

Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee
Staff Meeting
15:00 – 17:00
9 January 2012

Herbert C Hoover Building
14th and Constitution
Room 6205

1. Introductions – Kelly (5 min)

Brendan Kelly (OSTP)
Simon Stephenson (NSF)
John Farrell (USARC)
Martin Jeffries (ONR)
Shella Biallas (DOI)
Adrianna Muir (DOS)
Nikoosh Carlo (NSF)
Igor Krupnik (SI)
Lindsey Williams (NOAA)
Lauren Marr (SI)
Michael Kuperberg (DOE)
Ashley Chappell (NOAA)
Chris Elfring (PRB)

By Phone:

Kathy Crane (NOAA)
Marya Levintova (NIH)
Alan Parkinson (CDC)
Tom Wagner (NASA)
Chuck Byvik (DOD)
Louis Tupas (USDA)
Doug DeMaster (NOAA)
John Berkson (DHS)
Cheryl Rosa (USARC)

Brendan opened the meeting by stating that he has assumed his new position as Assistant Director, Polar Science at OSTP. Simon noted that he will continue to serve as the NSF representative for IARPC staff meetings, and Brendan will continue to serve as chair of the staff group.

2. Proposed PRB/NAS Study of key scientific questions in the Arctic

Chris Elfring distributed (prior to the meeting) a draft proposal from the National Academy's Polar Research Board to undertake a study on Future Research Plans in the Arctic. (The draft is attached to these meeting notes for further review.) She indicated that this is a discussion draft, and any and all comments from IARPC are welcome. She suggested that the most important part of the proposal is the "Statement of Task" found on pages 2-3. Simon stated that NSF is very supportive of the concept and the draft proposal. He indicated that the study fits in nicely in the five-year plan cycle for IARPC since the study results could inform the next cycle of five year planning. Brendan thinks the study will be helpful in updating the current plan. Since the five-year plan focuses on work in the federal agencies, this study would help identify how the federal plan fits into a much broader and more comprehensive view.

Doug DeMaster noted that—while he agrees that expert panels are helpful and a study would be useful—he is concerned about supporting it in the tight budget environment in which NOAA finds itself. Kathy Crane reiterated Doug's budgetary concerns noting that the Arctic Research program in NOAA faces serious difficulties in FY2013. John Farrell offered the Arctic Commission's strong support of the proposed study, noting that he was hopeful that agencies would be able to come up with the funds to support it. He noted that such a study focusing on research

priorities is timely, even though there are budget constraints. This will help ARC identify goals and priorities which sets the stage for IARPC. He recommended that Chris and the PRB take a close look at the ARPA language to ensure that the study matches up with the intent of ARPA.

Chris noted that the document is open for discussion, including the title and the make-up of the panel of experts. Igor suggested that creating a healthy balance between agency people, scientists, and indigenous peoples is very important; especially making sure that agencies and indigenous people are not under-represented. Chris noted that Federal regulations make it difficult to appoint Federal agency people to NAS studies, but that she will keep that in mind and look for ways to make it work.

Other agency representatives by-and-large voiced support for the study, some noting budgetary concerns, however. Some specific suggestions were offered regarding the title and various aspects on the scope of the study. All of these should be submitted in writing to Chris as soon as possible.

ACTION: Send Chris comments on the NAS/PRB Study draft by Wednesday 18 January. Celfring@nas.edu. She will send a revised version based upon these suggestions by the February staff meeting.

3. Review and comments on the USARC "Arctic Policy"

At the December meeting, John Farrell distributed copies of a draft Arctic Research Policy. He has received a few comments but asked for more. During this meeting, he handed out a document citing various sections of ARPA and the role that the Commission plays along with the roles of various agencies and IARPC. Section 104 states that "The Commission shall develop and recommend an integrated national Arctic research policy." This serves as the legislative mandate for designing the draft Arctic Research Policy on which the Commission is working.

Questions were raised about the process. Should the document be sent to legal counsel? Should it be sent to Principals? What is the timeline? In addition, some specific questions about language within the document were raised regarding the scope of Arctic research and in particular cryospheric research outside the Arctic. In addition, Mike Kuperberg raised the point that the document is not clear on the impacts of the Arctic on global scale issues and that this needs to be clarified. He will offer language to John. These issues need to be resolved. It was also suggested that OSTP should give some thought to this proposed policy.

ACTION: All Staff provide comments to John Farrell as soon as possible on the draft "Arctic Policy", in particular, Martin on cryosphere issues, and Mike on ensuring DOE's research would be covered by the policy. Brendan will assess what the reaction to the Arctic Policy is in OSTP. John will present a revised draft at the February meeting and the Staff Group will prepare to put the Arctic Policy on the agenda of the next Principals' meeting.

4. Review of Interagency Arctic Committees Fact Sheet

At the December meeting, Shella distributed an Interagency Arctic Committees fact sheet which she drafted in response to a Principals' request. She noted that she had received only a few comments.

