

To: Meeting of Senior Arctic Officials

From: EPPR working group

Date: September 20, 2013

Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic – Procedures for updating the Operating Guidelines

Introduction

In the Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic, paragraph 21 states that Operational Guidelines should be developed and maintained.

At the SAO-meeting in Stockholm in March 2013, EPPR was tasked with the responsibility of maintaining and updating the Operational Guidelines (annexed to the Agreement).

At its meeting in Oulu, Finland in June 2013, EPPR drafted and approved the procedures for updating the Operational Guidelines.

Text from the Agreement and the Operational Guidelines regarding updates

Agreement

“The Operational Guidelines will be included among the Appendices to this agreement and be modified as appropriate.

In developing and modifying the Operational Guidelines, the parties shall seek input from relevant stakeholders as appropriate.”

Operational Guidelines

“The Guidelines should be current and take into consideration findings from joint reviews, joint exercises and training, lessons learned, best practices, relevant experience and any other new information. The Arctic Council Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR) Working Group is responsible for updating the Guidelines in consultation with Competent National Authorities, and should establish a system for doing so. The Guidelines should be made available on the Arctic Council website.

Agreed text for final approval by the SAOs

At every EPPR I meeting, the working group will undertake an annual update of the Operational Guidelines in order to maintain administrative accuracy. This update will be a standing item on every EPPR I agenda.

This update will proceed as follows: any amendments to the Operational Guidelines that do not require approval of other parties (i.e. national information, contact information, etc) should be submitted to the EPPR Chair a minimum of 14 days prior to the EPPR meeting in which the review is scheduled to take place. These amendments do not require further consultation with other working groups nor the approval of Senior Arctic Officials. Updates will also be made on the AC website.

On a bi-annual basis, at EPPR I meetings, the working group will undertake a complete review of the Operational Guidelines, taking into consideration lessons learned from the review of oil pollution incident response operations or exercises, training, lessons learned, experience or other new information. These proposed amendments must be submitted to the EPPR Chair a minimum of 60 days prior to the date of the EPPR meeting in which the review is scheduled to take place, in order to allow parties to consult their Competent National Authorities or other relevant bodies.

Proposed amendments to the Operational Guidelines should be submitted to the EPPR Chair through the national Head of Delegation. The party responsible for the proposal may be requested to make a presentation to EPPR to ensure the proposed amendments are well understood. Amendments will be adopted based on consensus.

Following adoption of amendments by EPPR members, the EPPR Chair will circulate the revised version to Permanent Participants, other working groups, and observers of the Arctic Council, and other relevant stakeholders for consultation. This consultation is related only to the amendments agreed by EPPR and is not intended to seek proposals for new amendments. Proposals for amendments will be made by parties to the Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic. The Chair may also receive proposals for amendments and will submit them to the EPPR working group for consideration. The final document will be submitted to Senior Arctic Officials for approval, and will be posted to the Arctic Council website.

The Agreement states that “in developing and modifying the Operational Guidelines, the parties shall seek input from relevant stakeholders as appropriate”. Stakeholders include Permanent Participants, working groups and observers of the Arctic Council, and parties having taken part in the development of the Agreement. Organizations that have participated in a particular response action may be consulted on an ad hoc basis for the purposes of obtaining the experience and expertise related to that action.

If needed, the Operational Guidelines could be amended at any EPPR meeting as long as the proper procedure is followed for submission of documents.

Action requested

Senior Arctic Officials are requested to approve the Procedures for Updating the Operational Guidelines.