



**FARO: Forum of Arctic Research Operators**

**FARO**

**FORUM OF ARCTIC RESEARCH OPERATORS**

**MEETING REPORT**

**OPEN SESSION**

**22 APRIL 2005**

**KUNMING, CHINA**





**FARO Meeting**  
**Kunming, China**  
**22 April 2005**

**MEETING REPORT**  
**OPEN SESSION**

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FARO: Forum of Artic Research Operators  
ASSW 2005  
Kunming, China  
22 April 2005

## MINUTES Open Session

**Participants:** See enclosed list – Appendix I

### 1. OPENING AND REPORTING SESSION

#### 1.1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair, Dr Simon Stephenson, welcomed all participants and suggested a brief round of self-introduction.

#### 1.2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes had first been reviewed by the Chair, then sent electronically to all participants for comments, and finally a paper copy was mailed to all. No comments had been received to the paper copy version and the minutes were accepted.

#### 1.3 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

It was agreed to split the Agenda into two parts:

- An open session before lunch, and
- A closed session after lunch, to which operators only were invited, with the intention of discussing operational issues.

In addition, information about ASSW 2006 was added to the Agenda.

With these changes the Agenda was adopted.



## 1.4 REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair reported that a meeting of the FARO Executive had been held in Copenhagen, Denmark, 4 October 2004.

Issues discussed:

- **IPY:** Up-date on IPY planning and Arctic coordination needs
- **ICARP II:** FARO had been asked to serve as an ICARP II working group reviewing critical infrastructure needs.
- **Secretariat for FARO:** Considering the future requirements, a possibly more active role of FARO, and forming a separate secretariat from IASC. DPC had agreed to serve on the condition that some additional support could be provided.
- **Membership and fee:** FARO had been through its initial phase which, in this period, consisted of an open forum with an annual meeting. The future need is likely to become more in the form of active consultations between operators, increased secretarial support requiring a long-term strategy for funding.

In addition, the Chair noted that **CEON** (a FARO project also adopted by IASC) had progressed well, and was now being considered combined with **COMAAR**.

**The ship database** now operated by **ARCUS** contained a great deal of information. However, it was somewhat lacking in detailing the ship information of particular interest to operators.

The discussion following this report focussed on ship information and the missing report from the FARO/AOSB Advisory Group on Ship Information. In addition, the question is which ships are really needed to be included; the assumption was that the only relevant ships to be included were those that could be 'cooperative candidates', i.e. those directly or indirectly controlled by the research operators, and in particular icebreaker and ice-strengthened research vessels.

## 2. MAIN ISSUES

### 2.1 FARO SECRETARIAT

The Danish Polar Center (DPC) had offered to host the FARO Secretariat for an initial period, on the condition that some additional funding could be provided. Dr Hanne Petersen presented DPC (on behalf of Dr Morten Rasch) giving an indication of what tasks and services they could provide. FARO needs would be defined as a 20% job with Dr Morten Rasch in charge – drawing on other staff members.





They would need a transition period of 1 – 2 months, and thereafter be operative.

**Conclusions:**

**All members endorsed the proposal to house the FARO Secretariat at DPC and they will be informed when the new FARO Secretariat has become operative at DPC. The ship database is the most urgent issue. It was agreed to remain with ARCUS. However, the new FARO Secretariat would be asked to stimulate, and keep track of the work of the FARO/AOSB advisory group and the ARCUS responses.**

## **2.2 RESTRUCTURING FARO**

Professor Anders Karlqvist introduced this item by mentioning that FARO was initiated in 1998 and inspired by the COMNAP cooperation. Some terms of reference were developed (see the FARO website for details at: <http://www.faro-arctic.org>). The idea was to create a forum that:

- “aims to encourage, facilitate and optimise logistics and operational support for scientific research in the Arctic, through international collaboration for all those involved in Arctic research” (the FARO mission).

The proposed structure was a forum of national representatives with their network to other operators in their country.

The achievements have been slow, and apart from exchange of information, projects like CEON, access, ship survey etc. have been the main issues. There is a need for new initiatives and someone to do the job; i.e. secretarial assistance.

The tasks are:

- Exchange information between operators
- Coordination of logistics (IPY)
- Respond to requests from the science community
- Sharing information and experience with Antarctic colleagues (technology)
- Advice to policy makers (Arctic Council)

As to **membership**, we should consider building on organisations rather than national representatives. As increased secretarial assistance is needed, we may also consider introducing fees in order to secure a long term funding of a secretariat.

The discussion confirmed support for some of the ideas presented, although a more thorough analysis may be needed and could be a task for the Executive/Secretary. The European Polar Consortium with their European Polar Infrastructure was mentioned, and mutual interests should be explored. Other groups (Chukotka Science Support Group, Barrow Arctic Science Consortium, etc.) showed an interest in joining FARO.

There was a general, open attitude to paying a membership fee.

