

Part 1 Report on 2013-15 Achievements

Working Group Summaries

Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response - EPPR

Mandate:

The mandate of the Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response Working Group (EPPR) is to address various aspects of prevention, preparedness and response to environmental emergencies in the Arctic. EPPR is not an operational response organization. Members of the Working Group exchange information on best practices and conduct projects to include development of guidance and risk assessment methodologies, response exercises and training. The EPPR Working Group work plan is refined biennially through Ministerial Declarations and is further shaped by guidance from Senior Arctic Officials. The goal of the EPPR Working Group is to contribute to the protection of the Arctic environment from the threat or impact that may result from an accidental release of pollutants (i.e. oil, chemicals and radiation) or questions related to the consequences of natural disasters.

Relevant Sections of Kiruna Declaration and/or SAO Report:

- Appreciate that the first legally binding agreement negotiated under the auspices of the Arctic Council, the Agreement on Cooperation in Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic, has come into force, recognize its important role for safe transport and enhancing cooperation in assisting people in distress in the Arctic, and acknowledge the importance of continued operational exercises in support of its implementation.
- Announce the Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic, the second legally binding agreement negotiated under the auspices of the Arctic Council, and encourage future national, bi-national and multi-national contingency plans, training and exercises, to develop effective response measures.
- Recognize that effective prevention, including related containment practices, is critical to ensuring the protection of the Arctic marine environment from oil pollution incidents, welcome the Recommended Practices in the Prevention of Arctic Marine Oil Pollution Project reports and recommendations to Ministers, and encourage Arctic States to pursue further work in the recommended areas.
- Decide to establish a Task Force to develop an Arctic Council action plan or other arrangement on oil pollution prevention, and to present the outcomes of its work and any recommendations for further action at the next Ministerial meeting in 2015.
- Recognize the important ongoing work in the International Maritime Organization to develop a mandatory Polar Code on shipping and decide to strengthen our collaboration in that work towards its expeditious completion.

Working Group Chair's Summary (max 250 words):

EPPR has implemented the work plan for 2013-2015, completing projects and developing new projects in support of the Kiruna Declaration and direction from Senior Arctic Officials. As part of on-going work, EPPR continues to undertake activities and develop projects aimed at improving Arctic nations' capabilities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies involving petroleum and radiological materials, and hazardous noxious substances (HNS). In follow-up to the Recommended Practices for the Prevention of Oil Pollution in the Arctic (RP3), EPPR will carry out a *Circumpolar Oil Spill Response Gap Analysis*, as a first step in deciding the necessity and scope of a full Circumpolar Marine Environmental Risk Assessment. The Working Group, in cooperation with the International Maritime Organization, has developed an IMO/EPPR Guide on Oil Spill Response in Ice and Snow Conditions. An Arctic version of the Guide will be hosted on the EPPR website. EPPR continues to undertake radiation exercises, and has successfully completed the first table top exercise under the auspices of the *Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic*. Finally, the completion of the *Arctic Environmental Hazards and National Programs* represents a historic compendium of the work Arctic countries have done on risk assessments.

Summary report on achievements 2013-2015

(max 150 words for each achievement plus up to **140 character bullet** explaining how the achievement benefitted people in the Arctic region)

Guide on Oil Spill Response in Ice and Snow Conditions

At the request of the IMO Protocol on Preparedness, Response and Cooperation to Pollution Incidents by Hazardous and Noxious Substances Technical group, EPPR has finalised the *IMO/EPPR Guide on Oil-Spill Response in Ice and Snow*. As co-leads, Canada and Norway, have shepherded the Guide through three rounds of broad consultations, including Arctic Council members states, permanent participants, working groups and other external stakeholders. The firms Owens Coastal Consultants and Dickens Associates were hired to prepare documents for final submission. The objective of the Guide is to identify and describe those aspects of planning and operations that are directly associated with a response to an oil spill in ice and snow conditions. An Arctic-only version of the guide has been developed and will be available on the EPPR website. This Arctic-only version will be put forward as a Ministerial deliverable.

- The *Guide on Oil-Spill Response in Ice and Snow* is a practical tool for planning and developing operations for responders and communities in the event of an oil spill in ice and snow conditions.

Arctic Environmental Hazards and National Programs

Led by the US, the *Arctic Environmental Hazards and National Programs*, is an historical compendium of work Arctic countries have done on risk assessments. The goal was to

assemble information on national programs to respond to risks in the Arctic. The final document will be placed on the EPPR website.

- The compendium *Arctic Environmental Hazards and National Programs* will be a resource for the development of any future pan-Arctic risk assessments.

Radiation Exercises

The radiation emergency exercise, Arctic 2014 was held June 23-24, 2014, at the Atomflot facility in Murmansk, Russia. Led by the United States in cooperation with Russian partners, the exercise involved a simulated conventional radiation emergency that occurs on a nuclear icebreaker at the dock. Specific goals of the exercise were to: 1) check level of preparedness; 2) develop recommendations for enhancing capabilities; 3) verify the effectiveness of detailed response procedures; 4) execute recommendations for public protection and communication; and 5) examine how regulations and chosen interventions impact response time. A full report, including lessons learned, will be put forward as a deliverable to the Ministerial meeting.

