

EPPR Working Group Meeting

November 10-11, 2009

Copenhagen, Denmark

Final Report

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This report serves as the final record of the EPPR Working Group meeting held on November 10-11, 2009 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The meeting was attended by all 8 member states as well as two (2) Permanent Participants and one (1) Observer Organization.

Presentations and Discussions

1. Opening of Meeting

Ms. Ann Heinrich, EPPR Chair, welcomed everyone and thanked all for participating in the meeting. She noted that there were many new faces in the room both as participants and heads of delegation. The EPPR Chair also noted that this was the first semiannual EPPR Meeting, implementing the decision taken at the March 2009 Annual Meeting to increase the frequency of meetings in order to offer additional opportunities for collaboration and cooperation. EPPR's Annual Meeting took place in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA, March 2009.

2. Approval of Agenda

The EPPR Chair requested comments on the draft Timed Agenda. None were received.

Conclusion: *The Timed Agenda was approved.*

3. Host Country Welcome and Presentation of Activities

Mr. Claus Smith Rasmussen from the Danish Defence Command welcomed everyone to the meeting, which he hoped would be productive. Mr. Rasmussen introduced participants to the history of the meeting facility, the Kastellet, a historical site which was part of the original defense system of Copenhagen. It is an unusual facility in that although it is still an active military installation; its grounds are open to the public. Mr. Rasmussen reviewed practical information on the facility and the conduct of the meeting.

Mr. Rasmussen gave an overview of the Danish Defence Agreement, which serves as the guiding document for Denmark's protection of Greenland and the Faroe Islands. Denmark expects an increased level of traffic and corresponding activity in the Arctic to result in increased risk of emergencies, especially from the increase in maritime activity around Greenland. As such, Denmark has established 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 Island, or internationally, if requested. Mr. Rasmussen noted that within the Danish Armed Forces the Coast Guard function is contained within the Navy; there is no separate Coast Guard organization. This is important when comparing and understanding operational structures.

Denmark is also currently conducting an analysis of operations in the Arctic to identify any areas for improvement. The Danish government is specifically analyzing the use of unmanned aerial platforms and satellite systems for surveillance. These would be particularly beneficial for northern Greenland, which, as part of a long-standing

agreement, Denmark is obligated to patrol year-round. Currently Denmark uses dog sled teams to fulfill this obligation. Mr. Rasmussen will share applicable results from the operational analysis with EPPR when it is completed.

Mr. Rasmussen then gave a presentation specifically focused on emergencies near Greenland. There are currently only two small patrol vessels (more 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 the Arctic waters. Denmark is currently investigating new equipment but it is costly and the effectiveness is unknown. The United States Coast Guard offered to work with Denmark, through EPPR and the North Atlantic Coast Guard Association, to offer training on comparable cold weather equipment and techniques to help inform Denmark's decision making process on new equipment.

Conclusion: *The EPPR Chair expressed thanks to Denmark hosting the meeting and for the timely information on the applicable agreements and arrangements in place.*

4. Iceland's Prevention, Preparedness, and Response System

Mr. Kristján Geirsson from the Environment Agency of Iceland gave a presentation on Iceland's Prevention, Preparedness, and Response System. Iceland had not participated in an EPPR meeting in several years and as such Mr. Geirsson and the Chair agreed that it was important to provide an update on Iceland's system.

The Environment Agency of Iceland has responsibility for risk analysis, preparedness, and response while the Coast Guard is responsible for monitoring and surveillance.

The risk level in Iceland is increasing. Currently there are three shipping lanes to and from Iceland, all of which terminate at the capital, Reykjavik, on the western shore. Two of these shipping lanes go to Europe and one goes to North America. Despite the limited number of shipping lanes, all three shipping lanes travel through an extremely 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.

The three shipping lanes to and from Iceland are not the only areas of maritime risk. Iceland is also concerned about the risk from two new trans shipping lanes that pass near Iceland, one on the north and west coasts and one on the south and east coasts. These shipping lanes include oil tanker traffic. In 2006, two hundred ships transited these two new routes, containing from thirty-five thousand (35,000) to one-hundred thousand (100,000) tons of crude oil. Although tankers posed a risk, the greater threat is from freighters that carry up to 1.5 tons of fuel bunker oil. Furthermore, 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 contained within 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 his 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 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 its first new Coast Guard vessel since the 1970's and a new Coast Guard aircraft. The vessel will be delivered in 2011 and will be equipped with spill response equipment including 300 meters 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.

Mr. Geirsson thanked the EPPR Chair for the opportunity to update the group on Iceland's activities and expressed his eagerness to re-engage in the EPPR Working Group.

5. Cooperation on Spill Response in the Arctic – Gap Analysis Workshop

Mr. Ole Bjerkemo, the EPPR Vice Chair, led a Gap Analysis Workshop on Cooperation on Spill Response in the Arctic. On October 13, 2008, the Chair of PAME wrote a letter to the Chairs of the Arctic Council Working Groups transmitting a matrix identifying the follow-up activities to be implemented pursuant to the guidance provided by the Arctic Council at the April 2009 Tromsø meeting. The Gap Analysis Workshop originated from discussions which took place at the March 2009 EPPR Meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA to consider the AMSA Report recommendations that fall under EPPR's mandate. At that 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.

