

EPPR

**Emergency Prevention,
Preparedness and Response**

**Emergency, Preparedness, Prevention, Response
EPPR Working Group**

Report to the SAO Meeting

April 28-29, 2010

Iulissat, Greenland

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1. Introduction

The mandate of the Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response Working Group (EPPR) is to deal with the prevention, preparedness and response to environmental emergencies in the Arctic. Members of the Working Group exchange information on best practices and conduct projects to include development of guidance and risk assessment methodologies, response exercises, and training. The EPPR Work Group mandate is refined biennially through Ministerial Declarations and is further shaped by guidance from Senior Arctic Officials. The goal of the EPPR Working Group is to contribute to the protection of the Arctic environment from the threat or impact that may result from an accidental release of pollutants or radionuclides. In addition, the Working Group considers questions related to the consequences of natural disasters.

The EPPR Working Group is an expert forum designed to:

- Plan and prepare for response to accidents;
- Develop strategies and tasks to prevent accidents;
- Enhance best practices; and
- Focus on the environmental implications of emergencies involving oil, hazardous and noxious substances (HNS), radiation, and natural disasters in the Arctic.

Mrs. Ann Heinrich (USA) is chair of the work group through the 2011 Ministerial meeting and Mr. Ole Kristian Bjerkemo (Norway) is vice-chair.

2. EPPR Working Group Activities

EPPR Meetings

In 2009, EPPR working group held two meetings. EPPR held its annual meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA from 17-19 March 2009. Mr. Johan Marius Ly (Norway) chaired the meeting, and Mr. Igor Veselov (Russia) was Vice Chair. At this meeting, it was agreed that EPPR should meet twice a year: once in a full annual meeting as was conducted in March and at a second meeting where heads of delegation are required but other participants can join as determined by topics on the agenda. The WG decided the additional meeting was necessary to maintain momentum of the work and planning of the group. Aiming for efficiency, it was decided that the smaller semiannual meeting would take place in a convenient location, and if possible in conjunction with another Arctic Council event or meeting attended by EPPR representatives.

EPPR's first semiannual meeting was held November 10-11 in Copenhagen, just prior to the SAO meeting. All eight Arctic nations, the Saami Council, and the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat participated. The meeting also welcomed one Observer organization and representatives from both the Arctic Council Secretariat and the PAME

Secretariat. The meeting was hosted by the Danish Defence Command at the historic Kastellet in Copenhagen. This report reflects discussions and decisions made at the November meeting and subsequent activities.

EPPR's annual meeting will be held in Vorkuta, Russian Federation. EMERCOM is hosting the meeting, which will be held June 16 – 18, 2010.

Strategic Plan

EPPR determined that its Strategic Plan of Action was outdated and was no longer an effective tool for the Group. The existing plan needed to be updated to position EPPR to respond more effectively to Ministerial Declarations and to better facilitate synergies between EPPR and the ongoing work of other Work Groups. The Plan was discussed in detail at the March 2009 EPPR meeting, where Canada, Norway and Russia agreed to draft a revised Plan. The revised document was discussed at the November EPPR meeting, finalized shortly thereafter, and circulated to the Arctic Council for comment. Comments were incorporated; however the comments did not cause any substantial change to the document so no subsequent comment period was warranted. The Strategic Plan of Action was distributed in its final version on March 5, 2010.

EPPR kindly asks the SAOs to accept EPPR's Strategic Plan of Action. The Plan is attached as Attachment 1.

Operating Guidelines

The new Strategic Plan of Action no longer contains the Work Plan for the Working Group. This change was needed for several reasons. First, conceptually the work plan is the tool that captures the implementation of the Strategy but is not part of the strategy itself. Second, the work plan needs to be updated on a more frequent basis to reflect implementation of the strategy, which may include identification of new projects, revision of information on ongoing projects, and identification of changes within projects regarding lead and participant countries, for example. The work plan will be reviewed and revised if necessary twice a year in conjunction with the EPPR meetings. The work plan document now will be maintained and revised as part of the EPPR meeting reports.

This change requires a modification to EPPR's Operating Guidelines. The current Operating Guidelines, section 6, Activities state:

“6.1 The main objectives and priorities for the work of the EPPR working Group shall normally be included in the Strategic Plan of Action”, which is approved by the SAOs and subject to a Ministerial mandate. The work plan part of the “Strategic Plan of Action” is updated periodically.”

EPPR wishes to delete from the Operating Guidelines the sentence: “The work plan part of the “Strategic Plan of Action” is updated periodically.” EPPR requests approval from the SAOs to revise the Operating Guidelines as noted.

The current Operating Guidelines are attached as Attachment 2.

Country Reports: Denmark and Iceland

Both Iceland and Denmark provided EPPR with important new information regarding their country’s programs in emergency preparedness.

Denmark

Denmark’s Head of Delegation, Mr. Claus Smith Rasmussen, of the Danish Defence Command, provided information on the Danish Defence Agreement which is the guiding document for Denmark’s protection of Greenland and the Faroe Islands. Denmark anticipates that an increased level of traffic and corresponding activity in the Arctic will result in increased risk of emergencies, especially from the increase in maritime activity around Greenland. To respond, Denmark is establishing a Joint Service Arctic Command, based in Greenland, to streamline operational command structure in the area. Additionally, an Arctic Response Force is being established from within the Danish Armed Forces to contribute increased expertise in the Arctic. The Arctic Response Force will be deployable in Greenland, the Faroe Islands, or internationally, if requested.

Denmark is also currently conducting an analysis of operations in the Arctic to identify areas for improvement. The Danish government is specifically analyzing the use of unmanned aerial platforms and satellite systems for surveillance. Remote sensing would be particularly beneficial for northern Greenland where dog sled teams are used for patrols. Responding to emergencies near Greenland poses additional challenges. There are currently only two small patrol vessels (more are planned to be built), four ocean patrol vessels, and eight aircraft, including helicopters and planes used for surveillance and pollution monitoring. Although there is limited spill response equipment available for the patrol vessels, the equipment is not used in operational deployments because the technology has been deemed ineffective in Arctic waters. Denmark is currently investigating new equipment, but the equipment is costly and its effectiveness is unknown. EPPR encouraged participants to exchange information on training and equipment.