- Radiation exercises are important tools to validate plans and procedures and response capabilities at the facility, community, and government levels.

First International Exercise under the auspices of the Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic

The first exercise under the auspices of the *Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic* (MOA) was hosted by Canada in May 2014. The scenario was an accident involving spilled marine diesel in Simpson Strait. All Arctic Council states participated in the exercise. EPPR welcomed the success of this first validation of the Agreement. As outlined in the Agreement, EPPR is responsible for identification of proposed amendments to the Operational Guidelines and Appendices to the Agreement. As per the Agreement, substantive changes to the Operational Guidelines must be approved by SAOs. A report on the exercise will be put forward for approval by SAOs as a deliverable to the Ministerial meeting.

- The first exercise under the MOA represents an international effort by Arctic Council states to validate the Agreement, invaluable preparation for real-world emergencies.

Arctic ERMA

Led by the US, Arctic ERMA (Environmental Response Management Application) is a GIS mapping platform designed to assist in oil spill response by providing a common operating picture of all response assets in theatre and threatened environmental resources. ERMA integrates and synthesizes data—some of which happens in real time—into a single interactive map, providing a quick visualization of the situation and improving

communication and coordination among responders and environmental stakeholders. Arctic ERMA is a promising platform that is evolving as more data sets are added. It has links to existing work in EPPR and other working groups. The link to Arctic ERMA is available on the EPPR website.

- Arctic ERMA provides a common operating picture of response assets and threatened environmental resources into a single interactive map, helping responders and communities make decisions in emergencies.

Development of Safety Systems in the Implementation of Economic and Infrastructural Projects

Led by Russia and Norway, the overall goal of these projects is the improvement of industrial and environmental safety related to economic and infrastructural projects, primarily the development of hydrocarbons on the Arctic continental shelf and hydrocarbons transportation. In support of these projects a SAR and Oil Spill Response exercise was held off the oil platform Prirazlomnaya, close to Varandey in Russia, on August 5-7, 2014.

- Improving industrial and environmental safety standards within the resource development sector remains a priority for the work of EPPR.

Arctic Rescue Project

The focus of this Russian project is to elaborate best practices, recommendations and key elements of the emergency risk assessment system and the system for improving safety of potentially hazardous facilities. One concrete outcome was the opening of the first *Arctic Complex Search and Rescue Center* in Naryan-Mar in 2014. The overall goal is the international promotion of advanced national experience and improvement of emergency preparedness through information exchange. A series of conference have been held under this project. Russia has presented recommendations from two Arctic Rescue conferences, in Naryan Mar, August 20-23, 2013, and in Arkhangelsk September 23-25, 2014.

- Sharing information through best practices and information sharing is imperative for improving safety of potentially hazardous facilities.

Updating the Operational Guidelines in support of the Agreement on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response

Paragraph 21 of the Agreement on Arctic Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response states that Operational Guidelines should be developed and maintained. In the SAO meeting in Stockholm, March 2013, EPPR was given the responsibility of maintaining and updating the Operational Guidelines which are annexed to the Agreement on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response. At the EPPR I meeting in Oulu, June 2013, EPPR drafted and

approved the procedures for updating the Operational Guidelines. These procedures have been approved by the SAO.

- Updated procedures for international cooperation is crucial for a successful emergency response

Chapter on In Situ Burn (ISB) in IMO's Guide on Oil Spills on Water and Broken and Solid Ice Conditions

This project was a joint effort with the IMO. EPPR provided text to the chapter in the IMO Guide on Oil Spills on Water and Broken and Solid Ice Conditions

- The *Guide* serves as a best practice document for responders and communities considering the use of in situ burns in the event of an oil spill in the Arctic.

Part 2 Work Plan for 2015-2017

Summary work plans for 2015-2017

- Following on from the work in the last work plan, taking into consideration work accomplished
- Informed by the priorities of the incoming US Chairmanship
- Follow-up on applicable recommendations from the Framework Plan developed by the Task Force on Oil Pollution Prevention

List of projects and activities

International Exercise under the auspices of *the Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic (MOA)*

[Building on the first successful exercise of the agreement, hosted by Canada in 2014, the second functional exercise is being planned by the United States. The proposed planning concept includes a workshop in 2015, and a live exercise in 2016. The planning phase will include identification of spill scenarios by each Arctic Council state, from which, one high risk scenario will be selected for the 2016 live exercise. Objectives for the exercise include execution of the Agreement and Operational Guidelines notification and request for assistance [procedures](#).]

