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Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR) Work Plan

Introduction

EPPR strives to be the premier international forum for collaboration on prevention, preparedness and response issues in order to advance risk mitigation and improve response capacity and capabilities in the Arctic. EPPR is assigned the responsibility for maintaining the Operational Guidelines that implement the Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic (MOSPA) to which all Arctic Council States are parties. EPPR also supports the Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR) in the Arctic by addressing relevant lessons learned from SAR exercises and real incidents. In October 2015, SAOs decided that EPPR has the lead on oil spill prevention, in cooperation with PAME. In this regard, EPPR will coordinate follow-up on the Framework Plan on Oil Pollution Prevention.

EPPR will develop project proposals within this mandate for approval as Arctic Council projects, taking into account the needs of indigenous peoples and incorporating traditional and local knowledge when appropriate. The projects identified in this work plan include projects that have already been approved by EPPR and projects that are under development for future EPPR review and approval. Additional project proposals may be developed within the scope of this work plan between 2017-2019. Implementation of projects is subject to secure financing.

List of individual projects and activities:

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

EPPR Marine Environmental Response Experts Group (MER EG)

Based on a recommendation from the 2016 MOSPA TTX After Action Report, EPPR established the MER Expert Group in December 2016. Guiding principles were discussed at the inaugural meeting of the MER EG and it was agreed that work will focus primarily on implementation of the MOSPA Agreement, including implementation of corrective actions and recommendations noted in each EPPR MOSPA Exercise After Action Report. MER EG representatives will ensure corrective actions and recommendations are approved by EPPR and that these changes are reflected as updates to the MOSPA Agreement and Operational Guidelines. These corrective actions will then be integrated into national planning processes for resolution. The MER EG will be chaired by a representative from one of the Arctic States.

Each Arctic State will designate 1-2 representatives to serve on the Experts Group. Permanent Participants, Observers and Working Groups are also welcome to designate a representative.

MER EG projects, initiatives, and milestones will be identified in a 2-year Work Plan, and include projects approved by EPPR, or projects that are seeking approval from EPPR. Some of these initiatives and projects may include, but are not limited to:

Project/activity: EPPR MOSPA Exercise Planning

Lead/co-leads: Finland, MER EG Chair

WG partners – invited Other Partners: Observers – invited

Rationale and overall Objective: The MER EG works to exercise and maintain this MOSPA Agreement by ensuring all eight Arctic nations remain engaged in multi-lateral discussions, which includes an annual exercise process. This exercise engages EPPR member state representatives whose countries may be impacted by an oil spill that is large enough to require the implementation of the multilateral MOSPA Agreement and associated Operational Guidelines thereby enhancing the collaborative Request for Assistance process.

Main activities: Annual Connectivity Test (held during first quarter of 2017 and 2018 to validate operational contact information listed in Operational Guidelines), 2018 MOSPA Exercise Planning Workshop (held EPPR I 2017 to finalize 2018 exercise scenario, design, and concept), MER EG meetings (held on fringes of EPPR I & II meetings to discuss 2018 MOSPA Exercise Design Process and implementation of AAR recommendations from 2016 TTX, which will include updates to the Operational Guidelines.

Timeline: 2017-2019

Kiruna Vision Element(s): [A Peaceful Arctic/The Arctic Home/A Prosperous Arctic/A Safe Arctic/A Healthy Arctic Environment/Arctic Knowledge/A Strong Arctic Council]

Finnish Chairmanship Priorities, if applicable: [Environmental protection/ Connectivity/ Meteorological cooperation/Education]

Project/activity: Development of recommendations for future exercises and workshops based on the assessment of lessons learned and best practices from previous events

Lead/co-leads: Finland, MER EG Chair

MER EG Membership comprised of States, PP, Observers and WGs

Rationale and overall Objective: Development of Lessons Learned (LLs) portal specific to LLs from each MOSPA exercise in order to properly track and account for progress on those LLs. This will increase visibility and accountability for accomplishing action items resulting from LLs.

Main activities: With the transition of the EPPR website to a new Visual Identity in order to align with the current Arctic Council's website, the MER EG will capitalize on this transition in order to modernize LL tracking and management of MOSPA exercise AARs. Better tracking of action items from past MOSPA exercises will improve future MOSPA exercise planning.

Timeline: 2017-2019 and ongoing

Kiruna Vision Element(s): [A Peaceful Arctic/The Arctic Home/A Prosperous Arctic/A Safe Arctic/A Healthy Arctic Environment/Arctic Knowledge/A Strong Arctic Council]

Finnish Chairmanship Priorities, if applicable: [Environmental protection/ Connectivity/ Meteorological cooperation/Education]

Project/activity: Development of recommendations for training focus areas and training opportunities, which are listed on the EPPR website Training Portal as openly available training opportunities

Lead/co-leads: Finland, MER EG Chair

MER EG Membership comprised of States, PP, Observers and WGs

Rationale and overall Objective:

Each EPPR member state hosts and/or participants in various training opportunities that if expanded to include all Arctic Council representatives could further enhance the training opportunities and collaboration in many Arctic specific areas of interest.