The AMSA recommendations specifically referred to EPPR are:

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** (emphasis provided) through circumpolar cooperation and agreement(s), as well as regional bilateral capacity agreements.*

As a background, Mr. Bjerkemo presented some historical information. EPPR conducted a Gap Analysis from 1997 – 2000 that resulted in a Ministerial Declaration at the 2000 Ministerial Meeting in Barrow, Alaska, USA that read:

Note with appreciation the work done Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR) Working Group on finalizing its Analysis of Agreements and Arrangements, endorse EPPR s future activities as outlined in the SAO Report to Ministers, and **further endorse** the main conclusion of the Analysis of Agreements and Arrangements conducted by EPPR, that international conventions and instruments currently in force, adopted or still under preparation appear to cover the present needs for Arctic cooperation in the field of prevention of, preparedness for and response to environmental emergencies on land or sea.

Since that time, however, conditions have changed. Most notably, an Oil and Gas Assessment (OGA) in 2008 concluded that there is a need “to improve coordination or preparedness and response measures,” in the Arctic. Correspondingly, the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA) 2009 Report states:

That the Arctic states decide to continue to develop circumpolar environmental pollution response capabilities that are critical to protecting the unique Arctic ecosystem

and

This can be accomplished, for example, through circumpolar cooperation and agreement(s), as well as regional bilateral capacity agreements.

Some bilateral and multilateral agreements exist, such as the Bonn Agreement for the North Sea, HELCOM for the Baltic Sea, and the Copenhagen Agreement between Nordic States. However, there is not a common understanding of the geographic, functional, and administrative boundaries of each agreement as they relate to each other.

As an example of one such agreement, Mr. Bjerkemo and Mr. Bernt Stedt from Sweden gave a presentation on the Bonn Agreement. The Bonn Agreement is a well-established agreement which recently celebrated its 40th year. The Bonn Agreement continues to grow, with Ireland scheduled to join soon. As a result of Ireland joining, the established northern boundary of the Bonn Agreement will expand. The Bonn Agreement is a mechanism by which contracting parties (1) work together to help each other in combating pollution in the North Sea Area from maritime disasters and chronic pollution

from ships and offshore installations, and (2) carry out surveillance as an aid to detecting and combating pollution at sea. The Bonn Agreement members have developed a 33-chapter Counter Pollution Manual that contains national points of contact, national organizations, and a command structure and operating guidelines for activities such as emergency towing, places of refuge, and aerial surveillance. It also covers specific operational details such as identifying a lead country, transfer of operational and tactical command, sending liaison officers, communication, and reimbursement.

As further examples of agreements and arrangements, Ms. Nora McCleary provided an overview of Canadian Joint Contingency Plans including similarities and differences. These include (1) a Canada/U.S. joint contingency plan on contiguous waters on all coasts and the St. Lawrence River/Great Lakes, (2) a Canada/Denmark joint contingency plan for the waters between Canada and Greenland, (3) a Canada/Russia memorandum of understanding for the ice-covered waters between Russia and Canada, and (4) a Canada/France agreement on waters surrounding islands of St.-Pierre-et-Miquelon. The arrangements have some similarities in terms of notification process, but differ greatly on the legal structure, operational command and control, and funding/reimbursement.

The U.S. and Denmark identified potential operational gaps in response to spills in the Arctic. Denmark would like to focus on reducing risks and enhancing preparedness as a strategy for managing risks. Canada will be reviewing its response regime to include the north. Canada sees this as an opportunity to educate on oil spill response in the north and to increase industry participation in the development of response capabilities in the north. Like all Arctic nations, Canada's offshore oil spill response capacity is limited by geography and the weather. To address this challenge, the Canadian Coast Guard is working on a strategy to place caches of equipment in select northern villages and train local communities to be first responders. Canada also noted that it is finishing up negotiations on one of its existing agreements which had expired.

The group acknowledged that there were challenges associated with the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation (OPRC 90).

Participants discussed the possibilities of developing a model bilateral or multilateral agreement or MOU that could be used as a standard format. In addition, it was noted that although the risks in the Arctic have changed, it is not known whether existing agreements cover the entire Arctic.

Much discussion centered on what form EPPR's response to the AMSA recommendations should take. At the end of the discussion, participants recognized the importance of distinguishing between gaps in operational spill response capacity and potential gaps in the coverage of agreements or other arrangements that cover bilateral or multilateral response to oil spills.

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, perhaps with help from the IMO's eastern command;

b) Establishing joint information centers;

c) Revisiting previous gap analysis to see if existing agreements still provide sufficient coverage. Group seemed to think that existing arrangements may be adequate, but that implementation of the agreements need improvement and that more work is needed on exercising contingency plans;

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

In order to keep the meeting schedule Mr. Bjerkemo suggested that a small group convene before the next day's meeting to come up with a proposal for implementing the recommendations.

Conclusion: *The group decided to establish a correspondence group, led by Norway, with one representative from each country. The group will 1) consider the 2000 Gap Analysis and the need to update it, 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.*

6. Arctic Council and EPPR Working Group Activities and Updates

The EPPR Chair noted that the next series of presentations would cover updates on Arctic Council and EPPR activities. The EPPR Chair also noted that the EPPR Secretariat will be updating the EPPR Brochure and Pamphlet originally produced for the Tromsø Ministerial Meeting in time for the COP 15 Meeting in Copenhagen in December 2009.

6.1 Arctic Council and COP 15 Update

Mr. Jesper Hansen from the Arctic Council Secretariat gave an update on Arctic Council participation in the COP 15 meeting. The Arctic Council will have a booth at the COP 15 Exhibit at the North Atlantic Pier from 12-18 December 2009. Arctic Council Secretariat personnel will staff the booth. Working Groups are welcome to send materials to be distributed to the public and school children who will attend the exhibit. EPPR will update existing brochures and posters outlining its activities to be distributed at the event.

