

Draft SAR EG Mandate Text

Updated by SAR Expert Group, December 6, 2016

EPPR - Search and Rescue Expert Group

The Search and Rescue Expert Group (SAR EG) is comprised of subject matter experts (SMEs) organized under the Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response Working Group (EPPR) of the Arctic Council to promote the implementation of the Agreement on Cooperation in Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic (SAR Agreement). The SAR EG reports to the EPPR as a guiding body, not in an operation capacity. The SAR EG acts as a facilitator for high level, inter-governmental discourse on Arctic search and rescue issues and assesses the implementation of the Arctic SAR agreement. The specific goal of the expert group is to identify key lessons of Arctic incidents and exercises and communicate/disseminate effective practices and necessary mitigation or remedial actions to the ministerial level, Member States and other relevant international bodies. The expert group supports existing operational fora dealing with Arctic SAR issues by leveraging high level engagement from government and scientific institutions.

As stated in the EPPR Strategic Plan:

Objective 5: Work to effectively implement relevant agreements among the Arctic States and arrangements of the Arctic Council in order to advance emergency prevention, preparedness and response capabilities.

Pursuant to the Arctic Council Iqaluit 2015 Declaration, EPPR will advise SAOs on relevant SAR incidents and events and maintain a repository of lessons learned and best practices of Arctic SAR incidents and events. EPPR facilitates implementation of the SAR agreement by focusing on enhancing cooperation, highlighting best practices, exchanging information, analyzing results of exercises, and sharing lessons learned. EPPR will maintain a repository for lessons learned in Arctic SAR exercises and incidents. EPPR recognizes operational SAR tactics vary and remain the responsibility of member states.

For the purpose of fulfilling its mandate, and in the capacity as SAR experts from the Arctic nations, the SAR EG shall:

1. Collaborate with other bodies, fora, working groups and academia to compile, identify, analyze and disseminate pertinent recommendations and needs related to Arctic SAR issues.
2. Evaluate exercise and incident reports for common themes identified in lessons learned disseminate mitigation recommendations as appropriate.
3. Communicate key findings to EPPR for coordination within the Arctic Council and other relevant bodies.
4. Support responsible and safety oriented culture for recreational and commercial activities in the Arctic.

5. Support different operational fora in their action oriented efforts, including SAR exercises.
6. Share findings from and influence the direction of research and development in academia and industry to reduce, prevent and/or respond to the impact of SAR incidents in the Arctic.
7. Integrate recommendations and policy direction from the Arctic Council as these come forward.