

EPPR Working Group  
Meeting  
**Final report**

Tromsø, Norway  
November 8, 2013

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The EPPR Chair, Ole Kristian Bjerkemo called the meeting to order.

## **1 Welcome by Norwegian Host**

The EPPR semiannual meeting was hosted by Norway in Tromsø, on November 8, 2013. The meeting was held in conjunction with the Circumpolar Marine Environmental Risk Assessment (CMERA) workshop conducted by EPPR on November 6 and 7 and the Oil in Ice Workshop conducted by the Norwegian Polar Institute in co-operation with EPPR on November 5. Johan Marius Ly, Head of the Norwegian delegation and Director of Department of Emergency Response in the Norwegian Coastal administration welcomed all to the Arctic Capital of Norway.

## **2 EPPR Work Group Convenes**

### **2.1 Introductions**

The 30 participants represented the eight Arctic Council (AC) countries, 3 non-Arctic countries, one observer organization and one Permanent Participant. In addition three members of the Arctic Council permanent secretariat staff attended portions of the meeting.

The EPPR Chair gave a short presentation regarding the SAO meeting in Whitehorse and the meeting between AC working groups held on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> of October. The note from this meeting will be distributed to the Heads of Delegations. One of the issues that were discussed was the review of the project costing tool. It is a challenge for the working groups' secretaries to develop real cost estimates taking into account all of the variables such as labor, in-kind contributions, travel, and contracts. The Arctic states have to be an active body to assess their own project costs. The cross-cutting activities were also discussed and how to cooperate without pushing additional workload upon each other.

In addition, the working group's chairs held a meeting with the SAO chair where the main issues for discussion were the Canadian Chairmanship priorities.

EPPR Chair listed other important activities for the Chairmanship such as attendance to the AC Communications group, presentation of the RP3 report in St. Petersburg, attendance to AACAC conference calls and participating in Oil

in Ice workshop this week.

Conclusions:

EPPR took note of the update and commented with appreciation for the broad scope of activities the Chair covers on behalf of EPPR.

## **2.1 Approval of Agenda**

The EPPR Chair requested some amendments to the Agenda. Singapore asked for the opportunity to present a video from an oil spill incident which occurred in Singapore some years ago. The meeting accepted the proposal.

The approved agenda is Annex 2 to this report.

## **3 Information from the Arctic Council Secretariat (ACS) in Tromsø**

Mr. Magnús Jóhannesson, Director of the Arctic Council Secretariat addressed the role of ACS in administration and organization, their support and facilitate of work of Arctic Council, closely collaborating with the Chairmanship. One of the important tasks for ACS is to strengthen bonds between ACS and the working groups. ACS will take on Secretariat functions for the ACAP and EPPR Working Groups and this week they opened the applicant search for this position and hope to have a person to start in February 2014.

Mr. Jóhannesson also referred to the successful SAO meeting in Whitehorse, which gave good support for the work done by EPPR. Special compliment given to the process designed for routing updating of operational guidelines as being a good example for Arctic Council work.

## **4 Information of the outcome of the SAO meeting in Whitehorse October 2013**

The first SAO meeting under the Canadian Chairmanship took place October

22-23, 2013 in Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada.

The meeting had a broad participation and a very good observer attendance.

The EPPR Chair drew attention to two initiatives in the EPPR report in the SAO meeting. The first was the upcoming workshop in Tromsø to develop a plan for a Circumpolar Marine Environmental Risk Assessment (CMERA). The second was a request from the International Maritime Organization to develop a manual for combating oil pollution under snow-and-ice conditions. Working with IMO demonstrates not only a positive assessment of EPPR's work by an important external organization but also understanding by both organizations of roles and responsibilities and the opportunities where collaboration can be mutually beneficial.

The EPPR Chair also gave an update on the ongoing work to update the operational guidelines for the existing Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution, Preparedness and Response in the Arctic.

