

# Arctic Coast Guard Forum

Developing Arctic Maritime Safety



**ACGF**

ACGF is an independent, informal, operationally-driven organization, not bound by treaty, to foster safe, secure, and environmentally responsible maritime activity in the Arctic.

8 member states, representing coast guard functions:  
Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russian Federation, Sweden and the United States of America.

Picture © Lars Bøgh Vinther

ACGF Chair duties will rotate every two years in concert with the Arctic Council Chair. Finland is the chair for the forum in 2017 - 2019.



**ACGF**

The goal of the ACGF is to gather knowledge, develop and enhance cross national collaboration, and demonstrate the ability to conduct search and rescue operations in the Arctic.

ACGF is an important platform of dialogue, consultation, communication and cooperation for member countries.

ACGF emphasizes the importance of cooperation, mutual understanding, partnership and consensual decision-making within the ACGF framework.



**ACGF**

ACGF organizes exercises to facilitate safe and secure maritime activity in the Arctic region.

**Arctic Guardian 2017** was the first operative exercise held by ACGF in Iceland, September 2017

Objective of the exercises is to show and promote the ACGF members' shared commitment in enhancing the 8 Arctic Nations' ability to conduct combined coast guard operations in the Arctic.

Sharing best practices builds safer and more efficient maritime operations in the Arctic.



**ACGF**



Rajavartiolaitos  
Gränsbevakningsväsendet  
The Finnish Border Guard



ULKOASIAINMINISTERIÖ  
UTRIKESMINISTERIET

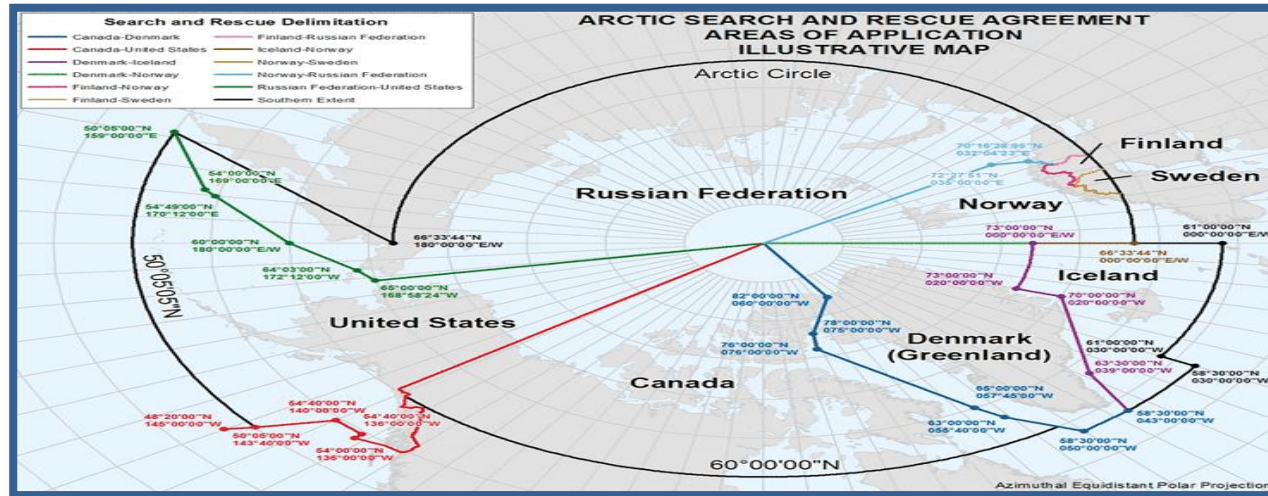


# Arctic Search and Rescue Capabilities Survey

Enhancing international cooperation  
2017



# Arctic SAR and identified challenges



- Further need for collective efforts in Arctic search and rescue and maritime safety
- Activity and risk vary according to different areas in the Arctic region
- **Identified challenges:**
  - long distances
  - challenging weather
  - ice and cold conditions
  - poor communications network
  - lack of infrastructure
  - scarce resources
  - capacity to host patients
  - shared situational awareness
  - unsuitable rescue and survival equipment
- Utilizing foreign units challenging due to long distances
- Need to develop information sharing and situational awareness between coast guards, emergency authorities, and other stakeholders involved in SAR operations

