

Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee  
Staff Meeting  
15:00 – 17:00  
6 February 2012

Herbert C Hoover Building  
14<sup>th</sup> and Constitution  
Room 5215

**Meeting Notes**

(Note: Pre-meeting briefing on ERMA provided by NOAA)

1. Introductions

Brendan Kelly (OSTP)  
Simon Stephenson (NSF)  
John Farrell (USARC)  
Martin Jeffries (ONR)  
Shella Biallas (DOI)  
Adrianna Muir (DOS)  
Nikoosh Carlo (NSF)  
Michael Kuperberg (DOE)  
Ashley Chappell (NOAA)  
Kathy Crane (NOAA)  
John Berkson (DHS)  
Frank Esposito (USCG)  
Bill Fitzhugh (SI)

Roberta Burns (DOS)  
John Caskey (Navy)  
Katherine Segarra (Navy)  
Tony Miller (Navy)

**By Phone:**

Alan Parkinson (CDC)  
Tom Wagner (NASA)  
Louis Tupas (USDA)  
Cheryl Rosa (USARC)  
Peter Thomas (MMC)

2. Updates from other Arctic committees

In an effort to stay informed about activities of other interagency organizations involved in Arctic issues, Brendan asked for short summaries from Staff Group members who are involved in other groups. He asked that these individuals also share back with the other organizations ongoing IARPC activities.

**Arctic Policy Group and Arctic Council** (<http://www.arctic-council.org/>) – Roberta Burns and Adrianna Muir reported on activities of the Arctic Policy Group and the Arctic Council. Roberta informed that Staff Group that the Arctic Council is considering undertaking an Arctic Change Assessment, which would include meta analysis of indicators of change across of the arctic to do both pan-Arctic and regional analysis. The Senior Arctic Officials (SAO) considered the proposal for the assessment at their November meeting and asked for more information. There will be another iteration of the proposal which will go to the SAOs and be considered at their March meeting. The

APG is providing thoughts on the Assessment concept. As a whole, the APG thinks that the Assessment has value, especially as it includes not only a comprehensive review of change, but also as a regional assessment component. There is concern, however, that no cost estimates have been provided. Roberta Burns indicated that the APG would welcome comments from IARPC.

Adrianna noted that APG meetings are held once a month. Topics over the past few months have included: invasive species, PAME and off-shore oil and gas exploration, and unmanned aircraft.

**ACTION:** Roberta will provide the IARPC with the current Arctic Change Assessment proposal along with the comments provided by the APG. The Staff Group is asked to review the proposal and provide comments back to Roberta by the end of February.

**Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks**[http \(www.arcticobserving.org/\)](http://www.arcticobserving.org/) – Martin Jeffries informed the Staff Group that the inaugural meeting of the SAON Board was held on 24-25 January in Tromsø. There was good participation in the meeting with all but one of the Arctic 8 States represented, several non-Arctic countries were also represented, several AC working groups, and two of the Permanent Participants. Much of the meeting was taken up on the Terms of References with the Board needing to go back to the AC for clarification on several points. The Board is planning another meeting in October. Martin noted that the Board accepted a SAON task proposal from IASOA submitted from the US by Taniel Uttal.

**Arctic Monitoring & Assessment Programme** ([www.amap.no](http://www.amap.no)) - Brendan Kelly noted that at our next meeting in March, Tom Armstrong will be here to talk about AMAP and the USGCRP.

#### **National Ocean Council – Strategic Action Plan for Arctic Ocean**

(<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/oceans/implementationplan>)

John Farrell informed the Staff Group that the SAP Implementation Plan is out for public review until the end of February.

**U.S. Global Change Research Program** (<http://www.globalchange.gov/>) - Brendan Kelly informed the group that this item would be covered during the March meeting.

**Study of Arctic Environmental Change** (<http://www.arcus.org/search/>) – Simon Stephenson provided a brief history and overview of SEARCH, including its vision statement and mission. He pointed out that SEARCH has sent invitations to all of the IARPC Staff Group to attend the Scientific Steering Committee meeting being held next week in Washington. He informed the group that there has been a shift in SEARCH's emphasis from observing and understanding change to the responding to change component of the program. The program currently has 4 goals: a) sea ice; b) permafrost; c) land ice; and d) society and policy implications of Arctic environmental change.