6.2 Brief Report on the March 2009 EPPR Meeting, April 2009 Ministerial Meeting, and Upcoming SAO Meeting

The EPPR Chair provided a brief report on recent activities. The March 2009 EPPR

Working Group meeting report has been finalized and is available on the EPPR website. Information from the report has been included in the EPPR Report to the SAOs. The meeting led to a number of new proposals for radiological emergency response training that will be presented later during this meeting.

The 2009 Ministerial Meeting was held in Tromsø, Norway. The meeting was preceded by a Melting Ice Forum led by former U.S. Vice President Al Gore. The final report from the Ministerial Meeting will be distributed at the SAO Meeting 12-13 November 2009. The final reports are available on the Arctic Council website. Denmark's emphasis as the SAO Chair will be information sharing during emergencies. EPPR should be ready to lead to this effort.

EPPR is not on the agenda for the 12-13 November 2009 SAO meeting. The EPPR Chair and Secretariat will attend to answer any questions from the SAOs.

There is a new Vice-Ministerial meeting scheduled for the off-years in between Ministerial meetings, meaning that there is now a Ministerial or Vice-Ministerial meeting every year. This will provide additional opportunities for EPPR to showcase its work and also to receive direction and tasks. The first Vice-Ministerial meeting is scheduled for late May 2010. In addition to the first Deputy Minister's Meeting, the first biennial Information Symposium is planned to take place in Copenhagen in late May 2010, back to back with the Deputy Minister's Meeting. The SAOs are considering ideas for the meeting, to include having an "open" meeting with a broader range of speakers and topics than allowed at the SAO meetings, in order to improve the flow of information, allow time for discussion and to take pressure off the SAO Meetings. However, the mandate for the Information Symposium was not specifically defined, and the organization and goals of the meeting are being developed by the SAOs.

The EPPR Chair and Secretariat are working to receive updated procedural guidance to better define the requirements for distributing, reviewing, and approving EPPR documents. Additional information will be shared with EPPR members when it is received.

6.3 EPPR Strategic Plan

The EPPR Chair thanked Mr. Ole Bjerkemo and Ms. Nora McCleary who served as the principal authors of the updated EPPR Strategic Plan. Mr. Bjerkemo and Ms. McCleary pointed out that the new Strategic Plan is a high-level vision document, which expresses our values. A change from previous strategic plans is that the Work Plan is no longer included in the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan has a new structure, but hopefully most of the content is self-explanatory, is better aligned with recent Ministerial Declarations, and outlines EPPR's objectives.

The Work Plan will be updated for EPPR's Biannual Meeting and for the Annual Meeting as needed. The Chair also noted that EPPR's Rules of Procedure will need to be updated in order to reflect the separation of the Work Plan from the Strategic Plan.

Conclusion: *The group discussed the new document and approved it, pending the completion of specific changes listed in the Record of Decisions. The Strategic Plan will be circulated to Arctic Council Permanent Participants and Observers for comment and then submitted to the SAOs for approval at their April 2010 meeting.*

6.4 EPPR Website Update

The EPPR Secretariat provided a proposed update to the EPPR website. The EPPR website (<http://eppr.arctic-council.org>) is one of the main forums for Arctic Council and EPPR members, permanent participants, observer states, observer organizations, and others to gather information about EPPR. It is frequently the first area that individuals interested in EPPR will review to learn about EPPR. Because of these points, it is important to keep the website updated.

The goal of the proposed changes is to highlight EPPR's ongoing projects and current activities on the front page of the EPPR website. The current center section outlining the background of EPPR would be changed to highlight recent and upcoming events in a new "News" section. These events could be listed in chronological order with the newest events at the top of the page. More complex events would have new pages created with additional, in-depth information, documents, photos, etc.

The changes would not affect the use of other areas of the EPPR website. Meeting reports, Reports to SAOs, and the Strategic Plan would still be posted to their respective areas on the website, and the Password Area would still be used for internal documents, draft documents, and project work.

The EPPR Chair and Secretariat are also investigating the feasibility of further updating the structure of the website to meet new web design standards for accessibility, search optimization, and web site performance. The EPPR Chair and Secretariat will report the results at the next EPPR meeting.

Conclusion: *EPPR approved changing the front page of the website to include news and current activities updates. The EPPR Secretariat and Sweden will update the website.*

6.5 EPPR Project Framework Overview

The EPPR Secretariat provided a draft Project Framework for EPPR use. EPPR does not currently employ a common framework for proposing, tracking, or recording projects. Each individual project is developed and reported in a unique format. Establishing a standardized project proposal and update format would take the guesswork out of the process for EPPR members and ensure that proposals and updates contain the necessary information to help guide the project review and approval process. In addition, the proposed framework would serve as an historical record of the project after the work is completed. The proposed project framework was 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. The project framework could be added to the EPPR website and its use encouraged for all future proposals and projects.

Proposing New Projects

To ensure full and readily available project information, the following format was suggested 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.

Tracking Projects

To provide the most current information on projects for the required reports to meetings of Senior Arctic Officials, Ministerial and Vice Ministerial, Heads of Work Groups and EPPR meetings, the EPPR Secretariat would send out an e-mail containing the last project update to the project Points of Contact prior to the meeting. Project Points of Contact would revise the information and return the project updates. The update format would include:

1. Project Title
2. Project Overview
3. Point of Contact
4. Project Updates: Any update on meetings, events, reports, publications, etc. related to the project.
5. Project Risks: Important conditions and risk elements. Description of how the risks are managed and the impact to the project if risks are not controlled.
6. Expected Duration

The Project Point of Contact would revise information under Project Updates section,

provide any relevant information under Project Risks, and revise the Expected Duration, if necessary.