Iceland

Iceland’s Head of Delegation, Mr. Kristján Geirsson of the Environment Agency of Iceland, provided information on Iceland’s prevention, preparedness, and response system.

In Iceland, the Environment Agency is responsible for risk analysis, preparedness, and response while the Coast Guard is responsible for monitoring and surveillance. Iceland has identified multiple activities that pose risks for emergencies and the risk level in Iceland is increasing.

With regards to shipping to and from Iceland, there are three shipping lanes that serve Iceland, all of which terminate at Reykjavik. The shipping lanes travel through a sensitive and treacherous area known for its important fishing ground, seabird colonies, and underwater mountains. Accordingly, Iceland and the IMO established an "Area to be Avoided" with two clearly defined routes further from shore. All ships with hazardous cargo are required to take the outermost route.

Two additional shipping lanes for trans-shipping are now operational and pose new risks as they pass near Iceland carrying traffic to include oil tankers. In 2006, two hundred ships transited these two new routes, containing from thirty-five thousand to one-hundred thousand tons of crude oil. Iceland has determined that the greater threat comes from freighters that carry up to 1.5 tons of fuel bunker oil. And finally, there is an increased risk from offshore activities ranging from industrial (oil exploration) to commercial (tourism from cruise ships that are not designed or equipped for operating in ice or are commanded by masters who are not familiar with the area).

Based on a probability assessment, Iceland has categorized the risk of pollution from oil spills and defined clean-up responsibility based on a three tiered system. Tier 1 incidents occur and are confined to one of the five harbor regions where the response authority rests with harbor masters. The harbor master will respond with the equipment on hand in the region. Tier 2 incidents are small to medium sized and require a national response capability and the involvement of oil importers who are required to maintain the equipment and readiness to respond. Tier 3 incidents are the largest and may require the activation of international agreements and assistance, since their potential size and infrequency make maintaining the required state of readiness uneconomical and inefficient.

Because of this increasing level of risk, especially for larger incidents, Iceland has recently acquired new equipment including a new Coast Guard vessel and aircraft. The vessel will be delivered in 2011 and will be equipped with spill response equipment including 300 meters of offshore boom and skimmers. The aircraft, a Dash-8 Q300, includes Side-Looking Airborne Radar (SLAR) for spill detection and an air-operable door for buoys, markers, and search-and-rescue. The equipment has already proven its effectiveness at discovering oil spills, including discovery of some previously undetected spills. Sweden is also using this aircraft, which is equipped with state of the art pollution detection equipment.

Activities Addressing Oil, Gas and HNS

Co-operation on oil spill and HNS response in the Arctic

In 2009 EPPR began considering projects related to co-operation on oil spill and HNS response in the Arctic. The primary focus of one project area under discussion is to address the adequacy of existing regional agreements in relation to the future challenges in the Arctic based on current and future oil and gas and maritime activities, following up on a report previously written by EPPR.

In the Inuvik Declaration of 1996, EPPR was charged with analyzing the adequacy and effectiveness of existing international agreements and other arrangements in the Arctic in the areas of emergency preparedness and response to environmental emergencies. In August, 2000 EPPR issued the *Analysis of the Adequacy and Effectiveness of Existing Arrangements and Agreements (2000 Analysis of Agreements and Arrangements)*, identifying risks and analyzing the potential threats and impacts of discharges from activities with the potential for trans-boundary impact, as well as the existing agreements relating to human activities posing high risk in the Arctic.

Among the risks considered in the *2000 Analysis of Agreements and Arrangements* and the associated *Environmental Risk Analysis of Arctic Activities (1998)* were oil terminals, major oil or hazardous materials transportation routes, exploitation of oil and other mineral resources, hazardous materials waste sites, as well as nuclear and radioactive waste sites and activities. EPPR found that “international agreements and arrangements currently in force, agreed to, or under consideration appear to address the present needs for trans-Arctic cooperation in these fields.”

In April of 2009, at the request of Arctic Council Ministers, PAME identified follow-on activities and recommendations based on the findings of the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA) Report, specifically referred two to EPPR:

II. Protecting People and the Environment – F. Oil Spill Prevention: Enhance the mutual cooperation in the field of oil spill prevention and, in collaboration with industry, support research and technology transfer to prevent release of oil into Arctic waters for environmental protection.

*III. Building the Arctic Marine Infrastructure – C. Circumpolar Environmental Response Capacity: Develop circumpolar environmental pollution response capabilities that are critical to protecting the unique Arctic ecosystem. This can be accomplished **for example** through circumpolar cooperation and agreement(s), as well as regional bilateral capacity agreements. (Emphasis provided)*

The activities described below reflect the consideration that EPPR is giving to address Recommendation III (C).

Activities

The first activity to consider Recommendation III (C) was a Gap Analysis Workshop conducted during the November 2009 EPPR meeting. The Gap Analysis Workshop originated from discussions that had taken place in anticipation of the issuance of the AMSA Report, and the recommendations that would fall under EPPR's mandate, during EPPR's annual meeting in March, 2009 in Las Vegas, U.S.A. At the March meeting, participants noted that the recommendations are an important area of responsibility for EPPR since any major spill in the Arctic could affect many countries and require a large, coordinated response.

In addition to the AMSA recommendations, the Gap Analysis Workshop also considered recommendations from the AMAP Oil and Gas Assessment (2007). Discussions in this workshop focused on the current status of response capabilities, existing agreements and arrangements, identified gaps, and planned next steps for EPPR.

Workshop participants noted that there are existing bilateral and multilateral agreements in force, such as the Bonn Agreement for the North Sea, HELCOM for the Baltic Sea, and the Copenhagen Agreement between Nordic States. However, the individual agreements are separate instruments and are not harmonized. There is no common understanding of the geographic, functional, and administrative boundaries of each agreement as they relate to each other. The Workshop examined the applicability of important agreements, e.g. Bonn Agreement and Canadian Joint Contingency Plans.

Discussions covered many issues including potential operational gaps in response to spills in the Arctic; focusing on reducing risks and enhancing preparedness as a strategy for managing risks; the need of Arctic nations to review response regimes; the need to educate on oil spill response in the north and to increase industry participation in the development of response capabilities in the north. Specific initiatives were provided as examples, including the Canadian Coast Guard's strategy to place caches of equipment in select northern villages and to train local communities to be first responders.