Simon noted that SEARCH should be helpful to the Arctic research efforts of all Federal agencies. There are benefits to working together to enhance the program.

**ACTION:** Simon will send out the coordinates of the SEARCH SSC meeting.

**Interagency Working Group on Coordination of Domestic Energy Development and Permitting in Alaska** (<http://www.doi.gov/alaskaenergy/index.cfm>)— Shella Biallas noted that the Deputy Secretary of Interior remains interested in improving the use of science to inform decision making. The Committee is considering Q&A's including questions that the Government will need to be able to answer once a decision is made. In addition, the interagency group is also looking at implications of renewable energies in the arctic

**Alaska Climate Change Subcabinet** (<http://www.climatechange.alaska.gov/>) – Cheryl Rosa will provide an update on ACCS at the March meeting. In the meantime she did note that there are other groups within Alaska that we need to communicate better with the Alaska Climate Change Coordinating Committee (C-4) of the Alaska Climate Change Environment Roundtable (ACER). She will serve as a liaison and consider how to include them in the Interagency Arctic Committee Fact Sheet as discussed below.

**ACTION:** Cheryl will look into including ACER and the C-4 into the Interagency Arctic Committee Fact Sheet.

### 3. IARPC and Interagency Arctic Committee Fact Sheet

Shella provided a Venn diagram to supplement the discussion document on the types of interagency coordinating committees. Brendan noted that this is a great start and that everyone should get comments back to Shella by the end of next week at which point we will circulate the document to the other interagency committees for their input. It was decided to hold off on including the Q&A's until the descriptive text and Venn Diagram are approved. Peter Thomas asked about where to put those committees that have a stewardship/management function. Shella will consider this as well.

**ACTION:** Shella will finalize the fact sheet and Venn diagram, and we will circulate to other interagency committees for their review and input.

### 4. Arctic Ocean Study Plans: Gantt Chart and GPS coverage

Shella noted that input from various agencies has been incorporated in the Gantt Chart. Ashley stated that we had a good briefing from ERMA and that it could likely be used to assist in this process. While the Gantt Chart gives a temporal view of what is going on and what is intended in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas, Arctic ERMA gives a spatial and visual view. Together, these provide useful tools for permitting groups. The question remains, however, whether or not this is what they want. Does it answer the questions that they have? Shella suggested that Brendan go back to the Interagency Working Group on Coordination of Domestic Energy Development and Permitting in Alaska (Chaired by Deputy Secretary of the Interior Hayes) and get their views on these as tools.

Brendan expressed concern that while these are useful tools, they may not be adequately address impediments to science informing permitting decisions. ERMA provides a user friendly way into data sets, but it won't solve the problem of how we ask questions in environmental impact work. We have calls coming out for work in support of some planned development. We need to refine

those questions better, so that the people who have to make the permitting decision have research which has been tailored to their questions.

Brendan noted that Hayes and Ulmer are planning a second workshop on how science informs decision making, and perhaps it would be helpful for IARPC to have input into the development of that workshop. He also noted that it may be necessary to form a subgroup of IARPC to work on this issue. He offered to be involved and Ashley Chappell also volunteered in this effort. Brendan indicated that he will inform the Deputy Secretary's group that we would like to respond to the Q&A's they are considering. He also offered to stay involved in the next iteration of the workshop being planned on science informing the permitting process. He will take the Gantt chart and ERMA to the interagency energy development task force.

**ACTION:** Brendan will provide input into the next workshop on how science informs decision making and will seek input from the interagency energy development task force on the Gantt chart and ERMA. We will form a small subgroup of IARPC to work further on this issue.

#### 5. Discussion of the 5-year Plan: Infrastructure section and final review of science sections

Brendan circulated an updated version of the plan with track changes identified. He asked all authors to go back and check to make sure that the milestones are really milestones marking work to be accomplished, rather than tasks. He asked for all revisions by Thursday so that the Plan can be sent to Principals on Friday. Those that still need to provide input on the infrastructure table should do so as soon as possible.

The CRNS will meet on Friday and will review our plan for public review of the 5-year Plan and bless it or suggest changes to it.

