



EPPR Working Group Report to SAO CA-03, October 2014 in Yellowknife

Summary of Main Activities

September, 2014

Introduction and Potential New Projects

Since the last SAO meeting in March 2014, the Emergency Prevention Preparedness and Response working group has had one meeting in Ottawa, Canada, June 16-17, 2014. Project leads have continued to implement projects and progress has been made in priority areas.

Three new projects are expected to be put forward at the next meeting of the EPPR WG.

Prevention, Preparedness and Response for small communities: Norway will organize a scoping workshop. Based on results of the workshop, EPPR can move forward with a more specific proposal and then identify leadership for a potential project. Broad participation by PPs, Arctic Council Member States, Observer countries and organizations is important.

Development of a Database of Arctic Response Assets: A pre-project proposal led by the US was presented to EPPR. Delegations were positive to the concept but had some concerns regarding format and functionality. The US lead will consider this feedback and return to the working group in the future with a formal project proposal.

Remotely Piloted Aircraft for Emergency Response: A workshop on the use of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) for emergency response will be held on December 4 during the next EPPR meeting to exchange information with key experts. Results from the workshop will determine whether to move the project forward.

Summary of progress on EPPR projects

EPPR can provide the following update on current projects:

- Circumpolar Marine Environmental Risk Assessment - EPPR discussed the project options developed from the Tromsø workshop in November 2013. It was agreed that a step-wise approach would be best and that a Circumpolar Oil Spill Response Gap Analysis would be a useful first step. This gap analysis would be used to evaluate the necessity of a full project and the scope of work a comprehensive CMERA would capture. US, Norway and possibly Denmark, will act as co-leads to develop and circulate a final proposal for the gap analysis before the EPPR II meeting in December.
- The document "Arctic Environmental Hazards and National Programs" is now finalized. The document will be placed on the EPPR website.
- 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. Phase I of the project is now complete, with Phase II underway. The link to Arctic ERMA will be available on the EPPR website.
- Safety Systems in the Implementation of Economic and Infrastructural projects - Russia has opened the first Arctic Complex Search and Rescue Center in Naryan-Mar. The area off the oil platform Prirazlomnaya, Varandrey region, played host to a SAR and Oil Spill Response exercise on August 5-7, 2014.

- Arctic Rescue – Russia presented the recommendations from the conference in Naryan Mar, August 20-23, 2013. EPPR attended this year’s conference which was held September 23-25, 2014 in Arkhangelsk, Russia.
- 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 OSR. The project supports work under the Marine Oil Agreement.

Deliverables for the next Ministerial

Three of EPPR’s current projects will be producing deliverables for the Ministerial meeting in April 2015:

IMO/EPPR Guide on Oil Spill Response in Ice and Snow Conditions – The second draft of the Guide is expected at the end of October for comments from EPPR. An Arctic-only version of the guide will be developed and made available on the EPPR website. The Arctic version of the Guide will be put forward for approval by SAOs as a deliverable to the Ministerial meeting.

The radiation emergency exercise, **Arctic 2014** was held June 23-24, 2014 in Murmansk, Russia. The exercise involved a simulated accident at a nuclear icebreaker. A full report, including lessons learned, will be put forward for approval by SAOs as a deliverable to the Ministerial meeting.

Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response (MOA) - The first exercise under the auspices of the MOA was hosted by Canada in May 2014. All AC states participated in the exercise. EPPR welcomed the success of this first validation of the Agreement. Next steps include analysis of results and finalization of the exercise report, identification of proposed amendments to the Operational Guidelines and Appendices to the Agreement, and follow-up actions for approval by EPPR II. A report on the exercise will be put forward for approval by SAOs as a deliverable to the Ministerial meeting.

Related to the MOA, EPPR discussed possible coordination and practical implementation of the SAR and Marine Oil agreements. The Chair has drafted a letter to SAOs outlining EPPR’s position and next steps.

Working Group administration and next meeting(s)

EPPR is Chaired by Ole Kristian Bjerkemo (NO) and Co-chaired by Ann Heinrich (US). Secretariat support is provided by Norway and by the Working Group Coordinator at the Arctic Council Secretariat.

The next EPPR Working Group meeting will be in Seattle, Washington, USA, December 2-4, 2014.

Collaboration with other working groups / other organizations

Representative from AMAP, PAME, SDWG and CAFF attended the last EPPR meeting providing valuable updates on cross cutting activities relevant to EPPR. National delegations and PPs agreed to contribute, whenever possible, with experts and information to appropriately reflect EPPR in the work of AACA-C (AMAP), the Arctic Marine Strategy (PAME), the ABA (CAFF) and the important work of SDWG on traditional knowledge. Reports from the work of the Task Force on Oil Pollution and Prevention are regularly shared with the WG. EPPR will coordinate with the AMAP UAS expert group in order to avoid any duplication as the planning for the workshop in December continues.