Participants recognized the importance of distinguishing between gaps in operational spill response capacity, potential gaps in the coverage of agreements or other arrangements that cover bilateral or multilateral response to oil spills, and the need to address both. Participants identified a number of suggestions for dealing with the AMSA recommendations including:

- a) Developing a common platform of knowledge and information on organizational structures and capabilities of Arctic country response systems which could be disseminated through a series of papers outlining existing resources; incident command structure; oil response regulations and practices;
- b) Establishing joint information centers;
- c) Revisiting the previous gap analysis to see if existing agreements still provide sufficient coverage;

d) Determining whether oil spill equipment in use is compatible with a different country's equipment.

Because of the complexity of the subject and the need to further consider appropriate measures in response to the issues raised by the AMSA recommendation, a correspondence group was formed under Norway's leadership to:

- 1) Consider the *2000 Analysis of Agreements and Arrangements* and the associated *Environmental Risk Analysis of Arctic Activities* (1998) in light of the need to update the documents;
- 2) Consider international regimes related to oil and HNS spills in international waters;
- 3) Review the AMSA recommendations and the report from the Envisioning Disasters and Framing Solutions workshop held in March 2008; and
- 4) Propose a way forward at the next meeting.

The AMSA Recommendations Correspondence Group (the Group), comprised of at least one representative from each of the Arctic countries, has held two conference calls to consider updates to EPPR's *2000 Analysis of Agreements and Arrangements* report and issues related to oil and HNS spills in international Arctic waters. Update of the *2000 Analysis of Agreements and Arrangements* will be recommended as the first EPPR project in response to the AMSA recommendations, and will be proposed for adoption at EPPR's next meeting with the goal of project completion in time for the 2011 Ministerial meeting. The need to revise the corresponding document, the *Environmental Risk Analysis of Arctic Activities* (1998) will also be discussed for decision at the June EPPR meeting.

Behavior of oil and other hazardous substances in Arctic waters (BoHaSa)

Norway developed the BoHaSa project in response to a request in the Salekhard Declaration to synthesize knowledge and expertise on the behavior of oil and other hazardous substances in Arctic waters and to promote the development and use of technologies and working methods that improve the capability to respond to accidents. The objective of the BoHASA Project is to gather and synthesize current knowledge and expertise on the behavior of hazardous substances in Arctic waters to promote the development and use of technologies and working methods that improve the ability to respond to accidents involving such substances.

The project was initiated in 2009 and it is anticipated the final report will be delivered to the 2011 Ministerial meeting. The BoHASA project has links to the work on the Joint Industry Project, Oil in Ice. The Project Plan includes a workshop with industry that will be scheduled at a later date. A draft report on the behavior of hazardous noxious substances in Arctic waters has been completed and the analysis of the behavior of oil will be completed during 2010.

The BoHASA Project analyzes how HNS properties (e.g., physical state; density; solubility; vapor pressure) will behave when exposed to temperatures prevalent in the Arctic and the associated implications and impacts on the response to spills involving HNS.

The BoHASA Project has already yielded two conclusions:

- 1) that more information is needed about the amount and type of HNS traffic in the Arctic so that trends can be developed; and
- 2) that the greatest risk to the Arctic comes not from traffic originating or ending in the Arctic region, but from shipments that are simply passing through Arctic waters.

Transshipments through Arctic waters are of particular concern because ships that are simply passing through are not obligated to report the nature of their cargo to any of the countries where they do not make a stop.

The BoHaSa report will be submitted to the Ministerial meeting in April, 2011.

Automated Questionnaire for Assessing Spill Response Preparedness

A software program entitled “Automated Questionnaire for Assessing Spill Response Preparedness” was presented for evaluation by EPPR members. EPPR will discuss this tool at its next meeting to determine if there is usefulness in expanding this product for international use.

The Automated Questionnaire is a product designed by the U.S. Coast Guard as a tool for surveying emergency response capabilities in order to determine levels of preparedness. The purpose of developing a diagnostic survey is to create a standard series of questions which provide specific information which is in turn evaluated to determine the level of preparedness. The response to such a system would be available to planners and responders for use at the local, regional, and national levels. EPPR is evaluating the program to determine if it would be useful and feasible to expand the database to include metrics and questions based on international standards or standards from other governments, thus adapting the database to make this a tool that is available for use by the international community. Both the Automated Questionnaire and the documentation containing the rationale for each question in the database is available on EPPR’s web site.

Activities Addressing Oil and Gas and Radioactivity

Development of Safety Systems in Implementation of Economic and Infrastructural Projects

The Russian Federation leads the activities conducted under the Development of Safety Systems in Implementation of Economic and Infrastructural Projects. The significant activity under the project was the conduct of the international exercise “Barents Rescue 2009” which was held in the Murmansk region of Russia from September 8-10, 2009. Barents Rescue 2009 was the first large-scale international exercise to have been implemented in the Arctic under existing cooperation between Arctic countries in Barents region. In total, 384 people took part in the exercise, including search and rescue crews, fire teams, police teams, engineer teams, aircraft and helicopter crews. In addition, 47 units of equipment, including fire boats, aircrafts, and helicopters from the Russian Federation were mobilized. Russia, Finland, Norway and Sweden took part in the exercise.

The objectives of “The Barents Rescue 2009” was to test the operational utility of existing cooperation, to improve information exchanges, to test the level of coordination of activities that are required, and to learn from the practical experiences of coordination and rescue services in the Barents region and how these can be used in cases of emergency. Lessons learned from the exercise will be reviewed in EPPR for potential next steps.

Arctic Rescue

Led by the Russian Federation, the EPPR project Arctic Rescue continued with the seminar “Prevention and Elimination of Emergency Situations in the Arctic” held in Anadyr, Russian Federation on August 19-20, 2009.

The conference, organized by EMERCOM, was conducted to increase domestic and international awareness of emergency response issues in the Arctic and unite efforts to increase global prevention, response, and recovery capabilities. These issues are of great importance due to the likelihood that the number of emergencies and the complexities of emergencies in the Arctic will increase in the near future as a result of continuing climate change and increased development in the Arctic. These incidents will be both natural and technological and will require increased response efforts. Themes discussed during the conference were:

- The need to carefully balance development in the Arctic, including increased industry presence, and the protection of the environment;
- The need to leverage scientific research efforts to mitigate operational challenges in the Arctic; and
- The necessity for multi-use platforms to maximize resource utilization in the Arctic.

