

## **Emergency Prevention, Preparedness, Response (EPPR) Progress report to Senior Arctic Officials**

**For the SAO meeting number 2 in Stockholm 28 – 29 March**

### **1. Introduction. Response to Arctic Council priorities and potential new projects under consideration**

EPPR addresses Arctic Council priorities as an expert forum designed to:

- Plan and prepare for response to accidents;
- Develop strategies and tasks to prevent accidents;
- Enhance best practices;
- Facilitate exchange of information; and
- Focus on the environmental implications of emergencies involving oil, hazardous and noxious substances (HNS), radiation, and natural disasters in the Arctic.

EPPR's response to current Arctic Council priorities mainly related to the support to the Arctic Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response Task Force. To date EPPR: 1) hosted Task Force co-chairs at two of its meetings and invited the co-chairs to the RP3 scoping workshop; 2) delivered a report to the Task Force titled "Arctic Emergencies: Current and Future Risks, Mitigation, and Response Cooperation," providing a snapshot of Arctic preparedness and response capabilities, existing and emerging risks, infrastructure deficits, Arctic state mitigation strategies, and an annex listing international, multilateral, and bilateral emergency cooperation agreements applicable to the Arctic region; 3) provided the Task Force with a list and brief description of its various publications on Arctic emergencies.; 4) briefed the Task Force on the RP3 Project at its first meeting; and 5) established Preparedness and Response Expert Group to provide technical assistance to the Task Force. In addition, EPPR will update the "Arctic Guide" to provide the Task Force and the response community with updated generalized risk assessment matrices for each Arctic nation's industrial activities which may result in pollution events, country specific discussion of types of risk and risk evaluation, emergency notification procedures and points of contact, organizational responsibilities, emergency equipment and facilities readiness, and international agreements. In addition are the following EPPR projects on preparedness and response also support the work of the Task Force:

- Arctic Region Oil Spill Response and Logistic Guide (Arctic ERMA)
- IMO Arctic Region Chapter: In Situ Burn (ISB) of Oil Spills on Water and Broken and Solid Ice Conditions
- Preventing Morbidity and Mortality among Arctic Oil Spill Response Workers
- Development of Safety Systems in Implementation of Economic and Infrastructural Projects
- The Arctic Automated Mutual Assistance Vessel Rescue Network (AAMverNet) supports the Arctic SAR Agreement

The Recommended Practices Prevention Pollution Project (RP3) is also a response to the Nuuk Declaration and Arctic Council priorities. For further details see in chapter 2.1.1.c

## **EPPR Guidelines on oiled wildlife preparedness and response for Arctic countries (Arctic Oiled Wildlife Preparedness and Response Guidelines)**

This pending project proposes to address the implications for marine and coastal wildlife during an Arctic oil spill. The guidelines would aid development of a dedicated wildlife response plan to be integrated into the wider spill response. The project was introduced during the October 21, 2012 EPPR meeting in Oslo, however it was tabled pending further coordination with home governments, other working groups and the Permanent Participants. EPPR will discuss the input from those above in the next meeting.

## **2. Summary of progress on EPPR projects**

### **2.1 Activities Addressing Oil, Gas and HNS**

#### **2.1.1 Recommended Practices Prevention Pollution Project (RP3) Update**

The project plan is finalized in close cooperation with PAME. At the end of January, 2012 EPPR distributed the RP3 scoping workshop report and project plan to the Arctic Council for information and possible comment. The Chair of EPPR will attend the third meeting of the Oil Spill Preparedness and Response Task Force to ensure the link between the Task Force and the RP3 project.

A final proposal is received from the contractor, Det Norske Veritas (DNV). The proposal will be discussed with DNV before they can start their work. The funding is still not clarified, but we assume that the funding issues will be sorted out in the nearest future. The funding issues have delayed the project. The first activities will be to organize data collection efforts and develop interview questions. There will be Interviews with experts during the spring in addition to collection of data. The input will be collaborated and analyzed.

The information will be the basis for the first draft report which will be submitted within June 1. An expert workshop is planned to be held back to back with EPPRs annual meeting. The workshop is scheduled for June 11-12. EPPRs annual meeting is June 13.-14. The results from the expert workshop will be used to update the 1<sup>st</sup>. draft report. The 2<sup>nd</sup>. Draft report will be sent AC for review.

#### **2.1.2 Arctic Region Oil Spill Response Resource and Logistics Guide (Arctic ERMA)**

The United States and Canada are co-leading a pilot project to produce a prototype web-mapping site for the Alaska and Canadian Arctic. The U.S. continues to expand Arctic ERMA capabilities, the demo site is ready; Canada is collaborating on further data set acquisition and integration as are Denmark (Greenland) and Norway. Project team is looking for ways to incorporate local knowledge and encourages contributions in this area. Other nations are monitoring development, and were

encouraged to access the Arctic ERMA demo site for more information. The website address is:  
<https://www.erma.unh.edu>

As agreed at the October 2012 meeting, the project lead provided EPPR participants with secure log-in information and password to access the demo site.

### **2.1.3 IMO Arctic Region Chapter: In Situ Burn (ISB) of Oil Spills on Water and Broken and Solid Ice Conditions**

EPPR is partnering with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to include specific information about *in situ* burning in the Arctic for inclusion in a proposed IMO project. EPPR's contribution is titled : "In Situ Burn (ISB) of Oil Spills on Water and Broken and Solid Ice Conditions" (Arctic ISB Chapter). Canada co-leads this project. This project is also considered to follow up on the recommendations of the BoHaSA report.