Project Completion

Upon completion of a project, the project framework should be revised to capture final costs, identify all participants, and describe implementation of the project such as distribution of manuals or conduct of training sessions. In addition, the Secretariat should prepare a summary of the project for posting on the EPPR web site. This summary should communicate succinctly to readers the purpose and results of the project.

Conclusion: *EPPR approved the proposed Project Framework as an accepted EPPR Business Practice. The EPPR Secretariat will upload the Project Framework to the EPPR Website and all EPPR members are encouraged to use this format for all future project proposals and updates.*

8. Project BoHASA Update and Discussion of Draft Text on HNS

Mr. Alun Lewis presented an update on the Behavior of HNS spilled in Arctic Waters, part of the BoHASA Project. The HNS portion of the project has been drafted and will be finalized in 2010. The next phase, covering oil, will commence in 2010. The entire project will be completed in time to be submitted to the 2011 Ministerial Meeting.

The objective of the BoHASA Project is to gather and synthesize current knowledge and expertise on the behaviour 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 BoHASA report identifies HNS as any substance other than oil which if introduced into the marine environment is likely:

- to create hazards to human health;
- to harm living resources and marine life;
- to damage amenities, or
- to interfere with other legitimate uses of the sea.

The BoHASA Project will analyze how HNS properties (e.g., physical state; density; solubility; vapour pressure) will behave when exposed to temperatures prevalent in the Arctic and the impact the changes will have on the response to spill involving HNS. This will include consideration of whether attempts to salvage materials that remain aboard ship are feasible.

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. The latter is particularly problematic 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.

Since BoHASA is a joint project with industry, the Project Plan includes a workshop with industry. The Report is due to be delivered to the 2011 Ministerial.

Conclusion: *EPPR members are asked to send comments on the current draft, which covers HNS, to Ole Bjerkemo, EPPR Vice Chair, by December 11, 2009 for inclusion in the next draft.*

9. Proposals for New Activities and Projects

The following section contains information on proposals for new activities and projects.

9.1 Report on the Results of the PAME Working Group Meeting and Discussion of AMSA Recommendations

At the March 2009 EPPR Meeting, EPPR agreed that there are benefits to EPPR, PAME, and the Arctic Council if EPPR is better informed of PAME projects and continues to partner with PAME on relevant activities. To improve EPPR's alignment with PAME, EPPR decided to send a representative to all future PAME meetings. Mr. Ole Bjerkemo, EPPR Vice Chair, attended the most recent PAME WG Meeting and provided a report to EPPR. Most of the PAME activities relevant to EPPR come from the AMSA Recommendation. Specifically, Recommendation II.F. (Oil Spill Prevention) and III.C (Circumpolar Environmental Response Capability) are within EPPR's existing mandate. The group discussed a path forward for the AMSA recommendations, the conclusions of which are included below.

The AMSA recommendations specifically referred to EPPR are:

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 (emphasis provided) through circumpolar cooperation and agreement(s), as well as regional bilateral capacity agreements.

Conclusion: *Norway will coordinate comments on and develop a document to further analyze the AMSA recommendations for the next EPPR meeting. Comments for the document are due to Mr. Ole Bjerkemo by February 15, 2010.*

9.2 Discussion Paper on Natural Disasters

Natural disasters were added to the EPPR mandate in 2004 but to date there has only been one project, led by Finland, within this area. Mr. Ole Bjerkemo, EPPR Vice Chair, presented a document produced by Norway that identifies possible areas for EPPR work relating to natural disasters. Mr. Igor Veselov from Russia pointed out the importance of

predicting natural disasters in order to prevent the worst impacts. As an example, one of the biggest dangers in northern Russia is the spring river floods following the ice melt. By predicting when the peak floods will occur, and the areas where the flood impact is likely to be the greatest, Russia has been able to reduce the impact on the population.

Conclusion: *No new project proposals were identified. Russia, Finland, and Norway agreed to participate in projects on natural disasters, if identified. The U.S. will investigate national activities to see if there is work of relevance underway.*

9.3 Automated Questionnaire for Assessing Spill Response Preparedness

Mr. Mark Meza from the United States Coast Guard presented follow-up information from the 2008 meeting in Luleå, Sweden at which he provided a briefing on a U.S.-based automated questionnaire for assessing spill response preparedness. Mr. Meza proposed expanding this database to include metrics and questions based on international standards or standards from other governments to make this a tool that is available for use by the international community.

Conclusion: *The U.S. will mail out to all EPPR members by December 4, 2009 the existing Automated Questionnaire for information. Once available, the U.S. will send out a document containing the rationale for each question that is included in the existing database. There is no timeframe for sending out this document. When all the documentation is available, EPPR will then determine if there is usefulness in expanding this product for international use.*

9.4 Discussion Paper: Concepts for Arctic Spill Response

Mr. Mark Meza from the United States Coast Guard presented a series of five concepts for discussion, titled:

- Study of Oil Spill Risk for the Prepositioning of Oil Response Resources
- Operational Manual for In Situ Burning in Oil Spill Response
- Operational Manual for Oil Disposal
- Cold Water Dispersant Applications
- Response Equipment Requirements – Vessels and Terrestrial Vehicles

Mr. Meza stressed that the USCG has an interest in these proposals and would be willing to support them if another country wished to lead. The USCG is unable, at this time, to lead or fund these proposals.