Presentations and discussions during the conference focused on three topical areas:

- Prevention and coordinated elimination of emergency situations in the Arctic;
- Development of search and rescue systems in the Arctic;
- Problems in prevention and elimination of radiological emergency situations in the Arctic.

The outcomes of the conference provide important input into developing EPPR projects and future plans. Next steps will be discussed at future EPPR meetings. The conference was attended by 68 people from 5 countries and one International Organization.

Activities addressing Radiation

Source Control

In the first phases of the source control project, ongoing since 2000, a Risk Assessment Methodology was developed and applied to both radiation and chemical hazardous industrial facilities. The methodology was verified and updated, and is applied to facilities to identify and rank facility hazards. The outcome of this analysis is a set of recommendations for actions and activities that when implemented will increase prevention and enhance safety. This process incorporates the Environmental Management System ISO-14001 principles for continuous improvement.

The current investigation, the fourth phase of the project, is aimed at the application and further verification of the developed methodology in a new area – transportation of radioactive sources by vehicles (versus a fixed facility). The project is being implemented at the Scientific and Research Institute of Atomic Reactors in Dimitrovgrad, Russian Federation. This Institute is a large enterprise which is involved in the production and transportation of medical radioactive sources.

The final stage of work is the risk assessment for the most hazardous scenarios identified during the analysis of risks at the Institute. The final deliverable will be the developed recommendations on risk management and reduction of risks in the future. The project will be completed in 2010.

Previous reports on Source Control project are available on EPPR's web page.

Radiological Response Exercises

Exercise "Arctic-2010" will be conducted on July 28-29, 2010, at the FSUE "Nerpa Shipyard" in the Murmansk Region in northwest Russia. The purpose of the exercise is to assess consequences and response capabilities to a radiation emergency in the northwest region of Russia.

The exercise scenario involves a radiation accident at a decommissioned nuclear submarine at the pier of the Nerpa Shipyard. The simulated accident will occur during

work to remove gas from the pressure vessels of the vacuum systems of the submarine. The radioactive release scenario plans for the release to travel out of the Shipyard site. The extent of the simulated plume will require involvement of municipal and regional authorities.

EPPR will participate in the exercise both on scene at the Shipyard and in Moscow at the Technical Crisis Center of Nuclear Safety Institute of the Russian Federation (IBRAE), the organization responsible for developing recommendations for protective actions for the population and territories in the Russian Federation.

Videoteleconferencing sessions are planned to be held during the exercise between the site, regional and federal emergency management centers.

A final report on the exercise and lessons learned will be issued within 3 months after its conduct.

Crisis Center Support

Begun in 2007, technical work was completed in 2009 to enhance technical support in radiological issues to EMERCOM's National Crisis Situation Management Center (NCSMC). The NCSMC, responsible for all emergencies, requested augmentation in technical radiological issues. The goal of the Project was to develop an emergency resource center of information, data bases, procedures, and technical systems at the Technical Crisis Center of IBRAE to enable it to provide scientific and technical support to NCSMC for response to radiation emergencies.

Under the Project, new informational and program systems for the assessment of radiation accident consequences were developed and the existing systems were upgraded. The databases on radioactive sources at industrial facilities, medical institutions, and research institutes were developed and the necessary data collected. The scenarios of potential radiation emergencies at the facilities were analyzed in relation to their possible radiation consequences for the population and territory. Standard manuals, training and lecture materials for EMERCOM personnel were also developed.

The systems and procedures were tested in the course of training emergency response personnel in the Murmansk Region and during exercises at Balakovo NPP.

The project was successfully completed in December 2009.

Community Radiation Information

The Community Radiation Information Projects are continuing with the development of tools to help specialists communicate radiation and emergency information with the public and media. An earlier project was the development of the brochure: "The Far East: Nuclear Technologies and Environment," which is widely used as an informational tool for experts and decision makers in the region. The State Atomic Energy

Corporation “Rosatom” of the Russian Federation has found the EPPR brochure to be very useful and is separately adding new data for the years 2008-2009 to the document for their use. Another current project focuses on developing a computer simulation program to enable emergency public information responders to practice interacting with the public during simulated emergency events. The responder is faced with a variety of potential scenarios for public interaction and must choose the appropriate response of several presented to effectively communicate information to minimize public anxiety and control rumors. This project will be completed in November 2010.

In addition, work continues on a Glossary for Nuclear Power Plant Information Services that translates scientific and technical terms into plain language. It includes the list of the basic terms used by experts during a radiation incident or accident, the perception of these terms by journalists and population, and recommendations on using these terms in public communications under the different event conditions (according to the International Atomic Energy Agency’s INES event scale, a communication tool). The project will be completed in May 2010. The accumulated experience will be used to prepare public information messages during the EPPR exercise at the “Nerpa” Shipyard in July 2010.

Analysis Capability: Programs “Nostradamus” and “Trace Win”

This project is aimed at equipping the facilities of the North West Region of Russia involved in nuclear submarine decommissioning, nuclear ship maintenance, and spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste management with the two software packages “TRACE_WIN” and “NOSTRADAMUS.” The software packages were developed by the Nuclear Safety Institute of the Russian Federation (IBRAE) to forecast and assess radiation conditions. This site-specific software to model airborne radiological dispersion and contamination from an accident provides critical information to decision makers.

The specialized geoinformation system TRACE_WIN allows users to simulate, monitor, analyze, and map atmospheric radioactive releases. The main advantages of this model are its simplicity and immediacy. The computation takes a few seconds so TRACE_WIN is ideally used for the initial (approximate) assessment of the radiation release.

The Nostradamus package is designed to forecast aerosol and gaseous releases under variable weather conditions. Nostradamus is an advanced tool and allows users to calculate pollution transport for hundreds of kilometers in changing weather conditions for a source of arbitrary configuration and form, taking into account specific terrain features.

