

# ARCTIC COUNCIL WRITING STYLE GUIDE

APRIL 2023



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# 1 ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This style guide lays out the writing style to be used in documents produced by the Arctic Council, including its subsidiary bodies. It responds to issues that have been encountered in the preparation of Arctic Council documents. It is considered a living document, which will be expanded to reflect new issues that arise or be amended to reflect changes or improvements in practice. This document should be used for guidance, noting there are contexts in which departure from the styles described below is appropriate. This guide will be used as primary writing style reference tool for Arctic Council documents.

## 2 TECHNICAL GUIDELINES

### 2.1 REFERENCES

For short documents (less than 15 pages), use end notes for your references. For longer documents (exceeding 15 pages), use foot notes for your references. Please make sure that all your references in end/foot notes as well as in your bibliography (if applicable) follow the same style and form.

### 2.2 BULLETED LISTS

Bulleted lists are often useful, though they should not be overused. Unless there is an actual need for ordering (1-2-3 or a-b-c), use default dot-bullets. Use as few sub-levels as possible.

For Arctic Council documents, we will use numbering for all lists with sub-levels. This was chosen as a standard following the preparation of the SAO Report to Ministers in 2017 which included several different styles of lists in the draft versions.

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### 2.3 PAGE BREAKS, COLUMN BREAKS, AND SECTION BREAKS

Except in very rare circumstances, you should never use carriage returns (that is, hitting “enter” again and again) to make a new page start. Simply insert a page break (CTRL+Enter). This way, when a line somewhere else is added or removed, the whole layout of the document is not destroyed.

Likewise, please never use the space bar to position text left, right or center. Use the alignment function within Word.

Likewise, please be aware of functions such as column breaks and section breaks. Column breaks allow you to begin a new column without having to simply hit “return” until you’re in a new column. Section breaks allow you to move seamlessly from a section that has three columns (for example) to a section that has no columns.

## 3 EXPRESSIONS, PHRASES, GRAMMAR, AND PUNCTUATION

### 3.1 CITATIONS

This describes how these documents should appear when you refer to them in running text.

- *Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic* (2011)  
Shorthand: Search and Rescue Agreement (2011)
- *Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic* (2013)  
Shorthand: MOSPA (2013)
- *Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation* (2017)  
Shorthand: scientific cooperation agreement (2017)
- *Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment* (PAME, 2009)  
Shorthand: AMSA (2009)
- *Arctic Biodiversity Assessment* (CAFF, 2013)  
Shorthand: ABA (2013)
- *Arctic Climate Impact Assessment* (AMAP, 2004)  
Shorthand: ACIA (2004)
- *Senior Arctic Officials' Report to Ministers* (####)  
Shorthand: SAO Report to Ministers (####)

#### 3.1.1 TITLES

- *Italics and Headline Style*
  - All freestanding, published publications, events and films, regardless of length (CMOS 8.166, 8.183, CMOS 8.195). This includes factsheets and reports, basically anything that gets its own page on the OAR.
  - Titles of websites (e.g., *Eye on the Arctic*)
- "Quotes and Headline Style"
  - Articles, panels from events and parts of larger works (CMOS 8.175). This includes chapters, Pathways articles, clips from longer films, blog posts
- *Headline Style Only*
  - Unpublished works, planned events
  - Projects

### 3.2 CAPITALIZATION

#### 3.2.1 CAPITALIZE THESE TERMS

- Arctic Council
- Arctic State(s) (Please do not use the phrase "member states.")
- Chair, co-Chair, vice Chair, Chairman, Chairperson, Chairwoman, Chairmanship (when referring to Arctic Council Chairs), (do not capitalize "chair" when used as a verb, as in: "Inger Johanne is chairing ACAP for the next two years.")
- Declaration(s) (in reference to one or more specific Ministerial Declarations)
- Expert Group(s) (when used to refer specifically to one or more Arctic Council Expert Groups)
- Executive Secretary
- Head of Delegation
- Indigenous, Indigenous Peoples
- Minister/s/ial in reference to Arctic Council Ministers or Ministerial meetings

- Observer(s) (when used to refer specifically to one or more accredited Observers)
- Permanent Participant(s)
- State(s) (when used to refer specifically to one or more of the eight Arctic Council States)
- Task Force(s) (when used to refer specifically to one or more of the Arctic Council Task Forces)
- Titles such as “Senator” and “Ambassador” when used in front of a name (not when used in general)
- the North (when used as a region)
- U.S.
- Working Group(s) (when used to refer specifically to one or more of the six Arctic Council Working Groups)

