

Arctic Council Secretariat (ACS) Proposed Work Plan for the Year 2014-2015. Submitted by the ACS Director.

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Arctic Council

Arctic Council Secretariat

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Arctic Council Secretariat (ACS)
Proposed Work Plan for the Year 2014-2015
Submitted by the ACS Director

In accordance with the Kiruna Declaration of the Arctic Council and the Terms of Reference for the Arctic Council Secretariat, this proposed work plan for the standing Arctic Council Secretariat's operation in the years 2014-2015 is submitted to the Senior Arctic Officials for consideration and approval.

The ACS's activities described in the work plan support the approved functions of the ACS as set out in the Terms of Reference (see Article 2) and the Communication Strategy for the Arctic Council, and build on the first work plan of the ACS for the year 2013.

1. Administrative and Organizational Support

The ACS will provide secretariat support for: the Arctic Council (AC); in particular, for the Canadian chairmanship; and, from midyear 2015, for the US Chairmanship, in cooperation with and under the direction of the SAO Chair. This support will include:

- SAO meetings and the Ministerial meeting 2015; logistics and practical preparations
- Assisting the SAO chair in daily correspondence/ work; continued improving of routines as experience gathers
- Supporting Arctic States and Permanent Participants,
- Supporting Observers, in accordance with the Observer Manual
- Support and coordinate as appropriate in WGs and TFs meetings
- Maintaining and updating distribution lists, contacts and focal points
- Ensuring distribution of reports and other documents as required to SAOs, Permanent Participants, Working Groups, Task Forces, Expert Groups and other subsidiary bodies, and accredited observers.
- Working with US delegation to prepare for their chairmanship 2015-2017. It is assumed that the US preparation will become increasingly relevant during the second half of 2014.
- Provide Russian translation¹ services including:
 - Translation of the main documents for the Arctic Council Ministerial meetings and SAO meetings – agendas, meeting reports, key reports and report summaries;
 - translation of the Arctic Council website materials;

¹ The Russian translation service is funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ref ToR, 2.2)

- providing, as appropriate, translation of the Arctic Council communication and outreach materials, or other documents or materials;
- providing language assistance to the Working Groups (by request, and subject to approval by the Director);
- providing other Russian language-related support as instructed by the Director.

2. Overview and coordination of AC activities

In close coordination with the SAO Chair, the ACS will keep an overview of progress on AC projects and cross-cutting projects. The “Tracking Tool for Arctic Council Deliverables and Ongoing Work” has been developed for this purpose. The ACS will keep close contact with WG chairs/secretaries and TF co-chairs to assist the SAO chair in tracking progress, in preparing agendas for AC meetings and in implementing the Canadian (and from 2015, the US) chairmanship program.

3. Website, Communications and Outreach Activities

The ACS will continue to develop the AC website, including server, software and security features. The ACS has employed one web site officer who will be responsible for this work. She will also make regular backups of all databases and files located on the AC server, and produce monthly reports on the activity and trends on the AC website. Improving the online document archive in order to enhance usability, and seeking to make documents available through open-access licenses when possible, will also, as part of the larger archiving project (see below), involve the website officer.

The website work includes also sites for three WGs and some projects (see below). The ACS will continue supporting the Working Groups and other subsidiary bodies with their website hosting, design, and management when necessary and according to previous agreements.

The ongoing process of publishing content on the AC website in consultation with the SAO chair and the relevant AC subsidiary bodies is an important task for the ACS, and will continue to be a priority in 2014-2015.

In addition, the website work will in the period 2014-2015 include i.e. the following elements:

- Establish and maintain specific section of AC website where resources for outreach and communication are located.
- Create meeting pages on AC website for each meeting. Ensure that password areas are in place for sharing meeting documents and other important information.
- Increase dynamic content on AC website by utilizing automatic content feeds to AC members’ and subsidiaries’ content.

- Increase social media presence on AC website.
- Increase amount of video content on AC website.

Furthermore, the ACS will continue the work to develop a plan for implementation of the Arctic Council Communication Strategy in consultation with the SAO chair and the permanent contact group for communication to be submitted to the SAOs for approval. This work will be led by the Communication Officer, and might include several different methods of work, such as development of regular, active communications streams, improvement of internal and external communication, and a proposal to the SAOs for how the AC can improve its outreach, both in academia, social networks and in attending important Arctic events. Other tasks may be: to negotiate agreements with specific photographers and observer organizations in order to gain access to a pool of Arctic-themed photos; for use by AC members; to maintain and update a media contact list; and, in cooperation with the Chair, develop a proposal for a crisis-communication plan for the AC which will be presented to the SAOs and PPs for approval.

