ACS, 17.2.15 version 1

Review of Working Group Operating Guidelines – SAO tasking October 2014

DRAFT

1. Introduction

At their meeting in Yellowknife, October 2014, the Senior Arctic Officials tasked the Arctic Council Secretariat as follows:

"All WGs had submitted revised operating guidelines for the meeting and SAOs tasked the ACS to review the six sets of operating guidelines, as submitted, to ensure that they are consistent with the Arctic Council Rules of Procedure and with each other. The operating guidelines were provisionally approved while the ACS completes its analysis."

This analysis will 1) review the compliance of the provisionally operating guidelines of the six working groups with the Arctic Council Rules of Procedures[1] (ROP) and 2) assess the consistency of the six sets of guidelines, focusing on what they regulate and how they regulate it.

When reading this analysis, it worth noting that the AC working groups have been established at different times, with different tasks, and with differing supporting structures. Some working groups predate the establishment of the Council itself and have their own well-established secretariats with different sizes and capacities (secretariat staff ranges from 1 to 7 people).

The analysis should not be construed as offering any policy recommendation to SAOs. Consistency of guidelines has both advantages and disadvantages. The advantages include: transparency; greater ease for internal and external stakeholders (such as observers) who wish to engage in the work of the Council; simplification of SAO oversight and the process of amending guidelines. The disadvantages relate to the established working practices of six materially different working groups with established procedures.

2. Compliance with Arctic Council Rules of Procedure

All guidelines refer to the ROP as the primary text governing the work of the working groups, which would mean that in case of any disagreement between a set of guidelines and the ROP, the ROP will apply.

No irreconcilable discrepancies between the RoP and the provisional operating guidelines have been identified. All such discrepancies can be interpreted such that they are in compliance with the ROP.

---

[1] Arctic Council Rules of Procedure as adopted by the Arctic Council at the First Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting, Iqaluit, Canada, September 17-18, 1998. Revised by the Arctic Council at the Eight Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting, Kiruna, Sweden, May 15, 2014.

3. Consistency across the working groups' operational guidelines

At first glance, the operating guidelines are not consistent with each other in *what* they regulate and *how* they regulate each issue. The guidelines do not, however, contradict each other.

In addition to operating guidelines, several working groups have other documents that regulate how the working groups function, such as strategic plans and working plans. Thus, the operating guidelines do not show the entire picture of how the working groups function. This analysis focuses solely on the operating guidelines.

The table below illustrates two aspects of the guidelines. The grey color indicates *what* areas are regulated by a set of guidelines. The text illustrates examples of *how* the same issue is regulated by different working groups.

Going through the guidelines, general consistency was found between ACAP/EPPR/SDWG in one cluster and AMAP/PAME as another cluster. The table is organized according to these clusters.

In terms of appearance, the guidelines are not formatted in the same way and use WG and AC logos inconsistently.

	ACAP	EPPR	SDWG	AMAP	PAME	CAFF
Introduction						
-Falls under ROP						
-Is subsidiary body of AC						
-When last approved/revised						
-Objectives/mandate		"Activities"	"Activities"	Ref. to strat. + work plan		
Participation						
-Representation						
-Decision making						
Chair and Secretariat						
-Chair, vice-chair			Chair from HC			
-ES	Mentions secretariat	Mentions secretariat	Mentions secretariat			
-Chapter on Secretariat						
Board				Chair, vice-chair, ES		States+PPs
Meetings						
-Frequency	Not > twice/year	At least once/year	At least once/year	At least once/year	Avg. twice/year	WG:Every 2years BM:No req
-Invitation and first draft agenda	60 days ahead	60 days ahead	60 days ahead	60 days ahead	30 days ahead	60 days ahead
-Final agenda + meeting docs	30 days	30 days	30 days	30 days	30 days	Revised agenda in time
Decisions						
-Record of decision before EOM						WG: Yes, BM: No
Internal reporting						
-Minutes	Draft within 30 days	Draft within 30 days	Draft within 30 days	No deadline	Draft within 14 days	No deadline
-Comments on draft minutes	Within 14 days	Within 30 days	Within 30 days	Within 14 days	Within 14 days	
Reporting to SAOs						
-Progress report	14 days before subm.					
-Work plan	30 days before subm.					
-Project list to ACS			Every y after spring SAO			
Project management						
-Expert/sub group						
-Activities						
-Projects						
Other (relations with ext. parties)						
Amendment Clause	Deadline 1m before mtg	Any meeting	Any meeting	Deadline 2m before mtg	Deadline 2m before mtg	
-Requires SAO approval	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Document management						