- Led by U.S.
- Budget: unknown
- Timeline: 2015-2017

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Circumpolar Oil Spill Gap Analysis

At EPPR I in June 2014, it was agreed that a step-wise approach would be best to determine the necessity and viability of a comprehensive Circumpolar Marine Environmental Risk Analysis (CMERA) and that a Circumpolar Oil Spill Response Gap Analysis would be a useful first step. The goal is to build upon existing country gap analyses and, by applying common parameters, produce a pan-Arctic perspective. This will avoid duplicating work, but also identify where gaps exist. The Gap Analysis will provide an evaluation of mechanical and alternative oil spill response strategies based on available metocean data throughout the Arctic. Co-leads are planning a scoping workshop for May 6, 2015 (TBC) in Oslo, Norway. Participation will include consultants, member states and PP delegates, invited experts as well as interested observers and industry representatives. Norway has applied for funding and the further work depends on funding received.

- Led by Norway, the Kingdom of Denmark and the US
- Budget: unknown, funding application put forward to Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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- Timeline: 2015-2017
 - *A better overview of oil spill response limitations and effectiveness under arctic conditions will support the development of optimized prevention and response strategies in the Arctic region.*

Prevention, Preparedness and Response for small communities

The objective of this project is to provide guidance to small communities on best practices related to Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural incidents (flooding, avalanches, destroyed infrastructure, effects of severe weather etc), oil spills and accidental releases of radionuclides that might threaten living conditions. Small communities in the Arctic will benefit from information sharing among Arctic states which will lead to the development of guidelines and other tools for handling emergency prevention, preparedness and response within local communities. The project will begin with a scoping workshop to be held before June 2015. This project responds to the U.S. Chairmanship priority on improving economic and living conditions. The project will also be relevant for observer countries.

- Led by the US, Norway, Canada, ICC and AIA.
- Budget: 100 000 USD, for scoping workshop and initial planning, funding is pending with national authorities.
- Timeline: 2015-2017, may be extended based on the outcome of the scoping workshop
 - *Helping small communities prevent, prepare for, and respond to disasters will be an area of focus for EPPR during the 2015-17 period*

Development of a Database of Arctic Response Assets

In May 2013, the member states of the Arctic Council signed *the Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollutions Preparedness and Response in the Arctic*. Both the Agreement and Operational Guidelines speak to spill notification processes, requests for assistance, movement of equipment and resources across borders, and other information critical to an expeditious response to a large oil spill affecting one or more countries. The documents also address requirements for training and exercises. Key to Arctic response preparedness and response is an understanding of the types, quantities, and locations of oil spill response assets that are currently utilized by Arctic countries. The objective for the project is to develop a searchable oil spill response database and populate it with detailed information on Arctic specific equipment, vessels, dispersant stockpiles and application platforms, in situ burn boom, well containment and cap and flow devices, and other resources owned by or regionally available to all member states of the Arctic Council. At this time, a comprehensive database of available response assets in the Arctic does not exist. The proposed project would address this gap and is a priority of the US Chairmanship of the Arctic Council.

- Led by the US and Norway
- Budget: \$200,000 USD
- Timeline: January 2015-December 2016

- *The Arctic response equipment database will inform regional contingency planning and provide a comprehensive snapshot of the actual response capability in the Arctic.*

Development of Safety Systems in the Implementation of Economic and Infrastructural Projects

The overall goal of these projects is the improvement of industrial and environmental safety related to economic and infrastructural projects, primarily the development of hydrocarbons on the Arctic continental shelf and hydrocarbons transportation. In support of these projects SAR and Oil Spill Response exercises are undertaken on an annual basis. In 2014, the first regional Arctic Complex Search and Rescue Center opened, with the purpose of accumulating monitoring results and managing rapid reaction forces in strategically important spheres. This will make it possible to conduct efficient activities during emergencies. In 2015, the second Arctic Complex Search and Rescue Center will open in Murmansk.

- Led by the Russian Federation
- Budget: unknown
- Timeline: 2015-2017

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Arctic Rescue Project

The focus of this project is to elaborate best practices, recommendations and key elements of the emergency risk assessment system and the system for improving safety of potentially hazardous facilities. Significant outcomes include developing recommendations on joint activities aimed at ensuring industrial and environmental safety in major North-European transportation corridors, as well as the development of legal regulation and management tools based on best international practice. The overall goal is the international promotion of advanced national experience and improvement of emergency preparedness through information exchange. Implementation of the project includes conducting research, seminars and conferences on relevant subject areas. The next international conference is planned for August 2015, in Salekhard, Russian Federation. The subject of the conference will be safety provisions of Arctic projects implementation.

- Led by the Russian Federation
- Budget: unknown
- Timeline: 2015-2017

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Occupational Safety and Health in Arctic Oil Spill Response Workers

[Data synthesis will result in an EPPR report and a supplement to the AC's Field Guide for Oil Spill Response. The project supports work under the Marine Oil Agreement.]

- Led by the U.S.
- Budget: unknown
- Timeline: 2015-2017

- *140 Character Tweet*

Search and Rescue

Pending Arctic Council approval of expanding EPPRs mandate to include SAR, EPPR will include SAR tasks in the work plan.

Projects to implement the Framework Plan developed by the TFOPP

Pending Arctic Council approval of the Framework Plan, EPPR will discuss and initiate possible follow-up activities.

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