

III.1 SUSTAINABILITY OF RESPONSE PERSONNEL

This paper addresses three areas of personnel and human resources involved in the Deepwater Horizon incident response: Personnel within the Incident Command Post (ICP) organization, personnel within the oil spill response community and those brought on to support that community, and personnel from agencies or organizations outside of the Gulf region such as personnel from other States or local government responders.

Unified Command

Observations:

- The Unified Area Command (UAC) and Houma Incident Command Post (ICP) were established quickly and were staffed with competent personnel.
- As the Mobile ICP and Forward Operating Bases (later Branches) were established and staff rotations started, there was a significant lack of trained and experienced personnel from BP, the Coast Guard, and the States to fill key roles in the response organization.



- The directive from the White House requiring the “tripling of Coast Guard forces” led to significant logistical, training, and assignment issues.

- or three inexperienced, but dedicated people to complete the same role.
- The sheer numbers of staff in the ICPs led to other logistical issues regarding training, housing, transportation, and communications support.
- The structure and growth of the response organization was significantly influenced by political pressure that forced unnecessary staffing and equipment stockpiles in regions with little oiling or potential for oiling.
- There were instances where personnel and equipment were often underutilized or not resourced because of a complicated organizational structure that grew too rapidly.
- The directive from the White House requiring the “tripling of Coast Guard forces” led to significant logistical, training, and assignment issues.
- In all cases, Incident Commanders (ICs) from BP, the Coast Guard, and the States praised the workforce that was present and were impressed with the talent and effort individuals invested to develop a network of quality personnel.