

Quality Partnership Initiative
American Association of Port Authorities and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Communication/Collaboration Best Practices

Port Name: NY & NJ

POC:

Corps District: New York

POC: Jenine Gallo

Best Practice: Establishment of the Clean Air Act- Regional Air Team (RAT)

Purpose: The RAT convenes to review the status of projects and programs compliance with the Clean Air Act (CAA) within the Port Of New York and New Jersey/ New York and New Jersey Bight and identify solutions and resolve issues.

Explanation: The RAT is comprised of an interdisciplinary team of technical and subject matter experts, policy experts and leaders from New York District, the PANYNJ Port Commerce Department, USEPA Region 2, New Jersey Department of Transportation Office of Maritime Resources (NJDOT-OMR), the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection NJDEP), New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT). Initially, the Group met monthly to review the status of ongoing USACE or PANYNJ navigation projects; recently, the scope of project or program review has been expanded to include Coastal and Flood Programs, especially Hurricane Sandy projects extending from the New York and New Jersey Bight (from the North and South shores of Long Island) southerly along the NJ coast into Delaware Bay.

Examples of Results: The RAT provided a necessary and supportive framework to the District and the PANYNJ in which to ensure that the Navigation Program, comprised of the largest deep-draft navigation project the New York and New Jersey 50' Harbor Deepening Project, and several predecessor projects (Arthur Kill, Kill Van Kull and Port Jersey projects), would meet the compliance requirements of the Clean Air Act, General Conformity Rule. At the time of the approval of the Chiefs Report for the 50' project, there had been no pathway to compliance that would not have extended the construction schedule for the project three-fold; an option that was untenable for the PANYNJ as the leaseholder for the terminal operators that required 50' channels to accommodate the post-Panamax vessels scheduled to call. The RAT identified precedential mitigation options that included generation of regulated emission offsets or credits, purchase of credits or allowances and several other 'green port' initiatives that to the current day exemplifies the PANYNJ commitment to creating and maintaining an environmentally-sustainable port. The early identification of problems and issues and the RATs risk-averse and assertive resolution and ongoing management of these potential barriers to successful execution of the Navigation program lead to the projects being completed on schedule and under budget, while contributing significant benefits to the environment.

Why this Process is Important to the Port and the Corps: The RAT provided a precedent-setting forum within which stakeholders, regulators and other interested parties (ex. dredging industry) could convene to identify obstacles to success. Specifically, the benefit to the PANYNJ and the federal government (i.e. USACE) was the on-schedule, within budget completion of the regionally-significant deep-draft navigation program, while concurrently achieving the significant long-term improvements to the environment.

Attachments (if any)