Several comments were offered during the meeting. It was suggested that the fact sheet point out overlaps between the various committees especially on policy issues. For example, the National Ocean Council and IARPC overlap on ocean policy in the Arctic; the Arctic Interagency Policy Committee (National Security Staff) overlaps with IARPC on "protection of the Arctic environment..." and "enhancing scientific monitoring and research;" the Arctic Policy Group (State Department) overlaps with IARPC on Arctic Council issues concerning research; and the Interagency Working Group on Coordination of Domestic Energy Development and Permitting in Alaska overlaps with IARPC in terms of science informing permitting. Martin Jeffries suggested that a Venn diagram with overlapping interests might help clarify the situation.

The Staff Group acknowledged that there it needs to be clear rationale given why the various bodies exist and also a justification for overlap between them. It will be important in defending the need for the various groups, should that be called into question.

Brendan suggested that we should allot time at various staff group meetings for an update on the other committees. If one person from the IARPC staff could serve as the liaison between IARPC and another group, that would be helpful.

ACTION: One person from the staff group will be asked to liaise between IARPC and IPC, NOC, APG, Interagency Working Group on Coordination of Domestic Energy Development and Permitting in Alaska, CMTS and ARC. If you are willing to be a liaison between IARPC and one or more of these groups, please let Sara know.

ACTION: All SG members please send Shella comments on the current draft fact sheet. She will update the draft for the next meeting. Shella will also produce a Venn diagram to show overlapping interests of the groups.

ACTION: After the next staff meeting, the fact sheet and Venn diagram will be shared with the other interagency bodies for their input and suggestions.

5. IARPC involvement in Arctic Ocean Study Plans and model Gantt Chart

Shella presented DOI's activities in the Beaufort and Chukchi in the form of a Gantt chart (attached) as decided by the Staff Group at the December meeting. She asked whether it was helpful in presenting the ongoing and planned activities for the region as asked for by the Principals and the Interagency Working Group on Coordination of Domestic Energy Development and Permitting in Alaska.

The Staff Group in general agreed that the chart is useful in presenting the activities and that ONR, NOAA and NSF should add their activities to it. It was also agreed that the Gantt chart does not provide all the necessary information. Information regarding the scope of the activities as well as where the ongoing or intended research is being done also needs to be added. There was a lengthy discussion about whether or not the IARPC could use an existing platform for GIS information. For example, the Environmental Response Management Application (ERMA) was suggested as one platform which might work. Another suggestion was to link with Alaska Ocean Observing System (AOOS) which also has GIS information.

In order to ensure that we are on the right track as far as the permitting task force is concerned, Brendan suggested that Shella circle back and ask them if the Gantt chart (with additional information provided from other agencies) is useful and if the added GIS information might also be useful. This will ensure that we are on the right track with regard to their request to IARPC.

ACTION: ONR, NOAA, NSF and any other agencies with related activities should fill in more cells on the Gantt chart.

ACTION: Shella will request feedback from the Permitting Task Force on whether or not the Gantt chart is helpful and whether or not GIS information would also be useful. She will attempt to find out if we are on the right track in order to meet their needs for this type of information.

ACTION: Ashley will look into whether or not ERMA can be used as a platform to present the spatial aspect of the activities planned or taking place. If so, she will arrange for them to brief the IARPC at an upcoming meeting.

Martin suggested that IARPC could use this as an opportunity to look at the issue of interoperability between various data platforms such as ERMA, AOOS, and ACADIS. The Staff Group agreed this would be a worthwhile undertaking at a later date.

6. Discussion of the 5-year Plan: new introduction and layout, infrastructure section

Brendan provided a revised timeline (attached). It suggests sending the draft infrastructure section to OMB by January 18 and finalizing the entire document by February 8.

Brendan also provided a proposed infrastructure table. He noted that in the final document, this information might be presented as a table or it might be turned into a narrative. However, the table serves as a good mechanism for collecting the information. He asked agencies to take the lead on the various sections. Ashley suggested that we look at the infrastructure table the NOC is working on to ensure we aren't duplicating work. She will share information about that with the group.

Infrastructure leads:

Space-based: Tom Wagner (with help from Martin Jefferies)

Air-borne: Tom Wagner

Ocean-based: Martin Jefferies (with help from Ashley Chappell and Kathy Crane)

Land-based: Shella Biallas (with help from Simon Stephenson and Mike Kuperberg)

Data transmission and archiving: Simon Stephenson (with help from Mike Kuperberg)

Communicating and learning: Igor Krupnik (with help from Nikoosh Carlo)

ACTION: Infrastructure leads fill in chart and return to Brendan by January 18th.

Alan Parkinson noted that he will be making changes to the health section based upon input from other agencies, and he will get those to Brendan by the end of January.

7. Summary, assignments, and next meeting

The next meeting of IARPC Staff Group will be February 6 at NOAA.

The list of Action Items is:

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