### **2.1.4 Search and Rescue Pilot Project Arctic Automated Marine Vessel Emergency Rescue Network (AAMverNet)**

Plans call for establishing an Arctic Search and Rescue (Arctic SAR) page on the EPPR website. Once established, the U.S. will post a link the Automated Mutual Assistance Vessel Rescue System, AMVER, a voluntary global ship reporting system, sponsored by the United States Coast Guard and used by search and rescue authorities to arrange assistance to ships in distress at sea. Arctic nation search and rescue officials will be encouraged to include a request for AMVER ship position data during rescue operations. Arctic states will be encouraged to post national vessel tracking systems on the EPPR SAR page so as to increase the number of ships of opportunity available to respond to ships in distress in the Arctic region.

### **2.1.5 Occupational Safety and Health of Arctic Oil Spill Response Workers**

The purpose of the project is to improve regional operational capabilities to protect Arctic oil spill response workers by providing information to enhance safety and health practices during an oil spill response. The information developed during this project will include preparedness tools that will assist governments and agencies in identifying and controlling hazards that may be encountered by workers responding to an oil spill in the Arctic. The primary output, intended as a stand-alone supplement to EPPR's "*Field Guide for Oil Spill Response in Arctic Waters*", and other EPPR preparedness and response products, will represent a significant contribution to the understanding and control of the unique hazards that exist to workers responding to an oil spill in the Arctic. The project was approved at the October 2011 EPPR meeting in Oslo.

### **2.1.6 Development of Safety Systems in Implementation of Economic and Infrastructural Projects**

Arctic Council officials participated in Arctic Rescue 2011, an interagency exercise hosted by the Russian Federation, August 8-11. The exercise involved 9 boats and vessels, 3 aircraft, and more than 600 participants, to test the readiness of the management and response forces, including emergency communications, warning and information systems, and to verify fire security and sea rescue capabilities, and mitigation of the consequences of accidents in the Northern Sea Route.

Norway will as co-lead of this project arrange a workshop in Kirkenes, Norway on June 4-6, 2012. There will be invitations sent out in the middle of March.

### **2.1.7 Arctic Rescue**

As outcomes of the international conference Prevention and Management of Emergencies in the Arctic, held August 22 – 25, 2011 in Yakutsk, Russia, organized by EMERCOM, conference participants called for broader use of knowledge and developments in the Arctic states to include: AamverNet, Arctic ERMA; and the BoHaSa project; the conduct of new research on emergency response; and development of modern emergency monitoring and management systems.

The Russian Federation is hosting the 2012 International scientific – practical conference “Emergencies preparedness and response in the Arctic. Role of the complex search and rescue centers” will be held in Norilsk, August 22-25, 2012. The Conference will be dedicated to the opening of the Pilot Complex Search and Rescue Center in Talnakh (Norilsk).

## **2.2 Activities addressing Radiation**

### **2.2.1 Saida Bay 2012**

The Russian Federation has extended invitations to EPPR’s full scale radiological emergency exercise at the Saida Bay nuclear installation near Murmansk on June 20 2012. EPPR representatives will have the opportunity to participate in the exercise to validate national and international arrangements.

### **2.2.2 I-Medical**

EPPR will conduct a training course focusing on medical response to a radiological emergency. Sweden will host the training in 2012. This is the first medical training and it may lead to other initiatives in this subject area.

## **2.3 Other ongoing projects and activities**

### **2.3.1 Arctic Guide**

Update of EPPR’s *Arctic Guide* is ongoing. When completed, the update will enhance cooperation on spill response and search and rescue in the Arctic region by reporting on cooperation activities, providing a directory of emergency response contacts, brief national risk assessments, roles and responsibilities, and identifying the principal instruments and through which cooperation on oil spill preparedness and response and search and rescue are conducted. The updated Pollution Source Risk Matrices will be appended to the revised *Arctic Guide*.

## **3. Deliverables for the (2013) Ministerial**

EPPR have not any special issues/questions which the SAOs need to be made aware of/handle concerning the deliverables.

## **4. Working Group administration and next meeting(s)**

Mr. Ole Kristian Bjerkemo (Norway) is chair and Ms. Ann Heinrich (USA) is vice- chair of the working group. Ms. Synnøve Lunde (Norway) is the executive secretary.

EPPR's web page is not updated. EPPR planned to launch a new website, but technical problems have delayed the work. EPPR has been offered to move the web page to the Arctic Council web page to solve these problems. The offer is accepted and EPPR secretariat communicates with the AC secretariat to finalize the transfer of data and to have the EPPR web page updated again. EPPR's annual meeting will be in Reykjavik, Iceland 13th. and 14th. of June

## **5. Collaboration with other working groups / other organizations**

EPPR will coordinate Arctic ERMA activities with other Arctic Council Working Groups (*i.e.*, CAFF regarding the project that maintains a sea bird and shore bird colony registry; PAME resource links; and SDWG's Arctic Marine and Aviation Transportation Infrastructure Initiative (AMATII) to determine whether the information gathered by the working groups can be linked to the web-based platform. EPPR is encouraging the gathering of local knowledge to include in the Arctic ERMA data base.

Alaska Clean Seas, a response organization will contribute to EPPR's IMO in Situ Burn guidelines project.

EPPR have a good collaboration with PAME on the Recommended Practices Prevention Pollution (RP3) project. The expert workshop and other project activities will be prepared in close cooperation with PAME. At the scoping work shop in Oslo both governmental agencies, industry, Permanent Participants, observers and other relevant stakeholders from all of the Arctic States participated.

EPPR will participate in the PAME meeting in Stockholm in March.

EPPR chair gave a presentation at the meeting of the Standing Committee of Arctic Parliamentarians (SCPAR) in Stockholm February 14th.

EPPR participated in a workshop on Oil Spill Response in the Arctic. The workshop was as a side Event to Arctic Frontiers Conference in Tromsø, Norway.

EPPR includes Permanent Participants in its activities.

EPPR holds information exchanges with industry.