SAOs thanked EPPR for the valuable work of keeping the guidelines updated, as they are a critical part of the Agreement on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response. The SAOs approved the routines for updating of the Operational Guidelines proposed by EPPR, noting that projects such as this provide useful material for the Council's public diplomacy.

The SAOs reviewed and approved the EPPR Strategic Plan and its four key objectives.

#### **4.1 Arctic Marine Oil Pollution preparedness and Response Agreement - Operational Guidelines –Procedures for updating the Guidelines**

As stated above the procedure for updating the guidelines was approved by the SAOs.

The Operational Guidelines must be periodically reviewed and updated as needed; so the Guidelines will be a perpetual item on EPPR meeting agendas. The agreement has not entered into force because the ratification process is not completed. The typical cycle for updating a plan is to conduct an exercise first to identify possible text that needs to be updated. Following that procedure, the Guidelines will be updated at the EPPR I 2015 meeting.

Canada will share information on the Exercise as soon as they have specific information.

Conclusions:

There will be an Exercise on the Oil spill Agreement in summer 2014 and Canada is working on the preparations. The initial planning indicates that it will be conducted as a tabletop exercise.

The first full review of the Operating Guidelines will be at the EPPR I meeting in 2015 after the first exercise is conducted. There is a need to have the agreement and the guidelines on the AC Website. EPPR Chairmanship will work together with the AC secretariat to have a password protected area at the website.

#### **4.2 EPPR's involvement in possible Cross-cutting projects from other Arctic Council working groups**

##### **4.2.1 AACA**

AACA is a cross-cutting project on adaption to climate change in the Arctic. AMAP has highlighted the regional approach with focus on three pilot regions; Bering/ Chukchi/Beaufort, Davis Strait/Baffin and the Barents. EPPR urge that representatives from the different countries concerned in the different regions can take part in the regional meetings.

Conclusions:

There will be a regional AACA-C Workshop in Tromsø in December and EPPR Secretariat will try to attend.

#### **4.3 EPPR's Strategic Plan**

EPPR I meeting discussed and approved an updated edition of EPPR's Strategic Plan. The SAOs reviewed and approved the EPPR Strategic Plan in their meeting in Whitehorse. EPPR must ensure that the work of the group reflects the approved strategic plan.

#### **4.4 Task Force on Oil Pollution Prevention (TFOPP)**

The ministers have established a Task Force on Oil Pollution Prevention. The

TF is co-led by Norway and Russia. There will be consultative meetings in Moscow for the co-leads 28.11. January 16-17, 2014 a workshop will be held in Oslo, Norway. Shipping and Oil and Gas will be two approaches for the Task Force.

**Conclusions:**

EPPR is willing to contribute where relevant to the TFOPP.

## **5 Project: IMO Manual Ice and Snow Conditions**

EPPR has decided that development of a “Manual on Oil Spill response in ice and snow conditions” is an EPPR project and SAOs have been informed and are in agreement.

Ms. Josée Lamoureux, Canada presented the draft Table of Contents for the IMO manual and the draft timeline for the project. EPPR discussed the draft and the way forward. There is funding for an external consultant and the tendering process will start as soon as the draft Table of Contents are agreed.

The Table of Contents will be finalized by written procedure. EPPR will, based on the agreed Table of Contents, prepare a document for the IMO OPRC HNS Technical group meeting in the end of January 2014 for information.

**Conclusions:**

States have approximately two weeks for a final review on the Table of Contents for the IMO Manual in Ice and Snow Conditions. Canada will submit the latest updated version to HoDs.

Draft timeline was accepted. The subject of wildlife response is to be kept outside the document. The external consultant will prepare a first draft manual for EPPR review in the EPPR I 2014 meeting.

## **6 Workshop; Circumpolar Marine Environmental Risk Assessment (CMERA)**

### **6.1 Summing up the workshop**

One of the recommendations from the EPPR RP3 summary report delivered to



the Kiruna Ministerial Meeting was to conduct a Circumpolar Marine Environment Risk Assessment (CMERA).