Conclusion: *EPPR agreed that Project BoHASA will have implications for in-situ burning and dispersants, and as such, EPPR will revisit these concepts during the BoHASA Project as relevant. EPPR also noted the value of keeping up-to-date on industry projects related to these topics.*

9.5 Radiological Emergency Response Training

Ms. Maria Holleran Rivera from the United States presented two proposals for

radiological emergency response training. The first, International Medical Management of Radiation Emergencies, is a course intended for medical professionals who may encounter radiation-related injuries. The training addresses methods to minimize the spread of radioactive contamination when treating and transporting patients and procedures to address injuries to personnel who are contaminated. This course can be adapted to local training needs and can be delivered in partnership with other national experts in order to present a regional approach. Topics include basic health physics/radiation protection, early radiation dose assessment, treatment for acute local/whole-body irradiation and internal contamination, facility preparedness, decontamination techniques, and adapting emergency care protocols to manage radiological injuries.

The second course, the International Radiological Assistance Program Training for Emergency Response (I-RAPTER), is a classroom and field-based course covering radiological search, detection, and identification techniques. The emphasis is on sharing lessons learned and best practices in a realistic setting. Specific topics can be customized to meet local conditions. The curriculum includes: basic radiation concepts; health physics and biological effects of radiation; radiation detection theory; personnel protective equipment; mission planning concepts; radionuclide search and identification; emergency response examples and lessons learned; practical field exercises using radioactive materials; and application of host country response equipment and procedures in field exercises. If all topics are covered, both courses typically last four and a half days.

Conclusion: *EPPR agreed that the proposed courses would contribute to prevention and preparedness in the Arctic. EPPR members present at the meeting requested additional time to discuss the proposals with the relevant national organizations.*

10. Reports and Updates on Ongoing Activities and Projects

Country leads presented informational updates and reports on ongoing EPPR activities and projects, as listed below.

10.1 Report on the NATO SPS Syktyvkar Workshop

The International Advanced Research Workshop "Oil Spill - Risk Management and Decision Support System" was held in Syktyvkar, Komi Republic, September 24-25, 2009. Conducted under the Science Committee for Peace and Security of the NATO-Russia Council, the workshop focused on potential cooperation in protection of the Arctic against natural and man-made disasters. Presentations included information on legal frameworks, descriptions of prevention activities in the Arctic; scientific studies of dispersants and sorbents; and experiences with remediation and restoration. The conference was attended by 129 people.

10.2 Arctic Rescue: Report on the Anadyr Conference

Mr. Igor Veselov from Russia presented an overview of the "International Conference on the Prevention and Elimination of Emergency Situations in the Arctic," hosted by Russia as part of Russia's Arctic Rescue project for EPPR. The purpose of the conference was

to increase domestic and international awareness of emergency response issues in the Arctic and to unite efforts to increase prevention, response, and recovery capabilities. The conference was conducted August 19-20, 2009 in Anadyr, Russia and was attended by 68 people from 5 countries and one International Organization. The Anadyr Conference afforded participants an opportunity to discuss issues related to emergencies in the Arctic. These issues are of great importance because the likelihood that the number of emergencies in the Arctic will increase as a result of anticipated changes in the Arctic's climate, which in turn is expected to accelerate development of Arctic resources. The Arctic's harsh environment makes emergency situations in the area more complex. Thus, whether emanating from natural or man-made causes, increased response efforts will be required.

Recurring themes 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.

There were three plenary sessions:

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

Seventeen recommendations were developed by the participants. The recommendations are available in the Joint Report on the EPPR Website. Russia is forwarding the recommendations to the appropriate Russian Ministers for consideration of further action.

Conclusion: *EPPR members are requested to comment on the draft Joint Report by December 11, 2009. Comments should be submitted to Igor Veselov and the EPPR Secretariat.*

10.3 Update on Nordic Mapping Agency's Arctic Spatial Data Infrastructure Activities

Norway presented a document on the Arctic SDI as a follow-up to the discussions at the March 2009 EPPR Meeting. Seven SAOs offered their support to create an Arctic SDI. Russia is reviewing the information and considering the project. EPPR noted the presentation and will continue to track the progress of this external project.

10.4 Beaufort and Chukchi Update

Mr. Walter Parker from the United States gave an update on oil and gas operations in

the United States sectors of the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas. Offshore oil and gas development in the U.S. Arctic has been challenged over the past two years by court rulings and the rejection of planned actions in the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas by some indigenous communities. Spill response in broken ice has not been the major factor, but the subject has received a good deal of attention from local residents throughout the Arctic Slope. Shell announced that it plans to drill two wells in the Beaufort in 2010 and is in the process of securing air pollution permits from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. EPA has announced they will make a decision on the permits by the end of 2009. Some environmental groups have challenged the air pollution permits as being contrary to efforts to reduce air pollution and to slow climate change.

The fisheries are a new entrant to this complicated legal and geologic picture as they begin to address climate change. The North Pacific Fisheries Management Council recently recommended that no commercial fisheries be permitted in federal waters in the Arctic until a major scientific effort ascertains the effects of climate change on the fish in those waters. The U.S. Secretary of Commerce approved this proposal on November 3, 2009. Fishing in state waters (3 miles offshore) and subsistence fishing will not be affected by this ruling.

Mr. Parker also reported on the Arctic Marine Oil Pollution (AMOP) Technical Seminar in Vancouver, B.C., Canada on June 9 – 11, 2009. Conference topics included dispersant use, solidifiers, in situ burning, and recovering oil in ice and snow. Particularly useful highlights of the conference were described.