# SAR training in the Arctic



**There is no comprehensive education plan specifically intended for Arctic SAR.**

- A workshop or a planning conference for the authorities responsible for SAR training and education to discuss challenges and possibilities of joint training
- Systematic sharing of exercise reports and lessons learned in a standardized format
- Improving exercise planning based on lessons learned
- Close cooperation with other stakeholders such as authorities, shipping companies, universities and maritime training centres, voluntary organizations and companies

## **Interest in joint courses specific to Arctic SAR:**

- Ship and ice operations
- Ice navigation
- Ice rescue
- OSC
- ACO
- SMC
- SRU
- Operational environment and resources in the Arctic
- Annual Arctic SAR training week involving junior officers and leaders with first hand experience

# Calling for new innovations



## Communications technology

- Satellite AIS
- Satellite broadband
- **Satellite communications equipment (also for aviation)**
- Long range communication equipment not necessarily reliant on satellite connections
- **Situational awareness tools**
- Radio towers and radars
- **Ice and weather tracking and forecasting, as well as means of sharing data**
- Monitoring equipment including Unmanned Aeronautical Vehicles (UAV) for monitoring and search activities during SAR operations
- A shared exercise calendar and a database for distributing exercise reports
- Database for SAR resources and RCC information.
- New solutions for patient triage and telemedical services



# Calling for new innovations



## Rescue and survival equipment

- Rescue boats and hovercrafts that operate on ice
- Personal survival equipment and survival suits
- Survival packages
  - easy to use and assemble
- De-icing equipment and technology
- Oil spill response facilities and equipment both off- and on-shore and for icy seas
- Refueling assets at sea
- Evacuation tents/centers

# Recommendations



1. Keeping each other informed on the new developments of relevant infrastructure and equipment.
2. **Establishing a working group on technological developments related to the Arctic operating environment.**
3. Liaising with the Arctic Council, EPPR and the AEC.
4. Arranging a seminar on Arctic telecommunication innovations. Investigating opportunities for working together with the Arctic Economic Council regarding potential events.
5. **Testing new technology in exercises, such as the AIES system or other situational awareness tools.**
6. Developing a shared platform for sharing general SAR related data. Such platform could include features such as information on all Arctic RCCs and organizations responsible for and involved in SAR, resource asset data, weather and ice data, AIS data etc.
7. Encouraging more exercises and the systematic sharing of lessons learned.
8. Developing a database or a log system for sharing exercise and incident reports, calendar, blogs and other relevant information between coast guards and/or SAR authorities.

# Recommendations



9. Developing an annual joint course or workshop on Arctic navigation and operations involving junior officers, and senior leaders with first-hand experience.
- 10. Encouraging cooperation between coast guards, academia and the industry by involving them in exercises for evaluation and the testing of equipment.**
- 11. Encouraging information sharing between operators and coast guards, such as sailing plans, emergency plans, SAR cooperation plans and vessel information.**
12. Including embassies in exercises or contingency planning, in order to develop common procedures for coordinating foreign patients.
13. Including local medical authorities, voluntary organizations and other local actors as stakeholders and recognizing their key role.
- 14. Reaching out to the AECO and CLIA or other industry groups to establish connection and cooperation.**
- 15. Encouraging interest in safety issues, also among the non-Arctic countries.**



For further information:

To learn more about ACGF, please watch the video introducing the activities of the forum:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=73t4cP\\_KEiY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=73t4cP_KEiY)

ACGF website is available at [www.arcticcoastguardforum.com](http://www.arcticcoastguardforum.com)



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