November 6-7 in Tromsø, Norway, EPPR arranged a workshop with aim to examine the possibility of conducting a circumpolar marine environmental risk assessment (CMERA). The CMERA would focus on many factors, including increased Arctic shipping, tourism and hydrocarbon production. The workshop brought together an international group of 50 participants from governments, research organizations, NGOs, and the private sector.

The workshop was facilitated by an external consultant funded by Norway.

EPPR received a lot of useful and constructive input from presentations and breakout sessions.

## **6.2 Next Step**

EPPR will receive the consultant's draft summary including a draft project plan from the CMERA workshop in December 2013. EPPR will, based on the documents from the consultant, among other things consult with other WGs and PPs. In addition will there be a HoD conference call to agree on a preliminary discussion paper for the SAO meeting in March. EPPR will point out to SAOs that there are many views on the appropriate scope and hopefully EPPR will have some guidance from the SAOs. There will be a project proposal and full discussion at the EPPR I meeting in June 2014. The question of funding has to be raised at a later stage when the scope is defined.

Conclusions:

EPPR took note of the update and agreed on the way forward.

## **7 Short update on current projects**

### **7.1 Arctic Guide / Arctic Environmental hazards and National programs**

Ms. Ann Heinrich presented the document. This document is a revision of two original EPPR documents, a risk assessment matrix and an Arctic Guide. The idea is to assemble information on national programs to respond to risks in the Arctic. The document was reviewed at the last EPPR I meeting in June where there was new input. The document has been circulated prior the meeting and

there are still a couple of things to be corrected.

Conclusions:

There were small proposed changes in the Arctic Environmental Hazards and National programs, and some additional information from the states that have to be submitted to US about the country information. The report will be finalized by the end of the year. AC secretariat will assist EPPR to communicate this important report. Additional comments are due in two weeks.

## **7.2 Arctic ERMA (Environmental response Management Application)**

EPPR received an update for the Arctic ERMA project. US will prepare a paper for the EPPR I 2014 meeting where progress and results of the project will be highlighted.

Arctic ERMA is located at:

<https://www.erma.unh.edu/arctic>

## **7.3 Development of Safety Systems in the Implementation of Economic and Infrastructural projects**

Mr. Igor Veselov gave an update on the project. Within the framework of the conference in Naryan-Mar the opening ceremony for the Arctic Complex Search and Rescue Center of the Emercom of Russia was held. It is the first center in the North-West Federal district. The main objectives of the Centers are to accumulate the monitoring results and manage rapid reaction forces in the strategically important spheres, which will make it possible to ensure the implementation of efficient emergency response activities.

A group of conference participants visited the "Prirazlomnaya" Offshore Ice-resistant Oil-Producing Platform, the latest infrastructural project of "Gazprom". The platform is located on the shelf of the Pechora Sea.

There will be a new SAR exercise in the Varanday region 5-7 August 2014. The exercise will include offshore and onshore SAR and oil spill response. Invitations will be sent EPPR as soon as possible.

#### **7.4 Arctic Rescue Project, Naryan – Mar 20-23 August 2013,**

Mr. Igor Veselov gave an update on this project. The aim of this project is to gather all new ideas and capture best practices in the sphere of reduce the consequences of emergencies. He referred to a conference in Naryan-Mar City, Russia in August. There were 95 participants from government officials, oil industry and Russian Academy of Sciences. The conference participants formulated and adopted recommendations which summarize the findings and proposals from the conference.

There will be a written report from the Development of Safety Systems - Project for the next EPPR meeting. The report will be uploaded on EPPR's website.

EPPR will be invited for a new conference held August 19- 21 2014 in Arkhangelsk.

#### **7.5 Occupational safety and health in Arctic oil spill response workers**

There will be an update on this project at the EPPR I 2014 meeting.