Since 2004, these modeling programs have been adapted to the specific features of 14 facilities in Russia and have been installed in their emergency crisis centers. Facility-specific information includes electronic geographical maps, landscape information, and databases on the applicable radionuclides and the civilian communities around each facility.

The purpose of the current Phase V of the Project is to improve the methods of calculating outputs in convenient formats for further data analysis and processing, and to adapt NOSTRADAMUS and TRACE_WIN software packages to the specific features of three additional Rosatom facilities. Both packages are widely used during preparation and conduct of national and international exercises and emergency response drills related to airborne radiological dispersion and contamination.

Phase V of the Project will be completed in spring 2010.

Emergency Rescue Team Equipment

The aim of this project is to upgrade the equipment of the Emergency Response Team at the CS “Zvezdochka” facility and enhance the level of preparedness to respond to radiation accidents at the facility. Initiated in 2009, this activity was begun following the results of the “Arctic-2008” exercise conducted at the facility and the lessons learned and recommendations provided by observers. The exercise identified that some emergency rescue team equipment was no longer reliable and was difficult to service.

The project includes an analysis of the existing equipment, development of the modernization plan, development of methodological tools for the facility’s emergency rescue team, purchase and installation of equipment, and training.

In 2009, the analysis of the existing equipment was performed, the recommendations to purchase new equipment were made, and the list of required equipment was agreed to by the management of the facilities. An advanced system for individual dose monitoring including 500 individual dosimeters, the dosimeter readers, and specialized software was purchased from Angarsk ECC.

Training for personnel who will use the purchased system was conducted in February 2010 at the manufacturer’s site.

In 2010-2011, the equipment will be tested and transferred to CS “Zvezdochka”. Procedures on how to use the equipment in radiation emergencies will be developed, and additional training for the members of the Emergency Response Team at the CS “Zvezdochka” will be conducted. The project will be completed in 2011.

Radiation Survey Simulation System

The aim of this project is to develop a site-specific computer system to dynamically model results of nuclear accidents and releases. The system is designed to simulate a release within the first day after an accident at a nuclear facility under conditions of a long-term release of arbitrary radionuclide composition, and is tailored to the specific features of radiation hazardous facilities.

The system is intended to be regularly used for emergency drills and exercises. Drills and exercises are the most efficient form of preparedness training to mitigate accident consequences. Through training and use, the simulation system will contribute to

improving the practical skills of authorities, emergency rescue teams and facility personnel in emergency situations.

Such simulation systems have already been installed at four Russian radiation hazardous facilities. In the current phase of the project, the simulation systems will be developed and installed at CS "Zvezdochka," Archangelsk Region, Severodvinsk and JSC MSZ, Moscow Region, Electrostal. Appropriate training of personnel is an important part of the project.

This project is in its final stage. Most of the development, installation of the systems, and training has been accomplished. The project will be completed in May, 2010. The aim is to develop a site-specific modeling system for use in training and conducting exercises to simulate a radiological accident at two specific facilities.

The aim is to develop a site-specific modelling system which will simulate a radiological accident at two specific facilities. The simulations will be used to train personnel and to conduct exercises.

Activities within Natural Disasters

Managing the cold conditions – a systematic approach

The project "Managing the cold conditions - a systematic approach" aims to build up the capacity for protection against extreme cold temperatures as part of the regional and interregional Emergency and Rescue Services in the Barents Region. Covering primarily safe treatment of victims in winter conditions, it aims also to support operations in the same situations. A financial application drafted by Finland as the lead country has been submitted to the international selection committee. It is anticipated that the project period would span from 2010 through 2012. Regional Council of Lapland is responsible for the project administration.

Collaboration with Permanent Participants, other Arctic Council Working Groups, and Other Relevant Bodies

To increase effectiveness and minimize duplication, EPPR works with Arctic Council entities and other organizations with the common goal of addressing the Arctic perspective in emergency preparedness and response. EPPR will cooperate with other organizations by:

- Working together with AMAP and CAFF on the Arctic Council Spatial Strategy;
- Maintaining liaison with PAME and support relevant PAME projects as a follow up to the AMSA report;
- Maintaining liaison with the University of the Arctic;
- Maintaining liaison with the Nordic Mapping Agencies on Arctic Mapping;
- Undertaking activities with the Northern Forum that support the EPPR agenda;

- Maintaining liaison with the oil industry and other relevant organizations with the aim to enhance oil spill prevention, preparedness and response in the Arctic.

3. EPPR Working Group Administration

Secretariat

The U.S. provides Secretariat support to the Working Group. This support will continue through the April 2011 Ministerial. Previously, Norway provided Secretariat support to the Working Group from January 1, 2007 until the 2009 Ministerial meeting.

Project Planning

EPPR agreed to a framework for proposing, tracking, and recording projects as an accepted EPPR business practice. The framework can be found on the EPPR web site. The framework is designed to more fully communicate the latest information on EPPR activities, to facilitate the increased reporting requirements, and to better track the status of projects. Its use is encouraged for all future proposals and projects. The framework is attached as Attachment 3.

Web Page

The EPPR's homepage <http://eppr.arctic-council.org/> is currently maintained by Swedish Radiation Safety Authority. The web site has been modified to increase the amount of information available on the web site and to highlight more timely information.

The EPPR homepage serves as its main outreach and communication tool. All EPPR-related reports, brochures, posters and other resources are available on the homepage. All of the documents are provided in English and some in Russian.

COP 15

EPPR provided graphics and copies of its informational report and pamphlet for distribution by the Arctic Council at the Council's booth during the COP 15 meeting in December 2009.