Main activities: With the transition of the EPPR website to a new Visual Identity in order to align with the current Arctic Council's website, the MER EG will capitalize on this transition in order to expand offerings for various training opportunities across the Arctic Council. Increased visibility and participation in training opportunities grows response expertise across the EPPR and other Arctic Council working groups. Timeline: 2017-2019 and ongoing

Kiruna Vision Element(s): [A Peaceful Arctic/The Arctic Home/A Prosperous Arctic/A Safe Arctic/A Healthy Arctic Environment/Arctic Knowledge/A Strong Arctic Council]

Finnish Chairmanship Priorities, if applicable: [Environmental protection/ Connectivity/ Meteorological cooperation/Education]

Project/activity: Follow-up activities to the Response Viability Analysis

Lead/co-leads: US, Norway, Kingdom of Denmark

WG partners – [insert] Other Partners: Observers – [insert]; Others – [insert]

Rationale and overall Objective: [brief statement]

Main activities: [brief description]

Timeline: 2017-2019 (?)

Kiruna Vision Element(s): [A Peaceful Arctic/The Arctic Home/A Prosperous Arctic/A Safe Arctic/A Healthy Arctic Environment/Arctic Knowledge/A Strong Arctic Council]

Finnish Chairmanship Priorities, if applicable: [Environmental protection/ Connectivity/ Meteorological cooperation/Education]

Project/activity: Follow-up activities and implementation of use of the Pan-Arctic Database

Lead/co-leads:

WG partners – [insert] Other Partners: Observers – [insert]; Others – [insert]

Rationale and overall Objective: [brief statement]

Main activities: [brief description]

Timeline: 2017-2019 (?)

Kiruna Vision Element(s): [A Peaceful Arctic/The Arctic Home/A Prosperous Arctic/A Safe Arctic/A Healthy Arctic Environment/Arctic Knowledge/A Strong Arctic Council]

Finnish Chairmanship Priorities, if applicable: [Environmental protection/ Connectivity/ Meteorological cooperation/Education]

Arctic Search and Rescue Agreement

Expert Group on Search and Rescue (SAR EG)

In December 2015, EPPR established an Expert Group on Search and Rescue (SAR EG) to promote and assess implementation of the Arctic Search and Rescue Agreement. The SAR EG mandate includes acting as a facilitator for high-level, inter-governmental discourse on Arctic search and rescue issues. The SAR EG has agreed on a charter to guide its work, which EPPR has approved. Project, initiatives, and milestones include projects approved by EPPR, or projects that are seeking approval from EPPR. Some of these initiatives and projects may include, but are not limited to:

Project/activity: Evaluation of exercise reports and identify lessons, develop mitigation recommendations and communicate these to the appropriate bodies

Lead/co-leads: Norway

WG partners – [insert] Other Partners: Observers – [insert]; Others – [insert]

Rationale and overall Objective: [brief statement]

Main activities: [brief description]

Timeline: 2017-2019 (?)

Kiruna Vision Element(s): [A Peaceful Arctic/The Arctic Home/A Prosperous Arctic/A Safe Arctic/A Healthy Arctic Environment/Arctic Knowledge/A Strong Arctic Council]

Finnish Chairmanship Priorities, if applicable: [Environmental protection/ Connectivity/ Meteorological cooperation/Education]

Project/activity: Support for complementary operational fora in their action oriented efforts, such as SAR exercises

Lead/co-leads: Norway

WG partners – [insert] Other Partners: Observers – [insert]; Others – [insert]

Rationale and overall Objective: [brief statement]

Main activities: [brief description]

Timeline: 2017-2019 (?)

Kiruna Vision Element(s): [A Peaceful Arctic/The Arctic Home/A Prosperous Arctic/A Safe Arctic/A Healthy Arctic Environment/Arctic Knowledge/A Strong Arctic Council]

Finnish Chairmanship Priorities, if applicable: [Environmental protection/ Connectivity/ Meteorological cooperation/Education]

Project/activity: Collaboration with other bodies, fora, working groups, and academia to compile, identify, analyze and disseminate pertinent recommendation and needs related to Arctic SAR issues

Lead/co-leads: Norway

WG partners – [insert] Other Partners: Observers – [insert]; Others – [insert]

Rationale and overall Objective: [brief statement]

Main activities: [brief description]

Timeline: 2017-2019 (?)

Kiruna Vision Element(s): [A Peaceful Arctic/The Arctic Home/A Prosperous Arctic/A Safe Arctic/A Healthy Arctic Environment/Arctic Knowledge/A Strong Arctic Council]

Finnish Chairmanship Priorities, if applicable: [Environmental protection/ Connectivity/ Meteorological cooperation/Education]

Follow-up on the Framework Plan on Oil Pollution Prevention (FP-OPP)

Lead/co-leads: Norway and Canada (?)