#### **7.6 Radiation exercises**

Ms. Ann Heinrich gave an update on these exercises which deals with radiological emergency response in the Arctic.

Exercise Arctic 2014 will be conducted June 23-24 in the Murmansk region, Russia. EPPR members are invited. The scenario is a conventional radiation emergency that occurs on a nuclear icebreaker at the dock in Murmansk. The exercise will include response to a radiological release impacting the region. Specific goals are to (1) check level of preparedness, (2) develop recommendations for enhancing capabilities, (3) verify the effectiveness of detailed procedures, (4) execute recommendations for public protection and communication, (5) examine what regulations and chosen intervention levels does to response time.

The deadline for registration for observers is March 1.

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## **8 Revised Arctic Marine Strategic Plan**

PAME has submitted an early draft of the Arctic Marine Strategic Plan to the different national authorities and asked for input. This was largely a national process. The next draft should have been submitted on the 1 of November but it has not come yet. PAME have asked for input from the Working groups. EPPR agreed that it is important that EPPR as a working group is visible in the Arctic Marine Strategic plan.

### Conclusions:

EPPR agreed that most updates of the Revised Arctic Marine Strategic Plan would be provided via national delegations. The EPPR Chair will be the contact person for the steering group for the project and if there are opportunities for EPPR to contribute as a WG HODs will be notified.

## **9 Administration**

### **9.1 Update of EPPRs Operational Guidelines**

The EPPR Chairmanship has considered the EPPR Operational Guidelines in relation to the updated AC Rules of Procedures and the Observer Handbook. The meeting went through proposed changes line by line. Based on the discussions, a new draft will be circulated for comments. The final draft will be sent to the SAOs for approval.

### Conclusions:

EPPR secretariat will reflect the comments from the meeting and will submit a new draft of the Operational Guidelines for EPPR review in two weeks. A final draft will be submitted for decision taken by written communication.

### **9.2 Report on Implementation of EPPR Work priority Considerations**

EPPR work plan was updated according to ongoing, completed and new

projects. The plan is converted into the template (tracking tool) from ACS. The EPPR part of this tracking tool will be an annex to the work plan. The new work plan is Annex 4 to this report.

### **9.3 Record of Decisions**

EPPR reviewed and agreed on the record of Decisions which follows the report as Annex 3

### **9.4 Scheduling of next Meeting and closing of Meeting**

Next EPPR meeting (EPPR I, 2014) will be in Inuvik, Northwest territory, Canada most likely the week of June 16, 2014.

## 10 Annex 1 List of Meeting Participants

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## 11 Annex 2 Timed agenda

### 0900 Start of meeting

1. Host Country Welcome
2. Information from the Arctic Council Secretariat in Tromsø
3. EPPR Work Group Convenes (EPPR Chair)
  - 3.1. Introductions (EPPR WG Participants)
  - 3.2. Approval of Agenda (EPPR Chair)

### 1100-1130 Coffee Break with fruits

4. Information of the outcome of the SAO meeting in Whitehorse October 20- 2013
  - 4.1. Arctic Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response Agreement – Operational Guidelines – Procedures for updating the Guidelines
  - 4.2. EPPR's involvement in possible Cross-cutting projects from other Arctic Council working groups
    - 4.2.1. AACA project**
  - 4.3. EPPR's Strategic Plan
  - 4.4. Task Force on oil pollution prevention

### 1230-1330 Lunch

5. **Project: IMO Manual in Ice and Snow Conditions Norway/Canada**
6. Workshop Circumpolar Marine Environmental Risk Assessment CMERA
  - 6.1. Summing up the workshop
  - 6.2. Next steps

### 1530- 1600 Coffee Break with some sweets

7. Short Updates on Current Projects
  - 7.1. Arctic Environmental Hazards and National Programs.- *US*
  - 7.2. Arctic ERMA (Environmental response Management Application) - *US*
  - 7.3. Development of Safety Systems in the Implementation of Economic

and Infrastructural projects - Russia

- 7.4. Arctic Rescue Project - Report from conference in Naryan-Mar city  
20-23 August 2013 - Russia
- 7.5. Occupational safety and health in Arctic oil spill response workers –  
US
- 7.6. Radiation exercises

**8. Revised Arctic Marine Strategic Plan**

There will be a revised AMSP after the PAME working group meeting in Rostov-on-Don September 24- 26. It will be circulated for an AC review.