4. Direction from the Tromsø Ministerial Declaration

Based on the directions and instructions from the Tromsø Ministerial meeting, and in accordance with EPPR's work plan, EPPR has continued working on existing projects and is developing projects to address new areas, in particular issues identified in the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment. The 2009 Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in Tromsø, Norway endorsed activities relevant to EPPR for the timeframe of 2009-2011 as follows:

Arctic Marine Environment

Approve the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA) 2009 Report including its recommendations on enhancing Arctic marine safety, protecting Arctic people and environment and building Arctic marine infrastructure and **request** Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs) to develop appropriate follow up actions,

Note that increased marine access and navigation in the Arctic Ocean calls for development and implementation of suitable national and international regulations, where appropriate, to advance the safety of Arctic marine shipping, including marine pollution prevention, reduce accident risk, and facilitate effective emergency response,

Encourage active cooperation within the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on development of relevant measures to reduce the environmental impacts of shipping in Arctic waters,

Urge that the ongoing work in the IMO to update the Guidelines for Ships Operating in Arctic Ice-Covered Waters be completed, application of its relevant parts be made mandatory, and global IMO ship safety and pollution prevention conventions be augmented with specific mandatory requirements or other provisions for ship construction, design, equipment, crewing, training, and operations, aimed at safety and protection of the Arctic environment,

Welcome the new Arctic Council project on “Development of safety systems in implementation of economic and infrastructural projects in the Arctic”, noting its comprehensive character and importance in minimizing the risks of increased human activity,

Approve the establishment of a task force to develop and complete negotiation by the next Ministerial meeting in 2011 of an international instrument on cooperation on search and rescue operations in the Arctic,

Approve the revised Arctic Council Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines and **urge** all States to apply these Guidelines throughout the Arctic as minimum standards in national regulations,

Human Health and Human Development

Recognize that education, outreach, scientific research, traditional knowledge and capacity building are major tools to address challenges in Arctic communities and **recommend** that, where relevant, Arctic Council projects include these elements,

Recognize that the University of the Arctic (UArctic), a network of higher education institutions in the Arctic, is an effective partner to promote the sustainable development of the region, and **welcome** its new mechanisms to further fund activities,

Energy

Approve the findings and recommendations of the assessment of Oil and Gas Activities in the Arctic: Effects and Potential Effects,

Emphasize that while there has been significant progress in technology, management, and regulations that have greatly reduced the impact of oil and gas activities, environmental risk cannot be eliminated,

Decide to strengthen cooperation on prevention of, and response to, accidental spills of oil and hazardous substances in the Arctic,

Urge Member States to apply the precautionary approach and polluter-pays principle as reflected in Principles 15 and 16 of the Rio Declaration, respectively, and conduct risk and environmental impact assessments for the exploration, development, transport and storage of oil, and enact and/or enforce appropriate laws and controls,

Recognize that environmentally sound oil and gas activities may contribute to sustainable development of the Arctic region

EPPR Workplan 2009 – 2011

ACCIDENTAL OIL POLLUTION: L – LEAD P- PARTICIPANT

Project	Canada	Denmark/ Greenlan	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Russian Federatio	Sweden	USA
Ongoing								
Arctic Rescue			P		P	L	P	P
Development of Safety Systems in the Arctic while Implementing Infrastructural and Other Economic Projects	P	P	P		L	L	P	P
Behavior of Oil and other Hazardous Substances in Arctic Waters (BoHaSA)	P		P	P	L		P	
Co-operation on oil spill and HNS response in the Arctic	P				L			P

CO-OPERATION WITH OTHERS AND LIAISON ACTIVITIES

Project	Canada	Denmark/ Greenlan	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Russian Federatio	Sweden	USA
Ongoing								
Northern Forum on catastrophic flooding						P		P
Nordic Mapping Agencies on Arctic Mapping					L			
PAME working group (Lead to be determined per meeting)								
Oil Industry					L			P
University of Arctic (Lead to be determined)								
AMAP and CAFF on Arctic Council Spatial Strategy					L			

RADIOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES AND OTHER HAZARDS: L – LEAD P- PARTICIPANT

Project	Canada	Denmark/ Greenlan	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Russian Federatio	Sweden	USA
Ongoing								
Analysis Capability						L		L
Technical Crisis Center support to the EMERCOM Crisis Situation Management Center						L		L
Conduct of Radiation Emergency Exercises	P		P		P	L	P	L
Source Control Phase IV: prevention related to transportation						L		L
Emergency Rescue Team Equipment						L		L
Radiation Survey Simulation System						L		L
Community Radiation Information						L		L

NATURAL DISASTERS L – LEAD P- PARTICIPANT

Project	Canada	Denmark/ Greenlan	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Russian Federatio	Sweden	USA
Ongoing								
“Managing the cold conditions – A systematic approach”			L		P	P	P	

OTHER ISSUES L – LEAD P- PARTICIPANT

Project	Canada	Denmark/ Greenland	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Russian Federation	Sweden	USA
Ongoing								
Host EPPR web site							L	P
EPPR Secretariat								L
Update the Arctic Guide for Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response	P	P	P	P	P	P	L	L

Strategic Plan of Action

Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and
Response Working Group (EPPR)

March 2010

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The Arctic Council was established in 1996 as a high level forum to provide a means for promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States, with the involvement of the Arctic indigenous communities and other Arctic inhabitants on common Arctic issues, in particular issues of sustainable development and environmental protection in the Arctic. Since that time a number of working groups have been created under the umbrella of the Arctic Council.

1.2 Context

The mandate of the Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response Working Group (EPPR) is to deal with the prevention, preparedness and response to environmental emergencies in the Arctic. EPPR is not an operational response organization. Members of the Working Group exchange information on best practices and conduct projects to include development of guidance and risk assessment methodologies, response exercises and training. The EPPR Work Group mandate is refined biennially through Ministerial Declarations and is further shaped by guidance from Senior Arctic Officials. The goal of the EPPR Working Group is to contribute to the protection of the Arctic environment from the threat or impact that may result from an accidental release of pollutants or radionuclides. In addition, the Working Group considers questions related to the consequences of natural disasters.

The Arctic is an environmentally sensitive area with an extreme climate characterized by low temperatures, winter-time darkness, snow, ice and permafrost. These harsh conditions and the lack of infrastructure in much of the Arctic create a higher vulnerability to emergencies than in more temperate climates. Actions for prevention, preparedness and response must be adapted to the conditions and remoteness of the Arctic. Accordingly, international co-operation in this area is of major importance.

2. Vision

The EPPR Working Group's vision provides the basic building blocks for the Strategic Plan.

The EPPR Working Group is an expert forum designed to:

- Plan and prepare for response to accidents;
- Develop strategies and tasks to prevent accidents;
- Enhance best practices; and
- Focus on the environmental implications of emergencies involving oil, hazardous and noxious substances (HNS), radioactive substances, and

natural disasters in the Arctic.