Finally, for many, the ACS serves as a first point of contact with the AC. It is important that the ACS continues to develop good routines in responding to public enquiries on factual matters and in forwarding to the SAO chair or the relevant government requests on information of political nature regarding the Arctic Council work. In these cases the ACS will assist the Chairmanship as needed and as appropriate. The ACS will always be of assistance in providing contact information of the Arctic Council subsidiary bodies as appropriate.

4. Establishing administrative functions and strengthening the institutional memory of the Arctic Council Secretariat

During its first year of operation, in 2013, the most essential functions of the Secretariat were established. However, some of the processes and projects are rather extensive and will continue into 2014. Improvement and elaboration of administrative office routines, agreements with contractors and suppliers is still an ongoing process. In particular, the field of archiving will be a priority in 2014.

Archiving project:

The archiving project consists of three main parts, of which one is expected to be completed during 2013:

1. Making the full range of official AC reports from 1996-2013 from the AC, including its working groups, task forces and expert groups more easily available on the AC website and in a database as “Open Access” documents. This part of the archiving project, in which the University of Tromsø / The University Library is the main partner, was started in 2013 with the ACS in cooperation with the

Working Groups identifying the whole list of Arctic Council scientific, technical and other reports. Today the reports are spread across the various WG websites. When the project is completed in 2014, all the publications will be easily available and accessible from the AC webpage. Open Access licensing, and proper listing of the documents in an Open Access database, will also increase the likelihood of AC material being found in online searches. This will make the documents more readily available for researchers, students and others who wish to use them as reference material. The major part of the project has been financed by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Norway. The necessary archiving software and *Open Access* licenses will be purchased by the ACS in 2013 in order to be able to run and maintain the document archive in a reliable and secure manner on the AC website.

2. Making the full range of relevant AC records which may be of interest to the public available and accessible on the AC website. This includes i.a. meeting reports and other material from all SAO meetings and WG meetings, statements from meetings at the political level and Records of Decisions from meetings. This will complete the “document archive” on the AC website, where all the founding documents, Ministerial Declarations and most of the reports from SAO meetings are already accessible. This part of the project includes contacting the former chairmanships of the AC and receiving copies of the original documents from the early years of the AC history. This work will be completed during 2014 by the ACS with support from Canada.
3. Internal archive for the Arctic Council: The amount of correspondence to and from the Arctic Council Chair/Secretariat has been growing steadily year by year. In 2013 the ACS purchased and implemented the software system “Super Office” to keep and maintain track of all correspondence, contacts and distribution lists. The further development with the view of taking full advantage of the system will continue in 2014. It is now time for the Secretariat to assess the need for a more sophisticated and secure archiving system to keep track of all internal documents which are *not* necessarily going to be available/searchable and publically available on the website. The ACS will seek to manage this task during the first half of 2014 in cooperation with the Canadian chair who has kindly offered professional assistance with assessing the needs and developing a plan for proceeding with this project.

5. Support to Working Groups and Subsidiary Bodies

Starting from 2014 the ACS will, (based on the Terms of Reference 2.2) provide secretariat support for ACAP and EPPR, the working groups “without a permanent secretariat”. One desk officer will be employed to fill the function of “secretary” for the mentioned working groups. For more details on this, see Addendum 1. A continued strengthening of the working

relationship and cooperation between the ACS and the WG Secretariats will be a priority. In addition the ACS will provide secretariat support as necessary to the Task Force for Action on Black Carbon and Methane, as stated in the Task Force mandate from the Kiruna Ministerial meeting in May 2013. Other Working Groups, Task Forces and expert groups may also be, resources allowing, supported by the ACS if so agreed between the SAO Chair and the Director.

As of 2013, the ACS runs the websites of the ACAP, EPPR and SDWG. In addition, the website for the Arctic Resilience Report project is also under the AC “umbrella”. This work is included in the portfolio of the website officer.

6. Technology/Equipment Requirements

The basic and essential equipment for the functioning of the ACS was, to a large extent, transferred to the standing secretariat from the temporary secretariat. An old printer was replaced in September 2013 with a new leased multi-functioning printer/copy machine. In 2014, microphone and lighting equipment for use with the ACS digital camera will be purchased. Additionally, some of the hardware will need to be replaced in 2014 and 2015, and some new purchases of computers, mobile phones etc will be needed for new staff.

New software licenses and user licenses for programs such as SuperOffice, Adobe, Joomla etc. will be purchased and training for employees will be arranged as needed in line with enhanced efforts on outreach and communication both in 2014 and 2015. In relation to archives, the ACS will assess different systems and purchase a feasible solution which serves the purpose of keeping historical track of files and documents in a secure manner. If possible, the solution should also be certified and approved for keeping sensitive information and any information with personal details for internal use only. If not, a new solution to cover this task may be needed. In any case, costs related to licenses, annual fees and training are to be expected.

7. Human Resources and Recruitment

During 2013 the ACS has recruited 7 people, and the ACS currently has staff from five Arctic States. From early 2014, two additional positions will be filled, one desk officer for ACAP/EPPR secretariat functions and one general staff for supporting functions, including maintaining archives and correspondence. In addition, the ACS already has very good experience with hiring interns for 4-6 months, and will work towards ensuring that one intern position is filled at all times during the period 2014-2015. Currently, the position of Deputy Director is financed through a secondment agreement with Norway, and when the current

two-year contract runs out on 1 August 2015, the ACS has to recruit a Deputy Director, and to finance the position from its budget.

8. Training and development for ACS staff members

Although the staff at the ACS is well qualified, it is still necessary to keep developing the staff competence further, both to make sure the ACS works as efficiently as possible in a fast-changing world, and to assist in creating a stimulating working environment for the staff. For these reasons the ACS will develop and implement a plan for training and development.

9. Representing the ACS

The ACS receives a substantial number of invitations to attend meetings, conferences and other Arctic-related events. The Director will, in general, coordinate his (or other ACS staff's) participation in such events with the SAO Chair.

The ACS will continue to receive groups or individuals who wish to visit the ACS to the extent capacity, time and other resources allow.

10. Biennial Work Plan, Budgets and Reporting

The ACS Director will report on the ACS operations at every SAO meeting.

The ACS will prepare and submit a budget proposal for 2016-2017 to the SAOs for approval by Ministers at the 9th Ministerial in Canada in 2015.

Arctic Council Secretariat 6 September 2013.

Services of Arctic Council Secretariat to Working Groups without a secretariat

Introduction

According to the Terms of Reference of the Arctic Council Secretariat (ACS), the ACS shall provide services to Arctic Council working groups without a permanent secretariat. The two AC working groups that do not have a permanent secretariat are the working group on Emergency, Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR) and the working group on Arctic Contaminant Action Program (ACAP). With reference to this task, the ACS has considered the matter and has had informal discussions on the matter with the chair of the EPPR and the secretary of ACAP. Earlier submissions from the two working groups to the Task Force on Institutional Issues on this issue have also been considered. It is clear that the main thrust of having the ACS assist these two working groups in their work is to ensure continuity in their work, avoid duplication and make their work even more effective. On the basis of these considerations, the ACS feels that the following support and division of labor between the Secretariat and the respective working group chairs would be appropriate, assuming the necessary resources are available in the Secretariat.

1. The Arctic Council Secretariat would, in close cooperation with the chairs of ACAP and EPPR working groups, undertake the following services:
 - a) Distribute (and when necessary, request) meeting documents prior to the WG meetings, including soliciting status reports from the chairs of the ACAP Project Support Groups (PGs);
 - b) Maintain e-mail distribution lists and ensure contact information is up to date;
 - c) Keep the WGs' calendar and provide notification of deadlines to Chair and/or WG, as appropriate;
 - d) Host the public websites of the WGs with password-protected sections where WG members can share and obtain meeting documents;
 - e) Update the WGs' websites;
The technical management of the websites is carried out by the Arctic Council Secretariat (and by the WG Chair when appropriate), but the content remains the responsibility of the WG Chair;
 - f) Assist in making meeting arrangements;
The host country of each WG meeting takes the responsibility for providing information for distribution to meeting participants of the location where the meeting will be held, hotel arrangements and other logistical details and ACS would channel this information on the WG's website. ACS would manage registration and the

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- necessary equipment for meetings (e.g. table signs and outreach material). All financing of the meeting would be the responsibility of the host country;
- g) Attend WG meetings, take minutes at WG meetings, in consultation with WG Chair and Executive Secretary;
 - h) Undertake other administrative duties at WG meetings as appropriate.
2. The WG Chair would continue to:
- a) Prepare and submit WG reports for the SAOs;
 - b) Prepare reports to Ministers/SAOs in close cooperation with the ACS and the WG.
 - c) Represent the WG within the AC and externally;
 - d) Prepare substantive content for website and approve substantive website changes;
 - e) Develop WG meeting agendas;
 - f) Provide guidance to the ACS.
3. Assessment of necessary resources.
- a) It is estimated that the secretariat services for ACAP and EPPR as described above would take close to one full position in the ACS and further work by the ACS such as in coordination of WG meetings would make it a complete task to fill one position in the ACS.
 - b) Estimated cost for Desk Officer – ACAP/EPPR.
If hired from 1 January 2014 the estimated total cost for the desk officer for 2014 is NOK 880 000. For 2015 the estimated total cost for the desk officer would be NOK 660 000.