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EPPR Working Group Report to SAOs, March 2018 in Levi

Introduction

EPPR held its second meeting of 2017 in Malmö, Sweden on December 5-7. 57 participants attended representing the Arctic States, one Permanent Participant (AIA), one Working Group (PAME), four observer states (Germany, Italy, Singapore and South Korea), four observer organizations (IFRC, UArctic, WMO, and WWF) and one invited guest from the World Maritime University. The meeting focused on follow-up activities from the last EPPR meeting in Vologda, reviewing the progress and planning of activities according to the approved 2017-2019 workplan. EPPR Heads of Delegation met in advance of the plenary session. Swedish Senior Arctic Official, Bjorn Lyrvall opened the meeting and participated in the first half-day of the plenary session. 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 5, 2017, the Marine Environmental Response Expert Group (MER EG) had a full day meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the objectives of the 2018 MOSPA Exercise (March 6-9, 2018 in Oulu, Finland), receive status updates on relevant projects, discuss new business and map out the next six months for the MER EG. The MOSPA Exercise will include a connectivity test, a MOSPA tabletop exercises, a live exercise that addresses both the Copenhagen and MOSPA Agreements, and a conference on oil spills in Arctic areas. On December 1, 2017, EPPR approved the most recent update to the MOSPA Operational Guidelines. EPPR decided that for EPPR I 2018 the MER EG should 1) develop planning guidance for MOSPA Exercises, and 2) submit a project proposal for development to an EPPR image database.

The second Meeting of the Parties to the MOSPA Agreement was held in Malmö on December 4, 2017. The first Meeting of the Parties (March 22-23, 2017) highlighted the need for clarifying the procedures for updating and modifying the Appendices to the Agreement, including the Operational Guidelines. The second Meeting of the Parties adopted a separate administrative appendix, Appendix VI Administrative Procedures. The new Appendix has been posted to the Arctic Council Open Access Archive. EPPR and the MER EG will implement the new provisions under the Operational Guidelines.

SAR Agreement

On December 5, 2017, the Search and Rescue Expert Group (SAR EG) had a full day meeting to discuss 1) content for the SAR section of the new EPPR website, 2) a project proposal for EPPR I 2018 for a SAR Asset Database, led by Norway, 3) coordination/information sharing with the Arctic Coast Guard Forum (ACGF) and 4) participation at annual meetings of the Rescue Coordination Centers (RCC). A review of recent exercise reports served to call out specific challenges of mutual interest for Arctic states. The SAR EG will discuss, at future meetings, the appropriate role of EPPR towards international bodies like IMO and ICAO.

Cross-Cutting activities

- EPPR participated in meetings of the TFAMC, TFICA and PAME, and has agreed that representation at future meetings would be beneficial.
- 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 agreed to move forward with developing an online tracking tool to capture the status of implementation of the FPOPP for the 2019 Ministerial meeting.

Current projects

ARCSAFE: A radiological project promoting cross-border prevention, preparedness and handling of maritime incidents or accidents which may involve a potential release of radioactive substances. Beneficiaries of project work include Arctic states' national eppr-agencies. At EPPR I 2018, EPPR will discuss establishment of a radiological expert group, and make a decision regarding an EPPR table top exercise involving the release of radiation in 2019.

Field Guide for Oil Spill Response in Arctic Waters: The field guide was approved on December 1, 2017, and is in the Open Access Archive. There are strong links to the EPPR Small Communities project that will be taken into consideration when developing outreach materials.

Prevention, Preparedness and Response for Small Communities: Three deliverables were approved by Ministers in May 2017, an interactive map displaying the data from the survey tool, a database of survey responses, and a resource guide in the form of a short brochure to share with small communities. The second phase of the project includes developing a series of three short videos to communicate the results of Phase I.

Development of a Database of Arctic Response Assets: EPPR requested that the MER EG, led by the United States, consider the questions raised by Heads of Delegation regarding further development and use of a live database system of Arctic Response Assets and come back to EPPR I 2018 with a proposal. The current version of the database will be posted on the new EPPR website and used during the 2018 MOSPA exercise.

Risk Assessment Methods and Metadata Project Proposal

In October 2017, a workshop on Risk Assessment Methods and Metadata took place in Ålesund, Norway. The workshop report outlines a step-wise approach towards a full circumpolar risk assessment. EPPR agreed that Norway will submit a full project proposal which will include development of risk assessment guidelines and a toolbox, either intersessionally or for EPPR I 2018. This project has links to the COSRVA and follow-up to the objectives of the FPOPP.

Review of legal challenges related to the MOSPA Agreement: This project was approved in February 2017, and a project group met on the margins of the meeting to clarify scope and expected outcomes. The project will have two parts, with a summary report expected for the 2019 Ministerial meeting. A correspondence group will be established shortly to begin Part 1, which is a review of legal liability issues for operational safety during requests for international assistance under the MOSPA Agreement.

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.

Next meeting

The next EPPR meeting (EPPR I) will be held in Helsinki, Finland, June 5-7, 2018.