3. Guiding Principles

The work of the EPPR working group is based on the following guiding principles:

3.1 *The involvement of Arctic inhabitants.*

Involvement of indigenous and local people in emergency prevention, preparedness and response is of critical importance. Arctic inhabitants, because of their proximity to the activities that pose risks of emergencies in the Arctic, are likely to be most affected by an accident and could provide first response until regional and national resources can be delivered if required. In addition, Arctic inhabitants may participate in response actions and contribute their traditional knowledge to the process. The EPPR Working Group recognizes the importance of involving Arctic inhabitants, and seeks their involvement in its work.

3.2 *Building on the initiatives of others.*

In order to increase effectiveness and minimize duplication, the EPPR Working Group takes advantage of the work of other groups and organizations and reciprocates where possible. EPPR cooperates with other Arctic Council Working Groups, the Northern Forum and other relevant organizations to address the Arctic perspective in emergency prevention, preparedness and response.

3.3 *Sharing and exchange of information.*

Information exchanges on practices, experiences and technology developments within the EPPR Working Group are an important avenue that can lead to improvements in national and multinational systems designed to protect the Arctic's environment and its inhabitants. The sharing of approaches, potential and existing problem areas and lessons learned strengthen prevention, preparedness and response capabilities of the Arctic countries.

3.4 *Communication with relevant organizations.*

The EPPR Working Group recognizes the importance of providing information to and communicating with nongovernmental organizations, international organizations, and the emergency management communities on Arctic emergency prevention, preparedness and response. EPPR has undertaken projects focused on public information and communication and will continue to address the need to provide accurate and timely information regarding emergency planning, preparedness and response.

3.5 *Cooperation with industry.*

Industries in the Arctic have expressed interest in closer cooperation between industry and the Arctic Council working groups. The EPPR Working Group and industry have a common interest of cooperation. This could be related to project cooperation but also to sharing resources, information and data.

4. The Strategic Plan Framework

The framework consists of four objectives and strategic priorities on which the Work Plan is based and in some instances represents a continuation of ongoing

activities. The Work Plan is an independent document, separate from the Strategic Plan.

Objective 1: Information sharing

Rationale:

The Arctic countries have knowledge of different types of technology and have the ability to function in a cold climate with snow and ice. The industries and the activities in the Arctic areas are adjusted to the harsh conditions of the Arctic with its very low temperatures, winter-time darkness, snow and permafrost. The harsh conditions and the lack of existing infrastructure in much of the Arctic make emergencies more problematic than in more temperate climates. Actions for prevention and preparedness must be adapted to the harsh conditions and remoteness of the Arctic. Research is being done at universities and at industrial and governmental research centres to further develop this knowledge. International cooperation in this area is of major importance to accelerate programs; maximize resources, and find solutions to common problems.

Initiatives:

Research and Development

The EPPR Working Group actively supports domestic and international research initiatives and work designed to develop and improve best practices. The EPPR Working Group also promotes the exchange of technology concerning preventive measures in environmental emergencies in the Arctic.

The EPPR Working Group engages in developing environmental impact assessment of preventive and response actions. The Arctic environment has a low tolerance for disturbance. Therefore, the impacts of actions in the Arctic need to be very carefully assessed and the actions adjusted to the prevailing conditions. Traditional knowledge should be applied to understanding the possible consequences of predicted impacts and in reducing uncertainties.

Objective 2: Improve prevention measures aimed at reducing accidents which could result in environmental emergencies in the Arctic.

Rationale:

It is a generally accepted principle that preventive measures are of great importance. The highest priority for the environmental protection of the Arctic is to increase prevention measures and thereby reduce accidents.

Initiatives:

Risk Analysis

For the development of emergency prevention, preparedness, and response actions in the Arctic, an important first step is the Environmental Risk Analysis of Arctic Activities.

The EPPR Working Group produced a report on potential risks in the Arctic, including the identification of high risk activities. This report, which will be kept up to date by the EPPR Working Group, provides the basis for future activities including mitigation of the highest risks.

The different reports produced by other Arctic Council Working Groups (e.g. Oil and Gas Assessment, Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment, etc.) are and will continue to be important in describing risk in the Arctic and continued cooperation with these working groups is essential. EPPR supports specific activities and products of other Work Groups and this engagement contributes to the development of the EPPR agenda.

Objective 3: Improve emergency preparedness programmes at local, national, regional and international levels to ensure they are commensurate with the level of risk that exists, including arrangements for mutual assistance.

Rationale:

If the preventative measure fails, it is of great importance that sufficient response capacity is in place on national, regional and local levels to protect the unique Arctic ecosystem and its inhabitants. Contingency plans to deal with emergencies such as safety of life and protection of the environment from natural and man-made disasters, should be in place, response resources available and the people involved should be adequately trained.

Initiatives:

Infrastructure

For preparedness and response operations, it is critical to know what resources are required and the extent of their availability and also the resources at risk. Therefore, the identification of infrastructure requirements and pre-placement of response assets and resources at risk in the Arctic area are essential and should be developed further with the inclusion of traditional knowledge and with involvement of indigenous people.

The use of spatial information will be of great importance. Based on experience from training and exercises, the EPPR Working Group will contribute to the identification of related strategic tactics and techniques.

Guides

The guides and guidelines prepared by EPPR Working Group are useful tools in emergency prevention, preparedness and response work. The Working Group ensures that manuals, guides, brochures and other documents it produces address a need; are clearly written; formatted for ease of use by the people working within the areas in question; and when possible, translated into relevant languages.

Exercises and Lessons Learned

EPPR member countries conduct and participate internally as well as between member countries in training and exercises based on current activities and events in order to identify and share best practices and lessons learned. Information from actual situations is also gathered and disseminated. To facilitate information sharing, standard EPPR templates for prevention, preparedness, and response documentation will be developed where appropriate.

Objective 4: Improve response capabilities so that they are commensurate with existing threats.

Rationale:

Emergency response capacity is highly dependent upon a nation's ability to provide human and physical resources over geographic distances in various seasonal and climatic circumstances. The current lack of infrastructure in all but a limited number of areas, coupled with the vastness, and harsh environment makes carrying out a response significantly more difficult in the Arctic.