- Dispersants: highlights included presentation of a valuable review of dispersant literature; information from Exxon on experiments using gels in dispersants; conclusions from a scientific study indicating that toxicity in dispersed oil may be less than that in undispersed oils with the caveat that major tests to demonstrate this in warm and cold water environments are lacking.
- Solidifiers: the session noted that the last test of solidifiers on ice was conducted in 1978 in the Mackenzie Delta of Canada; that solidifiers require from 15 – 50% of the volume of spilled oil to work properly, thus a “large spill would require a tanker full of solidifiers;” and that successful use of solidifiers for small spills have been demonstrated by the U.S. Navy.
- Recovering oil in Ice and Snow: outcomes of the session included statements that there is too much reliance on models developed as far back as 1972, and much work is needed to produce accurate models.

Mr. Parker summarized his conclusions that major research must continue on oil spill recovery in ice.

10.5 Risk Map of the North Atlantic

Mr. Kristján Geirsson of Iceland presented a proposal for a North Atlantic Sensitivity and Response Map. The goal of the project is to collect existing data, not create data, and form a web-based information system that covers:

- Nature – sensitive and important areas, nature reserves, wildlife, biology, weather etc.

- Risk factors – possible pollutants, marine traffic, offshore activities, shipwrecks, drainage etc.
- Response – location of response equipment and rescue teams, areas of responsibility, places of refuge.

Conclusion: EPPR noted the presentation. Canada stated that they have response maps and will investigate the possibility of adding their data.

10.6 Report on Exercise Barents Rescue 2009

The Russian Federation hosted Exercise BARENTS RESCUE 2009 in the Murmansk region of Russia from September 8-10, 2009. The objectives of BARENTS RESCUE 2009 were to:

1. Assess the functional use of existing cooperative agreements;
2. Improve information exchange; and
3. Develop practical experiences about coordinating rescue services in the Barents region.

The exercise was conducted in five stages:

Stage 1 “Actions of functional and territorial departments of Murmansk EMERCOM in case of radioactive emission due to destruction of a waste container”

Stage 2 “Joint actions of functional and territorial departments of Murmansk EMERCOM and Rescue Services of Kingdom of Norway in case of emergency at sea”

Stage 3 “Joint actions of authorities and departments of Murmansk EMERCOM and rescue services of the neighboring countries in case of a large traffic accident with the threat of radioactive contamination”

Stage 4 “Joint actions of authorities and departments of Murmansk EMERCOM, rescue services of Republic of Finland and Kingdom of Sweden in case of a large forest fire in the bordering area”

Stage 5 “Joint actions of authorities and departments of Murmansk EMERCOM, rescue services of the neighboring countries in case of the fire onboard and oil spill in the sea”

Stage 1 was conducted as an Alert Exercise, while Stages 2-5 were conducted as a Full-Scale Exercise.

An After-Action Report (AAR) with lessons learned is being developed. The next exercise to be conducted under this agreement will be BARENTS RESCUE 2011 to be held in Sweden.

10.7 Updates on Radiological Projects

Ms. Maria Holleran Rivera of the United States presented an update on three radiological projects that the United States and Russia are leading.

The first project, the Source Control Project, Phase IV: Risk Assessment during Transportation of Hazardous Materials focuses upon hazards associated with transportation activities at the NIIAR facility in Dimitrovgrad, Russia. Previous Phases (I – III) from 2000 to 2009, developed and tested a robust risk assessment methodology, focusing upon facility hazards. This current phase is especially challenging because the activity is not facility based.

The next steps are to complete data acquisition for most significant scenarios selected, complete the risk assessment, and develop recommendations.

The second project, “Arctic 2010,” is a full-scale emergency response exercise currently being planned. The exercise will be conducted the week of 26 July 2010, in Snezhnogorsk, Murmansk Region. The objective of the exercise is to plan and conduct an exercise on assessing consequences and responding to a radiation emergency at the Nerpa Shipyard. EPPR members will be invited to observe the exercise.

The third and final project update was on the Modernization of Emergency Response Team Equipment at Zvezdochka. A lesson learned from Exercise “Arctic 2008,” in Zvezdochka, was that equipment in use by the emergency rescue teams was no longer reliable or serviceable. Replacing the equipment is a priority for improving the capabilities of rescue teams to respond to potential radiation emergencies. The objective of the project is to upgrade the radiation survey and personal monitoring equipment so as to increase preparedness and response efficiency. Radiation emergency rescue teams operating in land and marine vehicles, as well as on foot will receive the equipment. Equipment manufactured during the 1950’s and 1960’s has been selected for upgrade, including DP-5A radiation monitors and DP-22 dosimeters. Additional equipment will include personal protection equipment.

11. Record of Decisions

A draft Record of Decisions was distributed by the EPPR Secretariat and reviewed by the group. The attendees approved the Record of Decisions. It is included as Annex 2 of this report.

12. Scheduling of the Next Meeting and Closing of the Meeting

The EPPR Chair thanked everyone for their time and contributions to a successful meeting. The EPPR Chair emphasized the need to keep information flowing in between meetings, not just in the immediate lead-up to a scheduled meeting. The next EPPR Meeting will be held June 16-18 in Vorkuta, Russia. In addition, there are a number of other upcoming events relevant to EPPR:

- 1 March 2010: Heads of Working Groups Meeting (Copenhagen, Denmark)
- 28-29 April 2010: SAO Meeting (Ilulissat, Greenland)
- Late May 2010: Vice-Ministerial Meeting and Information Symposium
- 16-18 June 2010: EPPR Meeting (Vorkuta, Russia)
- Week of 26 July 2010: EPPR Exercise at the Nerpa Shipyard (Murmansk, Russia)

EPPR Working Group Meeting

Copenhagen, Denmark – November 10-11, 2009

- October 2010: EPPR Meeting (Tentative)
- 1-5 November 2010: SAO Meeting
- 4-8 April 2011: Ministerial Meeting (Greenland)

Annex 1: Timed Agenda

Meeting Location:

Hjemmeværnskommandoen
(Danish Home Guard Command)
Kastellet 82
Generalstok, 2100
København Ø

Agenda

DAY ONE – 10 November 2009

9:00 – 9:20 a.m.

