



COMPENDIUM OF CANADA'S ENGAGEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS AND INSTRUMENTS

Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic

SUBJECT CATEGORY:

Marine / Oceans

TYPE OF AGREEMENT / INSTRUMENT:

Multilateral

FORM:

Legally-binding treaty

STATUS:

- Signed by Canada May 15, 2013 (at the Arctic Council Ministerial meeting in Kiruna, Sweden).
- Ratified by Canada February 13, 2014 (in force).
- Ratifications - Although workshops and exercises have been conducted under the "Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic" since 2014, the formal ratification process was completed in late March 2016.

LEAD & PARTNER DEPARTMENTS:

Lead: Canadian Coast Guard

Partners: Global Affairs Canada, Transport Canada, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, National Energy Board and Environment and Climate Change Canada

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Web Links: [Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic](#)

Contacts:

[Canadian Coast Guard Enquiry Centre](#)

COMPENDIUM EDITION:

October 2018

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

The objective of this Agreement is to increase cooperation and coordination among Arctic countries to increase the readiness and response to oil spills in order to protect Arctic marine and coastal environments.

Some commitments under the Convention include providing mutual assistance to other countries as needed, promoting the exchange of important information to improve the success of response operations and carrying out joint efforts on training and exercises in the Arctic environment.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Agreement is to strengthen emergency cooperation and coordination of Arctic oil spill response operations amongst the eight Arctic States (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States).

KEY ELEMENTS

Key elements of the Agreement include commitments to: provide mutual assistance in the event that an oil spill exceeds one nation's capacity to respond; undertake appropriate monitoring activities to identify oil spills in areas within a Party's national jurisdiction; promote cooperation and coordination amongst the Parties by endeavouring to carry out joint exercises and training; promote the exchange of information that could improve the effectiveness of response operations; and, conduct a joint review of activities undertaken during a coordinated response operation.

To assist with implementation of the Agreement, non-legally binding operational guidelines, country-specific competent national authority, and contact information are included as Appendices to the Agreement.

EXPECTED RESULTS

The Agreement aims to increase collective capacity in spill response operations since it is recognized that, at present, an Arctic spill of any significant magnitude may exceed any one Arctic State's ability to address it alone.

CANADA'S INVOLVEMENT

Canada was an active and constructive participant throughout the negotiation process and is pleased with the Agreement. The Agreement corresponds well with Canadian priorities in the Arctic. It continues to make an important contribution to advancing Canada's Northern Strategy, in particular the elements related to promoting social and economic development and protecting our environmental heritage.

Canada is Vice-Chair of Emergency Prevention, Preparedness, and Response Working Group (EPPR) and Co-Chairs the Marine Environmental Response (MER) Experts Group. The group meets at least twice a year to advance shared objectives and to practice collaborative environmental response exercises.

RESULTS / PROGRESS

Activities

In March 2018, the Marine Environmental Response (MER) Experts Group conducted its third tabletop exercise in Oulu Finland. The After Action Report will be used to inform future exercises. The MER is also developing exercise guidance documentation to capture the lessons learned after multiple exercises involving all eight MOSPA nations.