Initiatives:

Capacity building

To maximize the application of research and development, active exchange of knowledge among the Arctic Council countries in the form of educational material, technology, and training and exercises programmes is essential. Exchanging information and cooperating on emergency response training material and training programmes through exercises, courses, conferences and other methods furthers capacity building among the partners. The participation of local and indigenous peoples in the exchange of knowledge and information is very important in achieving successful results.

International agreements and arrangements

There are several international agreements which involve the activities of the EPPR Working Group. These are, inter alia, the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation (OPRC Convention) and its Protocol on Preparedness, Response and Co-operation to Pollution Incidents by Hazardous and Noxious Substances, 2000 (HNS Protocol), the 1992 Civil Liability Convention, the 1992 Fund Convention, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on Industrial Accidents, the IAEA

Conventions on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency, International Convention on Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) and many bilateral agreements and arrangements between the Arctic countries. EPPR will undertake a review and study of existing agreements to evaluate overlaps and gaps.

Notification and communication during incidents

Notification and communication among the Arctic countries during incidents are very important and there are existing international systems dealing with these requirements. International systems for notification exist for marine, industrial and nuclear emergencies.

At this point in time, the EPPR Working Group will not develop a new system for notification and communication in the Arctic but will build on the existing systems.

Public awareness

In all work done in the Arctic area, it is vital that the people living there are taken into account. In the identification of emergency response assets, risk assessments and response actions, the involvement of local and indigenous people should be increased. The increase of public awareness and of public participation is invaluable for emergency prevention, preparedness and response actions.

The EPPR Working Group communication strategy is developed and updated in co-operation with the other working groups and the Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council to ensure consistency and to avoid redundancy and to increase overall response capacity and capability.

OPERATING GUIDELINES

for the Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response Working Group (EPPR)

Adopted by the Working Group on February 22nd 2001 and approved by the Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs) on June 12th 2001.

The activities of the Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR) Working Group are governed by the Rules of Procedure of the Arctic Council. The following guidelines should be read in conjunction with the [Rules of Procedure of the Arctic Council](#).

1. Representation

1.1

The number and names of the delegation to any EPPR meeting shall be given to the secretariat of the working group and the country hosting the meeting at least 14 days prior to the meeting.

2 Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretariat

2.1

The chairperson and the vice-chairperson shall each serve terms of two years. These terms may be extended by the Working Group. The terms of the chairperson and vice-chairperson shall normally begin after the Ministerial Meeting of the Arctic Council that follows their election. Should the Chair fall vacant, the Vice-Chair shall act as the Chair until a successor is elected

2.2

The chairperson shall act in a neutral capacity.

2.3

The duties of the chairperson shall be to preside over the EPPR Working Group meetings and to direct and manage work programs approved by the EPPR Working Group, and to take initiatives and put forward proposals to the EPPR Working Group that could promote the efficient execution of its work.

2.4

The duties of the vice-chairperson are to substitute for the chairperson when the chairperson is not available and to assist the chairperson in his or her duties.

2.5

The home country of the chairperson normally provides secretariat support, or the Working Group may agree on other arrangements.

2.6

The duties of the secretariat are to help co-ordinate the work program, facilitate information exchange, arrange meetings, support reporting on and implementation of the program, and undertake tasks assigned by the EPPR Working Group.

3 Meetings

3.1

The EPPR Working Group shall meet at least once a year.

3.2

The responsibility for organization of the meetings shall rotate among the Arctic States and be co-ordinated by the chairperson and secretariat of the working group.

3.3

An invitation to the meeting with a draft agenda prepared by the chairperson, in consultation with the representative of the country hosting the meeting, shall be submitted by the secretariat of the working group to the national representatives, Permanent Participants and the observers of the Arctic Council at least 60 days in advance.

3.4

Official documents and proposals for the meeting shall be submitted to the national representatives, Permanent Participants and observers of the Arctic Council at least 30 days prior to the meeting at which they are to be considered. Documents of solely informational character shall be submitted at least 14 days prior to the meeting.

4 Decisions

4.1

A record of decisions shall be prepared and agreed upon at the conclusion of the meeting.

5 Reports

5.1

A draft meeting report including the record of decisions shall be distributed to all Arctic States, Permanent Participants and other meeting participants by the secretariat of the working group within 30 days of the conclusion of the meeting.

5.2

Comments on a draft final meeting report shall be submitted to the chairperson and secretariat of the working group within 30 days after issuance.

6 Activities

6.1

The main objectives and priorities for the work of the EPPR Working Group shall normally be included in the 'Strategic Plan of Action', which is approved by the SAOs and subject to a Ministerial Mandate. The work plan part of the 'Strategic Plan of Action' is updated periodically.

6.2

The projects and activities based on the Strategic Plan of Action and carried out by the EPPR Working Group shall be organised through the "lead country" principle.

7 Amendments to the operating guidelines

7.1

The operating guidelines may be amended at any meeting of the EPPR Working Group, subject to approval by the SAOs.

EPPR Project Framework

Proposing New Projects: To ensure full and readily available project information, EPPR members agreed to use the following format for proposals:

1. **Project Title:** A brief title describing the project. This title will be tracked in the work plan and used in reporting.
2. **Project Overview:** A short description of the project.
3. **Lead Organization:** The national delegation with primary responsibility for project management, including a specific ministry, office, or organization when applicable.
4. **Point of Contact:** The name, phone number, and email address of the individual(s) leading the project.
5. **Background Information:** Information that provides contextual information on the justification for the project, including previous work or projects related to the proposal.
6. **Detailed Description:** A detailed description of the project goals, milestones, implementation strategies, etc.
7. **Funding:** Identification of the cost of the project and source(s) of funding.
8. **Link to EPPR Mission / Strategic Plan:** A description of which objectives, initiatives, or activities in the EPPR Strategic Plan that the proposal supports. If no direct link to the current Strategic Plan is apparent, provide a description of the benefit to the Arctic Region.
9. **Partners:** A description of other participants in the project and their roles.
10. **Expected Duration:** The expected start and completion date of the project.
11. **Final Product:** A description of the final output of the project.
12. **Other Information:** The above categories are not meant to be limiting or constraining. Project proposals are encouraged to include other relevant information as needed. This could include target audiences, logistical requirements, ties to other Arctic Council Working Group activities, etc...