1. Opening of Meeting (Ann Heinrich, EPPR Chair)
2. Approval of Agenda (EPPR Chair)

9:20 – 9:45 a.m.

3. Host Country Welcome and Presentation of Activities (Claus Rasmussen, Denmark)

9:45 – 10:15 a.m.

4. Iceland's prevention preparedness and response system (Kristján Geirsson, Iceland)

10:30 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

5. Cooperation on Oil Spill Response in the Arctic - Gap Analysis Workshop

Workshop Lead: Ole Bjerkemo, EPPR Vice Chair

10:30 – 11:00 a.m.

- 5.1 Discussion document presentation (Ole Bjerkemo, EPPR Vice Chair)
 - Review of the work done by EPPR in 1998 – 2000
 - AMAP and PAME initiatives on the need for an agreement/MoU related to oil spill and HNS response
 - Future options

11:00 – 11:30 a.m.

- 5.2 Bonn Agreement presentation (Bernt Stedt, Sweden; or Ole Bjerkemo, EPPR Vice Chair)

11:30 – 12:00 p.m.

- 5.3 Joint Plans: Canada, U.S., France, Denmark (Nora McCleary, Canada)

1:00 – 2:00 p.m.

5.4 National Reports: Oil spill and HNS preparedness in the Arctic Bilateral and multilateral Agreements (10 minutes per country)

2:00 – 2:30 p.m.

5.5 National Reports (continued): Oil spill and HNS preparedness in the Arctic Bilateral and multilateral Agreements (10 minutes per country)

2:45 – 3:45 p.m.

5.6 Round Table Discussion: EPPR's role; how can EPPR contribute solutions? (Ole Bjerkemo, EPPR Vice Chair)

Conclusion of Workshop

3:45 – 5:50 p.m.

6. Arctic Council and EPPR Working Group Activities and Updates

3:45 – 4:00 p.m.

6.1 Arctic Council and COP 15 Update (Jesper Hansen, Arctic Council Secretariat)

4:00 – 4:15 p.m.

6.2 Brief report on March 2009 EPPR meeting, April 2009 Ministerial meeting, and upcoming SAO meeting (Ann Heinrich, EPPR Chair)

4:15 – 5:25 p.m.

6.3 EPPR Strategic Plan (Ann Heinrich, EPPR Chair)
- Review, Discussion, and Path forward

5:25 – 5:40 p.m.

6.4. EPPR Website Update (Mark Breitingner, EPPR Secretariat)

5:40 – 5:50 p.m.

6.5. EPPR Project Framework Overview (Mark Breitingner, EPPR Secretariat)

5:50 – 6:00 p.m.

Day one wrap up and adjournment of meeting (EPPR Chair)

DAY TWO – 11 November 2009

9:00 – 9:15 a.m.

7. Opening of Meeting (EPPR Chair)

9:15 – 9:40 a.m.

8. Project BoHASA Update and discussion on draft text on HNS (Alun Lewis, Norway)

9:40 a.m. – 1:20 p.m.

9. Proposals for New Activities and Projects

9:40 – 10:15 a.m.

9.1 Report on the Results of the PAME Working Group Meeting and Discussion of AMSA Recommendations (Ole Bjerkemo, EPPR Vice Chair)

10:30 – 11:00 a.m.

9.2 Discussion paper on Natural Disasters (Ole Bjerkemo, EPPR Vice Chair)

11:00 – 11:30 a.m.

9.3 Automated Questionnaire for Assessing Spill Response Preparedness (Mark Meza, U.S.)

11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

9.4 Discussion Paper: Concepts for Arctic Spill Response (Mark Meza, U.S.)

1:00 – 1:20 p.m.

9.5 Radiological Emergency Response Training (Maria Holleran Rivera, U.S.)

Conclusion of New Activities and Projects

1:20 -4:00 p.m.

10. Reports and Updates on Ongoing Activities and Projects

1:20 – 1:30 p.m.

10.1 Report on the NATO SPS Syktyvkar Workshop (Ole Bjerkemo, EPPR Vice Chair)
- Comments from participants

1:30 – 2:00 p.m.

10.2 Arctic Rescue: report on the Anadyr Conference (Igor Veselov, Russia)

- Comments from International Participants – Canada, Finland, Sweden, U.S.

2:00 – 2:15 p.m.

10.3 Update on Nordic Mapping Agency's Arctic Spatial Data Infrastructure Activities – (Ole Bjerkemo, Norway)

2:15 – 2:30 p.m.

10.4 Beaufort and Aleutian Update (Walter Parker, U.S.)

2:45 – 3:05 p.m.

10.5 Risk Map of the North Atlantic (Kristján Geirsson, Iceland)

- Presentation of project for consideration of EPPR involvement in the future

3:05 – 3:25 p.m.

10.6 Report on Exercise Barents Rescue 2009 (Igor Veselov, Russia)

3:25 – 4:00 p.m.

