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EPPR Working Group Report to SAOs, March 2019 Ruka

Introduction

EPPR held its second meeting of 2018 in New Orleans, USA on December 4-6. 46 participants attended representing the Arctic States, one Permanent Participant (GCI), three observer states (Italy, South Korea and Spain), three observer organizations (IFRC, UArctic, and WWF) and one invited guest (NNSA Remote Sensing Laboratory Aerial Measurement System). The meeting focused on follow-up activities from the last EPPR meeting in Helsinki, reviewing the progress of activities according to the approved 2017-2019 workplan, identification of Ministerial deliverables for May 2019, and discussion on the 2019-2021 EPPR work plan. EPPR Heads of Delegation met in advance of the plenary session. The Expert Group on Marine Environmental Response (MER EG), the Expert Group on Search and Rescue (SAR EG) and the project meeting on the sub-project RADSAR (under ARCSAFE) met on the first day of the meeting. The relevant sections of the Amarok were updated after the meeting.

Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response (MOSPA Agreement)

On December 4, 2018, the MER EG met in New Orleans to 1) finalize the draft MOSPA Exercise Planning Guidance, 2) initiate planning of a Research and Development Seminar for EPPR I 2019 in Bodø, Norway, 3) update the MOSPA Operational Guidelines (administration only), 4) finalize the MER EG work plan for 2019-2021, 5) receive country updates and 6) agree on a new MER EG Chair (May 2019-May 2021). The MOSPA TTX planning framework/cycle was reviewed, noting that Iceland plans to hold the next MOSPA exercise during its 2019-2021 Chairmanship. Exercises can be designed as a unique event or held in coordination with another exercise and can be discussion-based and/or operational.

EPPR welcomed the decision that Canada will take on the Chairmanship of the MER EG, supported by Norway as Vice-Chair, after the 2019 Ministerial meeting. It was decided that a Research and Development Workshop will take place in Bodø on June 3, 2019. EPPR Heads of Delegation were asked to identify a point of contact for workshop planning by January 15, 2019. It was agreed that the annual MOSPA Connectivity Test, initiated by the MER EG Chair, will take place between February 4-8, 2019.

SAR Agreement

On December 4, 2018, the Search and Rescue Expert Group (SAR EG) had a full day meeting to 1) discuss the status of projects in the 2017-2019 work plan, 2) work on the crosswalk to identify which clauses of the Arctic SAR Agreement are within the SAR EG's responsibility and which of them could be areas of collaboration with ACGF or other Arctic Council WGs, 3) discuss coordination/information sharing with the Arctic Coast Guard Forum (ACGF) and 4) discuss ARCSAFE synergies, 5) receive an update from the Red Cross and 6) finalize activities for the SAR EG work plan for May 2019 to May 2021.

It was agreed that the United States will take over the SAR EG Chair after the EPPR I meeting in Bodø, Norway in June 2019.

Cross-Cutting activities

- EPPR participated in meetings of the TFICA, EGBCM and has agreed that representation at future meetings would be beneficial. EPPR has continued to follow and provide input to the work of the TFAMC.
- EPPR Chair and Executive Secretary participated in a one day work planning meeting with the other Working Group Chairs and Executive Secretaries. (Reykjavik, December)
- EPPR Chair and Executive Secretary participated in the one day SAO Chair – Working Group Chairs meeting (Reykjavik, December).
- EPPR will continue to work with PAME on the joint PAME/EPPR project titled the Compendium of Arctic Shipping Accidents (CASA).
- EPPR and PAME continue to work together on follow-up to the Framework Plan on Oil Pollution Prevention (FPOPP). Projects developed in support of addressing gaps will be approved by EPPR, or other WGs, as appropriate. EPPR will submit a report for the status of implementation report of the FPOPP for the 2019 Ministerial meeting. The document will seek SAO approval and the SAOX meeting April 2019.

Current projects

EPPR has submitted input to the SAO Report to Ministers, which include achievements during 2017-2019 and the work plan for 2019 -2021.

ARCSAFE: EPPR has approved the initiation of work for the possible establishment of an EPPR Radiation Expert Group. Norway agreed to lead intersessional work to develop a suggested mandate and a description of a proposed organizational structure, for approval by the EPPR. EPPR approved the proposed radiation exercise from Norway as a planned EPPR-activity in conjunction with EPPR-I 2019. A summary report of the project has been submitted to SAOs for Ministerial approval.

ARCSAFE Maritime SAR/RN - Sharing of competence within SAR in a maritime radiological/nuclear (RN) scenario (RADSAR): This project is a sub project of the ARCSAFE project and focuses on challenges related to SAR operations in radio-nuclear (RN) scenarios. The project seeks to enhance the focus on maritime SAR operations in a possible radio-nuclear scenario. On June 3, 2019 an ARCSAFE workshop and radiation/SAR table top exercise will take place in Bodø, Norway.

Prevention, Preparedness and Response for Small Communities: The second phase of the project includes developing short videos to communicate the results of Phase I. The video on spill response has been submitted to SAOs for Ministerial approval.

Review of legal challenges related to the MOSPA Agreement: This project seeks to review legal liability issues for operational safety during requests for international assistance under the MOSPA Agreement. The summary report synthesizing information gathered during the project has been submitted to SAOs for Ministerial approval.

Safety Systems in the Implementation of Economic and Infrastructural projects: The goal of this ongoing project is the improvement of industrial and environmental safety related to economic and infrastructure 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 annually.

Arctic Rescue: The focus of this on-going Russian-led 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. EPPR Chair attended the International Conference in Murmansk in July 2018.

Risk assessment methods and metadata – development of guideline and toolbox: This project seeks to develop guidelines in combination with a practical toolbox to further cooperation and alignment between risk assessments undertaken in Arctic States. The guideline will outline best practices on Arctic marine risk assessments, the toolbox will include an overview of available data sources, incl. their accessibility, quality, completeness/coverage, contact persons etc. A project workshop was held in conjunction with the Biodiversity Congress in Rovaniemi in October 2018.

Circumpolar Oil Spill Response Viability Analysis – Phase 2: Since the COSRVA analysis was completed in 2017, new and improved metocean data (ERA 5) has been made available, and these should be implemented to eliminate the reported shortcomings in the previous data. The results of the analysis will be implemented in a web-based GIS tool, which will include several additional features.

Upcoming Working Group Meetings

EPPR I 2019, (June 3-6, 2019) will be in Bodø, Norway.

EPPR II 2019, will be hosted by Iceland, in Reykjavik on December 3-5, 2019.