

ARCTIC ECONOMIC COUNCIL MARITIME TRANSPORTATION WORKING GROUP (MTWG):

WORK PLAN February 2017

1. Information gathering on all the national Arctic traffic systems, preparation on guidelines for shipping and analysis for and preparation for possible transport scheme harmonization

- The MTWG will through its members gather information on all existing national Arctic traffic and navigation system descriptions, regulations, operation guidelines, instructions (Canada, Greenland, Norway, Russia, U.S.A. (Alaska)), structured, if possible, separately for existing ships and newbuildings.

Finland will for comparison gather the same information on the Baltic ice navigation regime.

As one of the subgoals is to build up a model for regular safe navigation system with traffic lanes and coordinated VTS arrangements for the Bering strait, an endeavour will be made to also gather benchmarking information from the triparty (Estonia, Finland, Russia) arrangements in the Gulf of Finland as well as from the bilateral (Canada, U.S.A.) arrangements in the St. Lawrence Seaway.

2. Status analysis on hydrographic mapping situation in the Arctic waters

One of the major risks in new and previously unknown Arctic waters is the lack of hydrographic information.

The AEC MTWG will through its national members gather information/descriptions on the situation and the status of each nation's Arctic waters hydrographic mapping and public availability of the said information in the form of printed or electronic charts.

3. New and additional ongoing processes on environmental regulations related to navigation in the Arctic waters

This information will also be gathered through the national members, especially for those issued by local administrations (national, regional or port/terminal specific).

The MTWG Chair together with the AEC Secretariat and national trade association will engage themselves to look at rules/regulations being in preparation process by IMO, the European Commission and Arctic Council, IOGP and ISO.

Upon having been able to create a summary of situation the MTWG shall gather and discuss what type of response/dialogue the MTWG and AEC as a whole should take and how the AEC should be positioned (e.g. towards IMO).

The goal would be to have the basic information for Items 1, 2, and 3 gathered by March 15th, so that analysis and summaries could be distributed in early May and processed at the next (2nd) plenary MTWG meeting along the Nor-Shipping Conference in Oslo at the end of May 2017.

4. Further analysis of business cases for container shipping on the Northern Sea Route utilizing transshipment hubs

This study proposal by the U.S. representatives was approved by the Executive Committee and MTWG was asked to support and coordinate the related work according to a more detailed Project plan to be distributed to the MTWG for commentaries and consideration.

We have some optimism in the above schedule, but on the other hand so much is happening today and in order to maintain possibility for a proactive AEC role we should keep in this endeavor.