



17.12.2009

Terms of Reference

Joint Committee on Cooperation within the Field of Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region

1. Provided by the Agreement between the Governments in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region on Cooperation within the Field of Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response, signed in Moscow 11 December 2008 (Agreement), the state competent authorities of the Contracting Parties Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden shall establish a Joint Committee (JC) for the application of the Agreement and appoint each their representatives thereto. The JC thus consists of representatives of the four countries mentioned above. Other member states of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) or other entities or stakeholders may be invited to take part in the meetings as experts or observers.
2. According to the provisions of the the Agreement
 - the chairmanship of the JC shall rotate among the Contracting Parties on an annual basis and in alphabetical order,
 - the JC shall meet annually or as and when necessary to plan and coordinate collaboration between the Contracting Parties and evaluate the application of the Agreement,
 - the JC among other things initiates cross-border exercises and joint training as well as takes part in their planning, updates the Joint Manual and organises exchange of experts.
3. In the capacity provided by the Agreement, the JC further defines its mandate and competence as follows:
 - the JC operates under the umbrella of the Barents cooperation.
 - the JC also takes into account the administrative principles of the International Barents Secretariat (IBS) for instance as regards essential documents for filing and other contribution,
 - the JC is independent in its decision making, and any decision made by the JC in its authority is valid without any formal approval,
 - the JC yet takes note, as appropriate, of points and proposals put forward by the BEAC or the Barents Regional Council (BRC),
 - The JC evaluates experiences, observations and lessons learned as well as evaluation reports of joint activities of the Contracting Parties,

- the JC may initiate, plan and coordinate collaboration between the Contracting Parties including different types of long and short term projects,
 - the JC may also take other tasks in the sphere of the Agreement than those mentioned above.
4. The chairmanship of the JC is responsible for the administration of cooperation of the JC by
 - inviting, hosting and organising the JC meetings by circulating the invitation at least one month before the meeting,
 - drafting and finalising protocols of the JC meetings and other documents that are essential for the collaboration,
 - preparing annual work plans and annual reports,
 - ensuring that the work plans and annual reports, after approval of the Committee, are submitted to the Committee of senior Officials (CSO) and the Barents Regional Committee (BRC) through the IBS,
 - participating in the CSO and the BRC meetings when requested,
 - maintaining communication with and updating the IBS regarding the progress of cooperation and activities of the the JC, and by providing the IBS with the documentation mentioned above for IBS records,
 - representing the JC in the BEAC and the BRC working groups when deemed necessary in the aggregate of the Barents Euro-Arctic cooperation.
 5. Decisions of the JC shall be made unanimously by the delegates of the four Contracting Parties.
 6. The chairmanship of the JC shall inform and update the BEAC members, that are not represented in the JC (Denmark, Iceland and the European Commission), on the progress of cooperation.
 7. The Participating State that hosts the meetings of JC bears the costs connected to them, unless otherwise decided. Participants at meetings cover their own travel and accommodation expenses.
 8. The working language of the JC shall be English.
 9. The JC may amend these Terms of Reference when necessary.