



Proposed Change to EPPR Mandate to include Search and Rescue

In 2011, in the Nuuk Declaration, the Arctic Council:

Announce the Agreement on Cooperation in Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic, as the first legally binding agreement negotiated under the auspices of the AC.

Since then, Canada led a table-top exercise in 2011 and the Danish Defense Command hosted two live search and rescue exercises in the framework of the SAR Agreement – SAREX Greenland Sea 2012 and 2013. Canada and Denmark provided reports to EPPR after each exercise.

In March 2014, Denmark presented a non-paper at the SAO Executive meeting, raising three issues for SAO to consider:

- The need for the AC reach a common understanding of the implementation of the “The Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic” (the SAR Agreement), as well as ensuring a successful implementation of the “The Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic” (the MOA).
- Suggest a discussion on how the Arctic Council can encourage a better handover and dissemination of lessons learned from earlier and coming exercises under the SAR Agreement.
- Establishing early and common scheduling and rotation for hosting joint exercises under the SAR Agreement, potentially within the existing exercise framework.

During the discussion SAOs broadly agreed that EPPR has a role to play in the planning, execution and reporting of SAR activities linked to the work of the AC and specifically the SAR Agreement.

Following discussions at EPPR I and II, and subsequent national consultation, EPPR is proposing to change the working group mandate to include a more explicit mandate on SAR, including follow-up on the SAR Agreement.

EPPR is requesting SAOs to accept the proposed change to the EPPR mandate at the SAO Meeting in Whitehorse, March 2015.

As the EPPR mandate is refined biennially through Declarations, EPPR requires mention of SAR in the SAO Report to Ministers and/or the Iqaluit Declaration (2015). To that end, we would like to put forward the following language for consideration by SAOs and Ministers:

Call for EPPR, in cooperation with the Arctic Council states, to develop recommendations, best practices and/or lessons learned in the field of search and rescue, including leading activities in support of the Agreement on Cooperation in the Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic.