

## **2- Page highlights to SAO Chair - From EPPR semiannual meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark October 5 and 6, 2012**

EPPR held its semiannual meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark on October 5 and 6. The meeting was generously hosted by the Joint Defense Staff of Denmark. The 25 participants represented seven AC countries, one Permanent Participant organization, one other working group and one observer country.

The meeting focused on two important issues for EPPR: the Arctic Council Recommended Practices Prevention Project (RP3 – project) and the Operational Guidelines for the Task Force Agreement on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response. Other issues on the agenda were discussed briefly in the meeting.

### **Operational Guidelines in support to the Task Force Agreement on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response**

The SAOs tasked EPPR to develop Operational Guidelines in support to the Task Force Agreement on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response. EPPR was instructed to develop operational guidelines on notification and coordination and cooperation in response operations as a first priority. A draft document was requested from EPPR for the Task Force meeting held October 9-11 in Reykjavik, Iceland.

The first draft of the guidelines was submitted to EPPR before the meeting. At the meeting, the draft document was discussed, reviewed, and updated. A revised draft was submitted to the Task Force and EPPR HoDs upon completion on October 5. EPPR will continue to refine the document and will incorporate feedback from the Task Force in the next version. The path forward and timeline will be determined after the Task Force meeting.

In the future EPPR will also prepare guidelines related to other important issues which are described in the draft agreement. (e.g. exercises).

### **RP3 project “Recommended Practices in the Prevention of Marine Oil Pollution”**

The other important issue in this meeting was the draft report “Arctic Council Recommended Practices Prevention Report” (RP3). The document was circulated in September to the Arctic Council for comments. A summary of comments from the AC review was submitted to the participants before the meeting.

EPPR discussed the way forward including revising the main report and developing a short document with recommendations that will be delivered to the Ministers. The RP3 report will be revised based on the feedback from the AC review and EPPR comments. EPPR established a small drafting group which will prepare a short report for the 2013 Ministerial. The short report will include recommendations and possible observations to the Ministers. Canada will take the leadership of the drafting group. The updated RP3 report will be submitted to the SAO- meeting in Haparanda.

## Project updates and new issues

EPPR's Strategic Plan of Action, finalized in 2010, is in need of updating. US will present a proposal for the next EPPR meeting. EPPR also decided to develop a communication plan for the working group. The secretariat will present a draft Communication Plan for the EPPR 2013 meeting.

EPPR discussed the possibility of partnering with the IMO on their project to develop a document titled "Guide on Oil-Spill Response in Ice and Snow." The possible workload for this task was unclear and EPPR's chairmanship will contact IMO OPRC secretariat for clarification. Based on the information received, the chairmanship will make a recommendation regarding EPPR's possible involvement in this activity.

## Current projects

The different lead countries gave updates/ short reports from the following projects:

- Automated Mutual Assistance Vessel Rescue Network
- Development of Safety Systems in the Implementation of Economic and Infrastructural projects
- Arctic Rescue Project
- Radiation Projects
  
- Occupational safety and health in Arctic oil spill response workers  
This project was given some extra attention. The purpose of the project is to raise awareness and improve regional operational capabilities to protect Arctic oil spill response workers. EPPR's HODs were given a package with specific information for their country. The HoDs was asked to nominate technical persons for data collection to the project. US will present initial product draft(s) to EPPR spring 2013.

In addition EPPR received a briefing from the AMAP UAS Expert group regarding their work. EPPR delegates were very interested and decided that cooperation with the AMAP UAS Expert group will be useful. In particular the issues related to surveillance and monitoring and the possibility of joint recommendations with the UAS project and the RP3 project are potential areas for future cooperation.

## EPPR Website

EPPR Chair presented the new website. <http://www.arctic-council.org/eppr>

The website is a good platform for the work of EPPR. EPPR members were requested to contribute news, events and pictures to the website.

## Next meeting

The next EPPR meeting will be in Finland in June 2013. A date is not yet set.