### 3.2.2 DO NOT CAPITALIZE THESE TERMS

- host country
- meeting as in SAO meeting or Ministerial meeting. Likewise, do not capitalize the “d” in “Ministerial declaration”, when in reference to non-specific declarations (example: “The Arctic Council has issued ten Ministerial declarations”).
- northward, to the north (when used as a direction), northern (when not part of a proper noun)
- secretariat (when used as a general noun: “The ACS acts as secretariat for ACAP and EPPR”)
- terms of reference, financial rules and similar terms, unless part of the full document title and placed in quotation marks.
- titles like “senator” and “ambassador” when used other than as part of a title including a name.
- For capitalization of titles, which has surprisingly complicated considerations, see (Chicago 8.18-8.21)

In a table, column headings should be capitalized sentence-style.

## 3.3 DEFINITE ARTICLE

The general rule for the definitive article when it comes to abbreviations is that it is not used with acronyms (initials that can be pronounced as a word) but is used with initialisms (where the letters are pronounced individually). There are however exceptions to this, and the formal rules are loose at best. That is why we have made the following choices when it comes to the definitive article.

The following terms/acronyms should be preceded by “the” in the nominative case...

- The United States (or the U.S.)
- The Russian Federation
- The Kingdom of Denmark
- The United Kingdom (or the U.K.)
- The ACS (the Arctic Council Secretariat)
- The IPS (the Indigenous Peoples’ Secretariat)
- The PSI (the Project Support Instrument)

...but the following terms/acronyms should not.

- ACAP, AMAP, CAFF, EPPR, PAME, SDWG
- WWF

## 3.4 CHOICE OF EXPRESSIONS

Much of the work produced by the Arctic Council is scientific, technical, or academic in nature, while the Council’s target audiences are diverse. Council communicators will remain mindful of this, and will make every effort to adapt the language, format, and tone of their products to best communicate in a clear and concise manner with the

audiences they target. A special emphasis will be put on communicating complex ideas and scientific findings in a visual and accessible way.

- “SAO executive/plenary meeting,” not “executive/plenary SAO meeting”.
- We prefer to spell the word “advisor” with “-or” on the end rather than “-er”.
- We call Russia “the Russian Federation” in published documents.
- We always speak of the Kingdom of Denmark to include Greenland and the Faroe Islands
- We call the oaarchive.arctic-council.org the Open Access library, as of April 2018
- etc. should be followed by a comma if it is ending a list, unless it is also ending a sentence. It should not be italicized. It should be avoided where possible in formal prose
- Split infinitives are OK (e.g. “to boldly go”)
- Common Latin phrases such as “inter alia” should not be italicized. Uncommon phrases in foreign languages, however, should be.
- Abbreviate the Arctic Council as “the Council.” Otherwise it should be referred to by its whole name. It should not be abbreviated “the AC” in formal/official documents.
- The term “traditional knowledge and local knowledge” (abbreviated TKLK) has been approved by the Arctic Council, replacing the previous use of “local and traditional knowledge”.

### 3.5 PUNCTUATION B

- Only one space should be used between sentences
- The serial/Oxford comma (a, b, and c) should be used when needed for clarity

### 3.6 NUMBERS AND DATES

Unless there is a compelling reason to do otherwise, we use American notation for numbers: 1,356,478.24.

Write out zero-nine and use numerals for others. Write out any number that begins a sentence. Accordingly, don’t start a sentence with a large number. If starting with a year, consider “The year ###...” – reword it.

Please only use specific dates, such as “in June 2015” or “on 13 October 2014” in writing articles or documents. Do not use relative dates such as “last month”, “two weeks ago”, or “next year”. Using relative dates can confuse readers that stumble upon this material in the future. When we write time, we prefer to use 24-hour time (##:##) rather than “am” or “pm”.

Standard date format: dd monthname yyyy (ex: 13 October 2019)

Numbers only: DD: MM: YYYY or YYYY:MM:DD

Hour format: HH:mm

The guidelines in this chapter are based on the Chicago Manual of Style.

## APPENDIX A – STANDARD LIST OF ACRONYMS

See full list at <https://arctic-council.org/resources/arctic-acronyms>

## APPENDIX B – COLOPHON INFORMATION

Choose all appropriate items from the menu below. If in doubt about a particular item, include it.

Full, correct title of the document

This document exists in ## versions

ISBN ##### - A4, digital (PDF)

ISBN ##### - A4, print

ISBN ##### - U.S. letter size, digital (PDF)

ISBN ##### - U.S. letter size, print

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