



ARCTIC COAST GUARD FORUM



Arctic Guardian Exercise in Search and Rescue and Marine Environmental Response in the Arctic

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Why Arctic Guardian?

- **Strengthen collaboration** between the EPPR and the ACGF to improve joint planning and emergency response
- Exercise the **Arctic SAR and MOSPA Agreements**
- Discuss the Icelandic emergency response system and the considerations for large **incidents requiring international assistance** in the Arctic
- **Raise awareness** of the collaborative emergency preparedness activities among Arctic States



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Scenario Overview

The MV Arctic Explorer (250 POB), and it's new Captain, is on a first-time transit from Iceland, and has just departed from Akureyri at 1900h. The vessel is headed northbound en route for scenic expedition cruising on the Eastern coast of Greenland. It has 500 MT of light oil (MGO) onboard.

The MV Tanker (27 POB) is traversing westbound north of Iceland on a supply trip, and has a cargo of 20,000 MT of IFO180 onboard. In addition it has 900 MT of HFO and 100 MT of lubricating oils onboard to support operations.

Suddenly, and with a terrifying sound, the two ships collide.

The bow of the cruise vessel is smashed and there is a large hole in the port side of the tanker. The two vessels remain stable, connected and adrift.

Latitude: 66° 28.069' N
Longitude 019° 31.157' W

Approximately 44 NM from
Sauðárkrókur
Approximately 25 NM from Siglufjörður
Approximately 60 NM from Akureyri



Two-Stage Exercise

1. Arctic Guardian 2020 - Tabletop Exercise

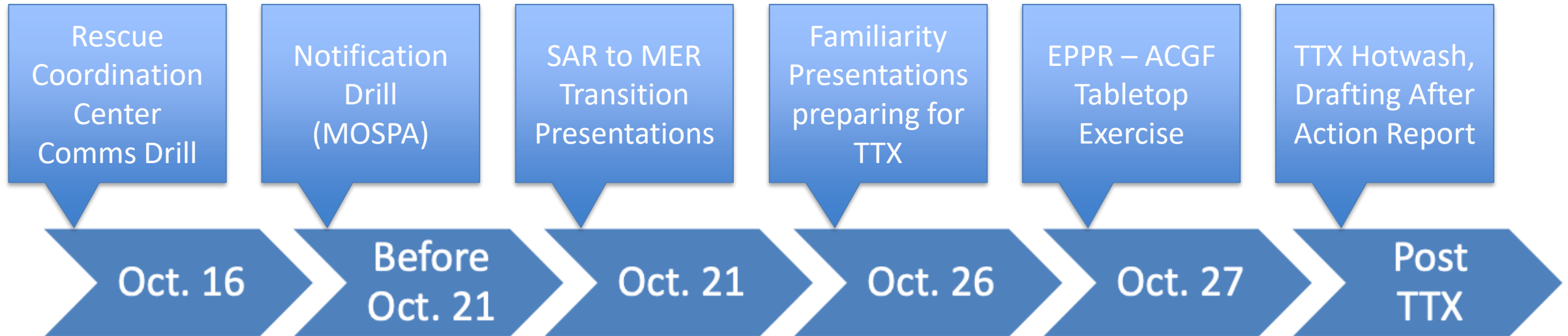
- Planned for March 2020, executed in October 2020

2. Arctic Guardian 2021 - Multi-Event Exercise

- Events from Dec. 2021 to April 2021
- Core Event Executed in April 2021

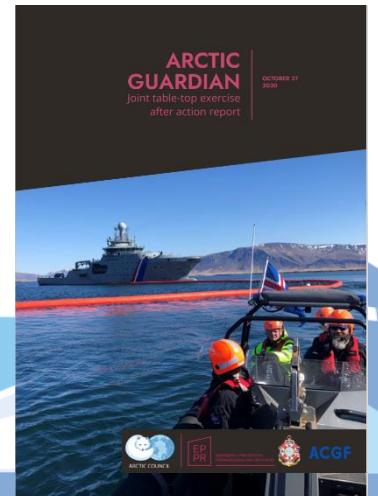


Oct. 2020 Arctic Guardian TTX Overview



Arctic Guardian TTX After Action Report is now finalized, approved, and was a ministerial deliverable under the Icelandic Chairship of the Arctic Council

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Arctic Guardian 2021 Overview



↑ Regular CPG and JDT Meetings ↑

Arctic Guardian Core Planning Group (CPG): incl. ACGF Combined Operations Working Group (COWG); Environment Agency of Iceland; and MOSPA Joint Design Team Reps

Joint Design Team (JDT): incl. MER EG; EPPR Leadership; and MER reps from Arctic States

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Exercise Participation

- Hosted by **Icelandic Coast Guard** and **Environment Agency of Iceland**
- Over **100 participants**, across **32 organizations**
- Smaller group of **core training audience (aimed for operators)**, but also very senior observers participating
- Team of note-takers from three countries
- **EPPR Secretariat** managed the IT
- Invited members of the **Wilson Center Polar Institute** to help facilitate proceedings
- **Domestic Icelandic Emergency Responders** involved, e.g. police
- **Industry**: OSRL, ITOFF
- **Cruise ship operators**: AECO, Quark, Oceanwide Expeditions
- **Volunteer Orgs**: Finnish and Icelandic Red Cross, ICESAR

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Main Exercise Themes

- **Icelandic incident management system**
- **Search and Rescue (SAR)**
 - E.g. Passenger / casualty tracking
- **SAR to MER transition**
- **Marine Environmental Response (MER)**
 - E.g. increase familiarity with MOSPA RFA process, the *Operational Guidelines*, and relevant EPPR products and tools



Overarching Public Relations Component

Raise awareness of the collaborative emergency preparedness activities among Arctic States.

1. Form a **joint information process** and provide the necessary interface between the ACGF, EPPR and Arctic States
2. **Release timely, clear, accurate and consistent information** related to the exercise to the media



**POLAR
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Arctic Guardian 2021 – First Impressions

What went well?

- EPPR/ACGF Collaboration throughout the AG series of events
- Request for Assistance workshop (and other components of AG 2021) socialized EPPR/ACGF processes:
 - Increased awareness of new process for many agencies, industry, other orgs
 - Many lessons learned for internal agency procedures
 - Revealed gaps and limitations in offering assistance
 - Recognized critical need for liaisons to facilitate process
- Virtual format a great mitigation strategy
- Allowed us to expand audience to include participation from critical partners and observers
- Public relations, social media engagement worked very well

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Arctic Guardian 2021 – First Impressions

What needs improvement?

- Request for Assistance Forms
- Recognition of Arctic State best practices (e.g. casualty tracking, common operating pictures, etc.)
- More focus on the SAR to MER transition
- Increased integration of industry and industry associations into the planning
- Support to training audience in advance of the exercise



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What's Happened Since Arctic Guardian 2021

- ACGF Principles welcomed exercise debrief / outcomes in April 2021
- COWG Chair and EPPR Chair sent **letter of appreciation** to participants.
- Several **media interviews and reports** about the successful exercise.
- Evaluation team and objective leads sifting through 100+ pages of notes and feedback forms to inform development of the **After Action Report**.
- Ministers welcomed the October TTX After Action Report and also the [statement of cooperation](#) between the AC (primarily EPPR) and ACGF.
- **The AG2021 AAR is currently awaiting approval by both ACGF and EPPR.**
- Panel discussion hosted at Arctic Circle Assembly 2021 to promote ACGF – EPPR Cooperation and highlighting the successes of the partnership and exercise.

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Thank You



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