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## Coast Guard Management Team Names Advisory Panel Facilitator

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ANCHORAGE, Alaska - The Aleutian Islands Risk Assessment management team selected **Nuka** Research and Planning Group, LLC February 9, to fill the vacant facilitator opportunity as identified in the Transportation Research Board's "Special Report 293, Risk of Vessel Accidents and Spills in the Aleutian Islands: Designing a Comprehensive Risk Assessment." As the facilitator Nuka Research will support the team's ongoing Aleutian Islands Risk Assessment with a key role of assembling and facilitating advisory panel activities. The contract is currently being finalized.

**Nuka** Research is a small business located in Alaska with extensive experience in facilitation and maritime issues in the Aleutian Islands. As the facilitator of the advisory panel, **Nuka** will assist in coordinating input on the risk assessment from a wide array of stakeholders and helping to ensure that the input is fairly considered within the panel.

"**Nuka's** experience and rapport with the stakeholders in the Aleutian Islands region makes them an ideal facilitator for the advisory panel," said Gary Folley, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. "We look forward to working with **Nuka** to build a structured stakeholder and participatory approach to this risk assessment."

The advisory panel will work with stakeholders to clarify the values and goals that should shape the risk assessment, incorporate local information and knowledge that might otherwise be missed and identify potential paths to organizational learning and policy change that might not otherwise be available.

The panel will consist of stakeholders and experts who can offer local knowledge and expertise on all issues pertinent to the assessment, such as local infrastructure, relevant industries, waterways and their navigation, weather, and habitats. Over the coming weeks the management team and **Nuka** will be reaching out

to the public for participation on the panel.

## Background

The grounding and breakup of the bulk carrier Selendang Ayu during a severe storm in December 2004 focused public attention on the oil spill risks posed by vessels transiting the Aleutians. It resulted in a spill of 336,000 gallons of heavy fuel oil near the shores of Unalaska Island. While this incident was particularly severe, other accidents, spills, and near misses have taken place and continue to occur in the region.

A federal court settlement following the Selendang Ayu grounding specified that certain community service funds paid by the defendant in that case be allocated to pay for a comprehensive risk assessment of ship accidents and spills in the Aleutians and for the conduct of projects identified to minimize those risks.

In 2008, a study titled "Special Report 293, Risk of Vessel Accidents and Spills in the Aleutian Islands: Designing a Comprehensive Risk Assessment," was published which can be found online at the following link: <http://onlinepubs.trb.org/Onlinepubs/sr/sr293.pdf>.

The report was composed by a committee empanelled by the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies, and it reviews and evaluates available information on the current system and operating environment for shipping in the Aleutian Islands.

It proposes a design for a comprehensive risk assessment for the evaluation of vessel accidents and spills in the Aleutians and recommendations for an appropriate framework for the conduct of that assessment. The risk assessment described above is the product of the 2008 report.

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