10.7 Updates on Radiological Projects (Maria Holleran Rivera, U.S.)

- Source Control
- Exercise "Arctic-10"
- Emergency Rescue Team Equipment

Conclusion of Reports and Updates

4:00 – 4:30 p.m.

11. Record of Decisions (EPPR Chair and Secretariat)

4:30 – 5:00 p.m.

12. Scheduling of the Next Meeting and closing of the Meeting (EPPR Chair)

Annex 2: Record of Decisions

The following Record of Decisions summarizes decisions made during the EPPR Working Group Meeting. The Record of Decisions was drafted at the meeting and approved before the meeting adjourned.

5. Cooperation on Oil Spill Response in the Arctic – Gap Analysis Workshop (includes 5.1 – 5.6)

The group decided to establish a correspondence group, led by Norway, with one representative from each country. The group will 1) consider the 2000 Gap Analysis and the need to update it, 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, and 4) propose a way forward at the next meeting.

The EPPR Secretariat will follow-up with Canada to obtain the public lessons learned from a recent joint Canada – U.S. exercise.

Historical EPPR documents were brought to the meeting and will be in the password area of the EPPR Website.

6.1 Arctic Council and COP 15 Update

The EPPR Secretariat will update the EPPR Pamphlet and Brochure prior to the COP 15 meeting in December.

6.2 Brief Report on March 2009 EPPR meeting, April 2009 Ministerial Meeting, and Upcoming SAO Meeting

EPPR supports the SAO's reinstating on their future agendas a chance for each Working Group to report on their activities and projects.

6.3 EPPR Strategic Plan

EPPR discussed the draft strategic plan and thanked Canada and Norway for their hard work preparing the document. EPPR approved the concept of making the Strategic Plan a high-level document that is separate from the Work Plan. EPPR approved the draft Strategic Plan pending the completion of the following changes:

- Insert into Section 1.2 a sentence that reads, “EPPR is not an operational response organization.”
- Insert the word “prevention” into the last sentence of Section 3.2
- On page 1-4, change the sentence that currently reads “EPPR supports specific activities and products of other Work Groups and this engagement shapes the EPPR agenda,” to now read, “EPPR supports specific activities and products of other Work Groups and this engagement contributes to the development of the EPPR agenda.”
- In the introduction to Section 4, clarify that the Work Plan is a separate document from the Strategic Plan.
- In the introduction to Section 4, change “three” to “four.”

EPPR discussed whether mentioning SOLAS is appropriate and decided to leave it in the Plan.

EPPR approved the path forward proposed by the EPPR Chair. The Strategic Plan will be circulated to Arctic Council Permanent Participants and Observers for comment and then submitted to the SAOs for approval at their April 2010 meeting.

6.4 EPPR Website Update

EPPR approved the changing the front page of the website to include news and current activities updates. The EPPR Secretariat and Sweden will update the website. The EPPR Secretariat will follow-up with Canada to obtain photographs from the surveillance flights and post those to the EPPR Website.

6.5 EPPR Project Framework Overview

EPPR approved the proposed Project Framework as an accepted EPPR Business Practice. The EPPR Secretariat will upload the Project Framework to the EPPR Website and all EPPR members are encouraged to use this format for all future project proposals and updates.

8. Project BoHASA Update

The BoHASA project will be finalized in 2010 and presented to the 2011 Ministerial Meeting. EPPR members are asked to send comments on the current draft, which covers HNS, to Ole Bjerkemo, EPPR Vice Chair, by December 11, 2009 for inclusion in the next draft.

9.1 Report on the Results of the PAME Working Group Meeting and Discussion of AMSA Recommendations

Ole Bjerkemo attended the 2009 PAME Working Group meeting and gave a report to EPPR. EPPR will further consider the AMSA recommendations. Norway will coordinate comments on and develop a document to further analyze the AMSA recommendations for the next EPPR meeting. Comments for the document are due to Ole Bjerkemo by February 15, 2010.

9.2 Discussion Paper on Natural Disasters

Norway presented an overview of their discussion document on EPPR work for natural disasters. No proposals relating to natural disasters were brought to the table. Russia, Finland, and Norway agreed to participate in projects on natural disasters, if identified. The U.S. will investigate national activities to see if there is work of interest underway.

9.3 Automated Questionnaire for Assessing Spill Response Preparedness

The U.S. will mail out to all EPPR members by December 4, 2009 the existing Automated Questionnaire for information. The U.S. will send out a document containing the rationale for each question that is included in the existing database. There is no timeframe for sending out this document. Once received, EPPR will then determine if there is usefulness in expanding this product for international use.

9.4 Discussion Paper: Concepts for Arctic Spill Response

The U.S. presented five concepts for Arctic Spill Response. EPPR agreed that Project BoHASA will have implications for in-situ burning and dispersants, and as such, EPPR will revisit these concepts during the BoHASA Project as relevant. EPPR also noted the value of keeping up-to-date on industry projects related to these topics.

9.5 Radiological Emergency Response Training

EPPR agreed that the proposed courses would contribute to prevention and preparedness in the Arctic. EPPR members present at the meeting requested additional time to discuss the proposals with the relevant national organizations.

10.2 Arctic Rescue: Report on the Anadyr Conference

EPPR members are requested to comment on the draft joint report by December 11, 2009. Comments should be submitted to Igor Veselov and the EPPR Secretariat.

10.7 Updates on Radiological Projects

The Nerpa 2010 exercise will be conducted the week of July 26, 2010. A cut-off date for submitting names will be established and disseminated.

Annex 3: List of Meeting Participants

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