

## 2-Page highlights to SAO Chair - EPPR II Working Group Meeting

### December 1-3, 2015 in Reykjavik, Iceland

EPPR held its second meeting of 2016 in Reykjavik, Iceland. 50 participants attended representing all eight AC countries, one Permanent Participant (AIA), two observer states (Singapore and South Korea), two observer organizations (WWF and UArctic), 2 Working Groups (CAFF and PAME), and 2 invited guests from the University of Akureyri.

The meeting focused on follow-up activities from the last EPPR meeting in Svalbard. Project updates and project proposals were discussed. On December 1, two break-out sessions were held, one with the Exercise Design Team (EDT) on the MOSPA exercise planned for mid-2016, and a second on Search and Rescue (SAR). EPPR Heads of Delegation also met in advance of the EPPR working group plenary sessions on December 2-3. The relevant sections of the AmaroK (the AC Tracker) were updated after the meeting.

### Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response (MOSPA)

On December 1, the members of the Exercise Design Team (EDT) met for a half-day session. The EDT, led by the US, agreed to use the scenario submitted by Norway for the MOSPA exercise tentatively scheduled to take place back-to-back with the EPPR I meeting in 2016. All eight Arctic States were represented at the EDT meeting, as well as AIA and WWF. The EDT will continue to hold regular meetings to finalize all aspects of the MOSPA exercise.

At the EPPR meeting, the plan proposed by the EDT was approved. It was decided to post all scenarios put forward as options for the MOSPA 2016 exercise into a “scenario library” on the EPPR MOSPA webpage for future use. The MOSPA Operation Guidelines updates will be submitted to SAOs for approval at the Fairbanks SAO meeting in March 2016.

### EPPR – SAR Mandate: Approach and Way Forward

A (SAR) breakout session was held to discuss how EPPR should continue to incorporate SAR into its work as a follow-up from the EPPR I meeting in Svalbard. This session focused on how EPPR can best follow-up with the SAR Agreement, readouts from recent SAR exercises, and EPPR’s relationship to the recently established Arctic Coast Guard Forum (ACGF). The breakout group reported back to EPPR and the working group agreed the following:

- To create a SAR expert group, under the leadership of Norway. EPPR delegations were asked to nominate representations by January 15, 2016. The SAR expert group will meet back-to-back with EPPR meetings and discuss short, medium and long term actions.
- To review and further discuss the recommendations for EPPR from the Arctic Zephyr exercise held in Anchorage (October 2015).
- That the work of the ACGF is linked to that of EPPR, particularly the need to share information between the two bodies. As the ACGF is a new body, at this point EPPR will observe developments and reassess modalities for cooperation at EPPR I, 2016.

### Follow-up on the Framework Plan on Oil Pollution Prevention (FP-OPP)

At the SAO meeting in Anchorage (October 2016), it was agreed that EPPR has the lead on prevention, in cooperation with PAME. In this regard, EPPR will coordinate follow-up on the FP. Norway, in collaboration with Canada, will develop an implementation matrix to be presented at EPPR I, 2016. EPPR will review the Norwegian report *Overview of measures specifically designed to prevent oil pollution in the Arctic marine environment from offshore petroleum activities* and approve the report intersessionally, before January 20, 2016. Once approved it will be submitted to SAOs for approval at the Fairbanks SAO meeting in March 2016.

### EPPR Strategic Plan

The EPPR Strategic Plan is in the process of being updated and will be submitted to SAOs for approval at the Fairbanks SAO meeting in March 2016.

### Cross-Cutting activities

- EPPR welcomed the participation of the Executive Secretaries of CAFF and PAME, finding it useful in identifying cross-cutting issues where cooperation could be enhanced. EPPR will attend the next meetings of both CAFF and PAME. It was agreed to explore the idea of having a back-to-back EPPR-PAME meeting in the future.

- EPPR discussed the work of the three standing Task Forces (TFSC, TFAMC and TFTIA) and agreed that representation at future meetings would be beneficial as the work of these TFs is relevant to the mandate of EPPR. It is the intention of EPPR to attend the upcoming meeting of the TFAMC in Stockholm and TFTIA in Tromsø.

## New Projects

**Radiation:** EPPR approved ARCSAFE, a project led by Norway. The goal of the project is to promote cross-border prevention, preparedness and handling of maritime incidents or accidents which may involve a potential release of radioactive substances.

**Risk Assessment:** Norway submitted an information paper highlighting the importance of developing risk assessment tools that are adapted for the particular risks factors present in the Arctic in an effort to achieve better calculation of “real risk” in the region. EPPR requested that a project proposal from Norway be submitted for intersessional review and approval.

**Field Guide for Oil Spill Response in Arctic Waters:** EPPR agreed to update the 1998 version of the Field Guide for Oil Spill Response in Arctic Waters, led by the US. Delegations were asked to provide names of experts as soon as possible. Synergies with the *PPR in Small Communities Project* will be explored.

**Natural Disasters:** EPPR welcomed information from the University of the Arctic project *Reducing Impacts of Spring Floods to Northern Communities*. The project lead will work with EPPR members to develop a project proposal for intersessional approval.

## Current projects

**International Standards for Petroleum, Offshore-Oil and Maritime Industries:** The aim of the project is to give a brief introduction to how standards for the offshore and maritime petroleum industry are developed, maintained and followed up. EPPR will review the draft report, circulated November 27, and send comments to Norway by January 15, 2016. This project has linkages to implementation of the FP-OPP.

**Prevention, Preparedness and Response for Small Communities:** A readout from the scoping workshop held in Anchorage (October 2015) was presented. Oil spill response will be the focus of work, with potential deliverables including a self-evaluation matrix for small communities, a video and a handbook for small communities to develop response plans. Additional funding is currently being sought.

**Development of a Database of Arctic Response Assets:** This project, which will create a stand-alone, searchable database of major response assets, is on track. The project workgroup is currently soliciting membership from EPPR delegations, establishing a contract for technical support and researching examples of other equipment databases.

**Impact of Metocean Conditions on Oil Spill Response Viability in the Arctic (Previously named Circumpolar Oil Spill Response GAP Analysis):** At the scoping workshop in Copenhagen (October 2015), participants determined that a response viability analysis would estimate how often different types of response systems could be deployed in different areas of the Arctic. EPPR agreed to next phase of the project, which will be funded by Norway. Input, experts and access to data sets will be provided as requested.

**Safety Systems in the Implementation of Economic and Infrastructural projects:** In September 2015, Emercom of Russia held large-scale exercises on the interaction of various rescue agencies in response to Arctic distress incidents. In 2016-2017, plans include organizing training and exercises on emergency response in the Russian Arctic. Invitations to AC states, PPs, WGs, and Observers will be extended.

**Arctic Rescue:** In August 2015, a conference on the subject of safety provisions of Arctic project implementation was held in Salekhard. The next conference on “Safe Arctic Settlements” will be held in April 2016. AC states, PPs, WGs, and Observers are invited to attend. Project leads from the *PPR for Small Communities* project are welcome to present at the conference.

## Next meeting

The next EPPR meeting will be in late May or early June 2016. A host will be decided in January 2016.