General Laborer
- Must meet the criteria for any one of the following:
  - Completion of the ACS Captain and Crew training program
  - Completion of 40 hours of equivalent training or experience on vessels larger than 30 feet, including navigation, anchoring, vessel electronics, and docking and maneuvering procedures
  - Current USCG 25 Ton Near Coastal, or larger, license
- Offshore vessel proficiency check

These are the five basic categories of responder qualifications. When requesting response personnel, the Operations Section will indicate the number of personnel needed from each category. This reduces the amount of confusion between the Operations Section and the Logistics Section.

**PROFICIENCY CHECKS**

The responder categories provide the basic level of training for the responder. However, each responder needs to receive a certain level of training in the piece of equipment they may be operating. To show that this training has been received, ACS developed the proficiency check program.

Proficiency checks are check off lists in which the trainee demonstrates the proper operation of a piece of equipment. It provides the documentation that the responder has been trained in the operation. Equipment includes skimmers, pumps, support equipment, etc.

*PC46 – Peristaltic Pump*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student's Name:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualifier's Name:</td>
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**Pre-Start**

- Check all fluid levels (diesel and oil).
- Connect and secure all kamlok hoses.
- Engage the clutch on the pump and adjust the throttle as required.
- Ensure that the drive clutch is disengaged.
- Ensure that the pump body bypass valve is closed.
- Set the compression release to the start position.
- Set the throttle to the start position.

**Start Up/Operations**

- Start engine and warm up.
- Engage the clutch on the pump and adjust the throttle as required.
- The pump may run "dry," however, disengage clutch or shutdown engine if not pumping for long periods.

**Shutdown**

- Disengage clutch.
- Slow the throttle setting down to stop position.

*Having performed all of the tasks listed above, the Student's and Qualifier's signature indicates agreement in the student's competency to perform all listed tasks.*

**NOTE:** In order to receive credit for completion of this Proficiency Check, the student must complete ALL tasks with no more than two (2) qualifier assists.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student's Signature:</th>
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**Qualifier's Signature: | Date:**

Some pieces of equipment, however, require more stringent training and documentation. Examples include airboat, bobcat, front end loader, and forklift operations. For these ACS developed a three level proficiency check. Level 1 is a familiarization level only and does not qualify the individual to operate the equipment alone. Level 2 is the operator qualification level. Level 3 is the instructor qualification level. In level 2 and level 3 the individual must not only demonstrate proper operation, but must also be approved by the Lead Technician who must be comfortable with the individuals operating capability.
Level 3 Qualifier/Instruction Qualification

I certify that ___________ has successfully completed the following:

The following prerequisites must be met to qualify as an instructor:

1. Successfully complete Level 1 Requirements.
2. Successfully complete Level 2 Requirements and/or maintained annual qualification.
3. Demonstrated ability to instruct and test students on the established ACS curriculum.

Individual is qualified to instruct the following equipment:
- (PC18A) Single Engine Airboat
- (PC19A) Twin Engine Airboat

Having demonstrated extensive knowledge and proficiency on the Alaska Clean Seas owned equipment and attachments, ___________ is hereby designated as a qualified operator for this equipment. Individual is approved to instruct courses unsupervised.

Approval is mandatory prior to attaining the title of Qualifier/Instruction.

Trainer Signature: __________________________ Date: __________
Supervisor/Manager Signature: __________________________ Date: __________

Specialized Qualifications

In some instances there may be a need for specialized training in order for an individual to be qualified. These include activities which may have permit stipulations. Examples include Bird Hazing, Bear Hazing, Bird Capture and Stabilization, and Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Team. In these cases the person must have obtained the proper training and certificate of completion for the course.

CONCLUSION

All North Slope Spill Response Team members and Village Response Team members spill response training documentation is managed by ACS. Utilizing the Response™ database, ACS can quickly provide reports to the Logistics Section during an event with the qualifications of each team member. When requesting additional manpower support from the Auxiliary Contractor Response Teams, ACS can provide them the exact numbers of responders from each category. This reduces confusion and provides for a quick and efficient response.

In 2006 the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation developed and issued the Spill Tactics for Alaska Responders (STAR) manual to provide a standardized oil spill response tactics manual specific to the State of Alaska. This manual is intended to be a standard tactics reference for oil spill planning and response activities in Alaska. The STAR manual adopted the personnel qualifications from the Alaska Clean Seas Technical Manual with some minor changes.

BIOGRAPHY

Lee Majors has over 20 years of spill response experience. He retired from the U.S. Coast Guard with ten years in the marine environmental field. The last seven years he has been the Planning and Development Manager for Alaska Clean Seas overseeing Oil Spill Response Research and Development, Spill Response Training, and the Safety Program.