John Farrell and Cheryl Rosa asked whether or not the State of Alaska should be given a pre-review of the plan before it goes out for broader public review. Brendan noted that the draft plan will be sent to the Governor of Alaska and other stakeholders for review as called for in the Arctic Research Policy Act. He further noted that input from the State of Alaska and other stakeholders will be important in revising the plan.

There was a brief discussion about receiving comment, collating, reviewing, and responding to comments. Simon and Sara agreed to look into this.

**ACTION:** Input on the infrastructure table should be provided by Wednesday. Brendan will write a brief summary on infrastructure needs that will go with the table in the 5-year Plan.

**ACTION:** All authors are asked to review their milestones. Any final changes to the Plan need to be sent to Brendan by Thursday.

**ACTION:** Simon and Sara agreed to look into staffing the review process.

#### 6. USARC Arctic Goals Report

John distributed the Arctic Research Commission's Goals and Objectives for Arctic Research 2011-2012 Report. The report is based on Commissioners' views drawn on input from the community. The report is given to IARPC for consideration in putting together the 5-year Plan. The priority research goals are the same as in the last report and include:

- Observe, understand and respond to environmental change in the Arctic, Arctic Ocean, and Bering Sea;
- Improve Arctic human health;
- Assess natural resources;
- Advance civil infrastructure research; and
- Assess indigenous languages, identities, and cultural research needs.

He further summarized the document by giving some specific examples on each goal and noted that the report concludes with some emerging research topics such as black carbon, ozone layer, renewable energy, unmanned autonomous vehicles and autonomous underwater vehicles, Arctic fisheries, and scaling Arctic research.

Brendan thanked him for sharing the report, and it was agreed that the report is a valuable tool for informing the 5-year Plan development and process.

**ACTION:** John will suggest that Dr. Ulmer transmit the Goals report to the IARPC Principals.

## 7. Summary, assignments, and next meeting

Before concluding the meeting, Brendan asked Nikoosh for an update on the PRB proposal to do a study on needs of the Arctic research community. Nikoosh circulated some questions from Chris Elfring, based upon the input that she received from IARPC staff. The most pressing question is whether or not the study should include a section on human health which will add to the cost of the report since it will require an expanded set of experts.

The Staff Group discussed this issue and determined that an emphasis on human well-being (including health) is important enough to warrant the extra cost. Alan Parkinson agreed to discuss within CDC.

**ACTION:** Nikoosh will communicate with Chris that we would like to include the issue of human well-being/health and ask the PRB to provide a revised cost estimate.

**ACTION:** Agencies need to let Nikoosh and Brendan know if they are willing to entertain a proposal to help fund the study. So far DOI, NSF, ONR, USARC, DOE, NASA, and Arctic Research Commission have indicated a willingness to entertain a proposal. All others please review the revised proposal from Chris when it is available, and let Nikoosh know if you think your agency would be willing to look at helping with the distributed cost of such a study.

The next meeting will be held on March 5 at 3:00 at the Department of Commerce.

Below is the list of action items from this staff meeting:

ACTION: Roberta will provide the IARPC with the current Arctic Change Assessment proposal along with the comments provided by the APG. The Staff Group is asked to review the proposal and provide comments back to Roberta by the end of February.

ACTION: Simon will send out the coordinates of the SEARCH SSC meeting.

ACTION: Cheryl will look into including ACER and the C-4 into the Interagency Arctic Committee Fact Sheet.

ACTION: Shella will finalize the fact sheet and Venn diagram, and we will circulate to other interagency committees for their review and input.

ACTION: Brendan will provide input into the next workshop on how science informs decision making and will seek input from the interagency energy development task force on the Gantt chart and ERMA. We will form a small subgroup of IARPC to work further on this issue.

ACTION: Input on the infrastructure table should be provided by Wednesday. Brendan will write a brief summary on infrastructure needs that will go with the table in the 5-year Plan.

ACTION: All authors are asked to review their milestones. Any final changes to the Plan need to be sent to Brendan by Thursday.

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ACTION: John will suggest that Dr. Ulmer transmit the Goals report to the IARPC Principals.

ACTION: Nikoosh will communicate with Chris that we would like to include the issue of human health and ask the PRB to provide a revised cost estimate.

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