**9. Administration**

- 9.1. **Possible update of EPPRs Operational Guidelines -  
Chairmanship**
- 9.2. Report on Implementation of EPPR Work Plan Priority  
Considerations
- 9.3. Record of Decisions and Follow up Actions (Chair and Secretariat)
- 9.4. Scheduling of the Next Meeting and closing of the Meeting (Chair)

**1700 End of meeting**

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## 12 Annex 3 Record of Decisions

- The agenda was adopted with the addition of an informational video from Singapore.
- There will be an Exercise on the Oil spill Agreement in summer 2014 and Canada is working on the preparations. As planning goes so far, this will be a tabletop exercise.
- The first full review of the Operating Guidelines will be at the EPPR I meeting in 2015 after the first exercise is conducted. There is a need to have the agreement and the guidelines on the AC Website. EPPR Chairmanship will work together with the AC secretariat to have a password protected area at the website.
- There will be an AACCA-C Workshop meeting in Tromsø in December and EPPR Secretariat will try to attend.
- The ministers have established a Task Force on prevention. There will be consultative meetings in Moscow for the co-leads 28.11. January 16-17 there will be a workshop in Oslo. Shipping and Oil and Gas will be two approaches for the Task Force. EPPR is positive to contribute if needed.
- States have approximately two weeks for a final review on the Table of Content for the IMO Manual in Ice and Snow Conditions. Canada will submit the latest updated version to HoDs.
- Draft timeline was accepted. Wildlife response is to be kept outside the document. The external consultant will prepare a first draft manual for EPPR review in the EPPR I 2014 meeting.
- EPPR will receive the consultant's draft summary from the CMERA workshop in December 2013, and then we will consult with other WGs and PPs, have a HoD meeting conference call to agree on a preliminary discussion paper for the SAO meeting in March. We will point out to SAOs that there are many views on the appropriate scope and then hopefully EPPR will have some guidance from the SAOs. There will be a proposal and full discussion in the EPPR I meeting in June 2014.
- There were small proposed changes in the Arctic Environmental

Hazards and National programs, and some additional information from the states that have to be submitted to US about the country information. The report will be finalized by the end of the year. AC secretariat will assist EPPR to communicate this important report. Additional comments are due in two weeks.

- EPPR received an update for the Arctic ERMA project. For the EPPR I 2014 meeting there will be a paper on progress and results in the project.
- There will be a written report from the Development of Safety Systems - project for the next EPPR meeting. EPPR will be invited for a conference 19- 21. 2014 August in Arkhangelsk
- There will be a SAR exercise in the Varanday region 5-7 August 2014, but also there will be oil spill prevention in the exercise both offshore and onshore. There will be invitations sent as soon as possible.
- Exercise Arctic 2014 will be conducted June 23-24 in Murmansk region, Russia. EPPR members are invited. Deadline for registration for observers are March 1.

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- EPPR agreed that most updates of the Revised Arctic Marine Strategic Plan would be provided via national delegations. The EPPR Chair will be the contact person for the steering group for the project and if there are opportunities for EPPR to contribute as a WG HODs will be notified.
- EPPR secretariat will reflect the comments in the meeting and will submit a new draft of the Operational Guidelines for EPPR review in two weeks. A final draft will be submitted for decision taken by written communication.
- Next EPPR meeting (EPPR I, 2014) will be in Inuvik, Northwest territory Canada most likely the week of June 16.

## **13 Annex 4 EPPR Work plan**

See attachment.