

# ACS Communications Update

2014

## Arctic Council Secretariat (ACS)

### Arctic Council Secretariat

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<http://hdl.handle.net/11374/1380>

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## Background

The Arctic Council Secretariat Communications Implementation Plan was presented at the meeting of Senior Arctic Officials (SAO) in Yellowknife in March, 2014. This document was produced collaboratively by the Arctic Council Secretariat (ACS) and the Canadian Chairmanship, with input from the Communications & Outreach Group. The implementation plan is intended as a road map for reaching the goals and target audiences laid out by the Communications Strategy for the Arctic Council. It presents concrete actions to reach the seven target audiences outlined in the strategy.

This is a brief overview of progress made in line with the implementation plan since the Yellowknife SAO meeting in March 2014. So far, efforts have been concentrated on areas that are expected to reach several audiences at once.

## Initiatives

### Arctic Council Website

The Arctic Council website is our primary communications channel. More than twenty-five web articles have been posted since the March SAO meeting, including accounts of meetings, news regarding personnel changes and upcoming events, and interviews with task force chairs, the Chair of the SAOs and others. The website has also hosted a series of articles, developed in close collaboration with CAFF, that highlight interesting data from the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment. This series of five articles illustrates one way in which different Arctic Council entities can work together to effectively spread awareness of the work done by the Council.

In addition, small alterations are being made on an ongoing basis to the website to optimize the presentation of information for visitors. The number of unique visitors to the Arctic Council website has fluctuated throughout the year, with the summer months being predictably slower. For 2014, the greatest number of unique visitors in a single month was March with 10,345. This was due to the SAO meeting, which also generated a significant number of mentions of the Arctic Council in the media.

### Social Media

Social media is another important channel for Arctic Council communications, helping us to address four of our seven listed target groups. The @ArcticCouncil Twitter account was successfully launched on the 12<sup>th</sup> of May, and the Facebook account was launched on 24<sup>th</sup> of June.

On Facebook, followers from India represent the largest single national contingent of our 1,000+ followers at 239. There are 300+ followers from the eight Arctic Council states combined. Our most popular post was a brief article on the June meeting of the Task Force on Arctic Marine Oil Pollution Prevention in Ottawa. This article was “re-shared” by the WWF and by the Arctic Circle conference, as a result of which it was seen by 682 people. This illustrates the viral nature of social media and its effectiveness as an outreach tool for the Council.

The @ArcticCouncil Twitter identity works in close coordination with the @SAOChair account. All statistics are trending upwards. The @ArcticCouncil account had reached 850 followers by mid-September, and continues to show steady follower growth. More importantly, the rate at which our tweets are shared and the rate at which the @ArcticCouncil account is mentioned are both growing, showing a clear increase in awareness. Our most popular tweet led readers to the AMSA page on the PAME website, illustrating the usefulness of social media in helping to convey the full breadth of the Arctic Council’s activities.

Alongside the @ArcticCouncil Twitter account, the @SAOChair Twitter account has seen steady growth in followers and retweets from Twitter users. The SAOC’s account is the primary social media platform for announcing new articles and releases on the Arctic Council’s webpage. It also provides information on the Council’s ongoing important work.

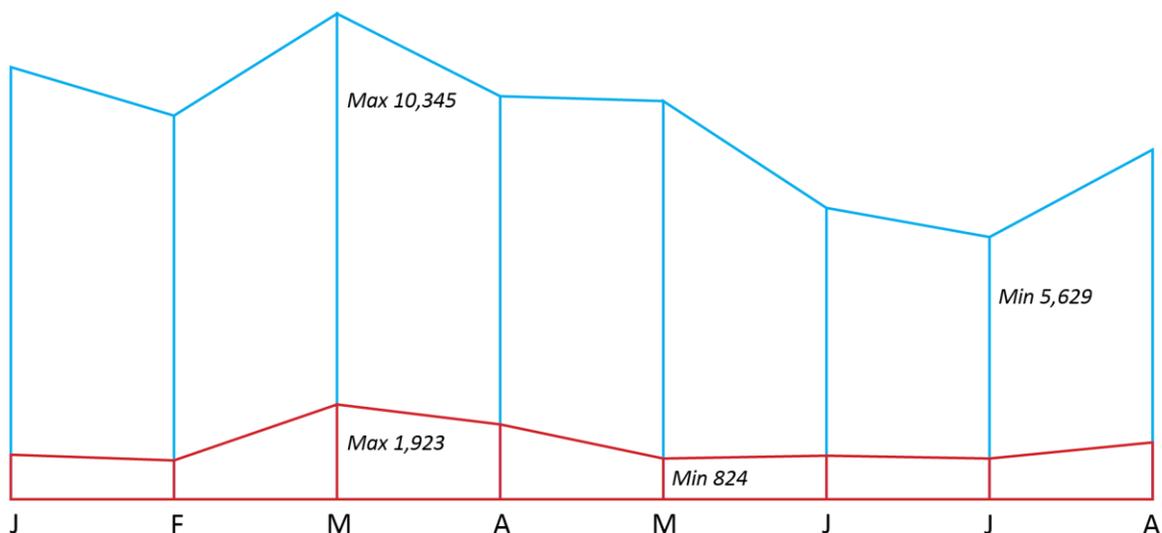
### Outreach to analysts, scholars and journalists

The ACS and the Chairmanship are making an ongoing effort to ensure that analysts, scholars and journalists who regularly write about Arctic issues are aware of the Arctic Council’s work and have ready access to relevant public information. We accommodate as many requests for interviews and quotes as possible, and attempt to ensure that each request is dealt with in a friendly and positive manner.

These efforts may be one cause behind the growth in “meaningful” citations in the media (including scholarly journals and think tanks), which are tracked daily by the ACS. In the four months of complete data that are available, citations of the Arctic Council and its work have grown steadily each month, from 67 in May to 107 in August. A broader and more comprehensive tracking of mentions of the Arctic Council across traditional media shows a lull following the March SAO meeting, followed by a steady rebound from April to August, with a peak for the year in August.

### Strengthening internal communications

One central element of both the communications strategy and the implementation plan is the strengthening of communications within the Council itself. To this end, a regular internal newsletter has been revived. This newsletter covers many major elements of the Arctic Council’s communications work and provides an overview of what is being said about the Council in the media. A second important initiative is the inauguration of “come-as-you-can” calls for the Communications & Outreach Group. These casual calls, which take place once a month, provide an important information-sharing opportunity for communications representatives from the states, permanent participants and working groups, without imposing time requirements. The Communications & Outreach group continues to host formal calls in advance of the SAO meetings.



Unique visitors to the AC website  
Total mentions across online media