WG partners – PAME Other Partners: Observers – [insert]; Others – [insert]

Rationale and overall Objective: This activity will be used to identify gaps in follow-up to the FP-OPP and encourage development of initiatives in these areas. Projects developed in support of addressing gaps will be approved by EPPR, or other WGs, as appropriate. The status report, final project reports and other materials will be approved by EPPR and be put forward for SAO and Ministerial approval in 2019.

Main activities: EPPR, in cooperation with PAME, will continue to report on the status of implementation of the FP-OPP. Currently led by Norway and Canada, the Status report on implementation identifies follow-up activities that support the objectives in the Framework Plan. The report will include input from other AC working groups and relevant stakeholders capturing activities that are already taking place.

Timeline: 2017-2019 (?)

Kiruna Vision Element(s): [A Peaceful Arctic/The Arctic Home/A Prosperous Arctic/A Safe Arctic/A Healthy Arctic Environment/Arctic Knowledge/A Strong Arctic Council]

Finnish Chairmanship Priorities, if applicable: [Environmental protection/ Connectivity/ Meteorological cooperation/Education]

Other EPPR Work Plan Items

Project/activity: ARCSAFE

Lead/co-leads: Norway, US, Russian Federation

WG partners – [insert] Other Partners: Observers – [insert]; Others – [insert]

Rationale and overall Objective: This project was approved by EPPR in December 2015. The main goal of the project is to promote cooperation and network-activities among the Arctic states in order to strengthen cross-border prevention, preparedness and handling of maritime incidents or accidents, which may involve a potential release of radioactive substances. Importantly, the project group seeks to disseminate and complement ongoing work in this area by other relevant international bodies such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the United Nations International Maritime Organization (IMO).

Main activities: EPPR will conduct a technical exchange on the subject in June 2017 in conjunction with the EPPR I meeting.

Timeline: 2017-2019

Kiruna Vision Element(s): [A Peaceful Arctic/The Arctic Home/A Prosperous Arctic/A Safe Arctic/A Healthy Arctic Environment/Arctic Knowledge/A Strong Arctic Council]

Finnish Chairmanship Priorities, if applicable: [Environmental protection/ Connectivity/ Meteorological cooperation/Education]

Project/activity: Safety Systems in the Implementation of Economic and Infrastructural Projects

Lead/co-leads: Russian Federation

WG partners – [insert] Other Partners: Observers – [insert]; Others – [insert]

Rationale and overall Objective: The project's main goal 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.

Main activities: In support of these projects, SAR and Oil Spill Response exercises are undertaken annually.

Timeline: 2017-2019 (?)

Kiruna Vision Element(s): [A Peaceful Arctic/The Arctic Home/A Prosperous Arctic/A Safe Arctic/A Healthy Arctic Environment/Arctic Knowledge/A Strong Arctic Council]

Finnish Chairmanship Priorities, if applicable: [Environmental protection/ Connectivity/ Meteorological cooperation/Education]

Project/activity: Arctic Rescue

Lead/co-leads: Russian Federation

WG partners – [insert] Other Partners: Observers – [insert]; Others – [insert]

Rationale and overall Objective: The focus of this project is to elaborate on best practices, recommendations and key elements of the emergency risk assessment system and the system for improving safety of potentially hazardous facilities.

Main activities: Activities include development of recommendations for joint activities aimed at ensuring industrial and environmental safety in major transportation corridors in northern Europe, supported by the development of legal regulation and management tools based on best international practices. Implementation of the project includes conducting research, seminars and conferences on relevant subject areas.

Timeline: 2017-2019 (?)

Kiruna Vision Element(s): [A Peaceful Arctic/The Arctic Home/A Prosperous Arctic/A Safe Arctic/A Healthy Arctic Environment/Arctic Knowledge/A Strong Arctic Council]

Finnish Chairmanship Priorities, if applicable: [Environmental protection/ Connectivity/ Meteorological cooperation/Education]

Communications and outreach

The EPPR webpage contains information on EPPR Expert Groups, projects, and meeting documents. EPPR reports benefit from being included in the Arctic Council Open Access Archive. In December 2016, EPPR approved a new visual identity, which will be used on all reports and outreach materials. EPPR has also undertaken the production of fact sheets to communicate project results to a wider audience. EPPR continues to develop its presence on Twitter @EPPR_arctic. The EPPR Executive Secretary participates in the Arctic Council Communications and Outreach group.

Administration

EPPR meets twice a year to discuss projects and priorities identified in the work plan, including new projects within the EPPR mandate. EPPR attends meetings of other Arctic Council working groups and task forces, contributing to initiatives on cross-cutting issues. EPPR has a permanent secretariat, staffed by the EPPR Executive Secretary, housed within the Arctic Council Secretariat in Tromsø, Norway. Funding for approved EPPR projects comes from state identified funds and other funding mechanisms as deemed appropriate. From 2015-2017, the United States has been responsible for the chairmanship of EPPR, supported by Vice-Chairs from the Kingdom of Denmark and Norway. The Kingdom of Denmark will take on/continue the chairmanship from May 2017, supported by the vice-chairs from the United States and [other VC].