The COMNAP fee is AUD 6 500 (or USD 5 400)

COMNAP has organised some of their work into working groups, and FARO could consider a similar structure.



**Decision:**

**The Executive to develop a discussion paper together with the Secretariat, and to circulate it for comments prior to the next meeting.**

**Action: The Secretariat**

**2.3 ICARP II**

ICARP II was presented during ASSW Project Day.

FARO had earlier been invited to be in charge of an ICARP II working group on "Enabling research infrastructure", see invitation enclosed, **Appendix II**.

FARO had accepted this invitation, and a Group was needed to address it.

**Decision:**

**The Executive to compose a group.**

**Action: The Chair**

**3 INFORMATION SESSION**

The intention of this session is to give short information presentations of potential interest to members.

**3.1 STATUS REPORT ON "AURORA BOREALIS"**

Prof. Jörn Thiede gave an overview of the "Aurora Borealis" concept both as an advanced research vessel and the science plan.

Aurora Borealis will be a novel research icebreaker with no national or international competitor because of its drilling capability, its sophisticated modularised mobile laboratory systems allowing mission-specific laboratory selections, its moon pools for drilling and for the deployment of Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROV) and Autonomous Underwater Vehicles (AUV) for sub ice surveys, its propulsion and dynamic positioning systems and its capability for polar expeditions into high latitude ice-covered deep-sea basins also during the unfavourable seasons of the year.

This unique facility addresses two scientific communities, which in part overlap and in part have divergent interests. The first one is the general polar science community, which requires a research vessel for conducting its field and sea work throughout all seasons of the year. The other is the deep-sea drilling community, which would use the ship mainly during the summer months to study the structure and properties of oceanic crust and the history of the oceanic depositional environments.

This has never been done in the permanently ice-infested waters of the Arctic.



To develop this science plan, the European Polar Board decided to establish an International Working Group composed of specialists recruited from two communities. Both groups were aided by specialists in ice-breaker technology.

Information both about Aurora Borealis Science Plan, as well as the Aurora Borealis is available at: <http://www.esf.org/esf-genericpage.php?language=O&section=2&domain=1zgenericpage=1898>

The total costs are estimated at about € 250 mill. EU will contribute with € 50 mill. and the rest to be funded by the consortium.

The intention is to have "Aurora Borealis" in operation during IPY.

### **3.2 CCGS AMUNDSEN**

CCGS Amundsen is a Canadian research icebreaker for international collaboration in the changing Arctic. In general any project using this icebreaker should be Canadian led.

The infrastructure consists of the Class-1200 Canadian Coast Guard Ship, Sir John Franklin, its refit and transformation into a state-of-the-art research icebreaker, the specialised scientific equipment necessary to complete her scientific mission and part of the costs of operation during the first 5 years. At 98 m overall length and developing 10 142 kW, the Franklin, which became the CCGS Amundsen on 13 September 2003, is one of 3 sister icebreakers built from 1978 to 1982. Sister ships of the Amundsen have proven efficient, versatile and cost-effective ships to conduct scientific research of international calibre in the Canadian Arctic.

She is fitted with 12 interior laboratories. More information and specifications are available at: <http://www.amundsen.quebec-ocean.ulaval.ca>

The schedule of deployment of the Amundsen for the next few years is being developed. The ship is presently available to support international programmes in and outside the Canadian Arctic. For charter conditions and dates of availability or to discuss international collaborations, please contact Louis Fortier at [louis.fortier@bio.ulaval.ca](mailto:louis.fortier@bio.ulaval.ca)

### **3.3 OVERVIEW OF NSF'S NEW CONTRACT WITH VECO**

Information by Dr Simon Stephenson, NSF.

VECO is a company providing engineering, construction and operations. Their standard business approach is to engage local regional partners working in the Arctic and subcontracting to them, for example PCSP (Polar Continental Shelf Programme) for the Canadian Arctic.

The NSF contract is for 3 years, annually renewable up to a total of 7 years.



### **3.4 THE MARINE LABORATORY IN NY-ÅLESUND, SVALBARD**

This experimental marine laboratory will be opened in June 2005, at 78° 55'N in an international research community with very easy access. The user group consists of representatives from 9 nations. The laboratory is owned by the Kings Bay company.

Ny-Ålesund has open access to the Arctic Ocean at least half of the year.

More detailed information available at: <http://www.kingsbay.no> (click on *Research – The Arctic Marine Lab.*).

### **3.5 BARROW ARCTIC SCIENCE CONSORTIUM (BASC)**

Dr Glenn W Sheehan, Executive Director of Barrow Arctic Science Consortium (BASC), gave an overview of the Barrow Arctic Science consortium activities and international cooperation.

Barrow has roots back to the first international polar year (1881-83).

BASC is dedicated to the encouragement of research and educational activities pertaining to Alaska's North Slope, the adjacent portions of the Arctic Ocean, and in Chukotka, Russia. BASC is a community-based organisation dedicated to helping closer contacts between scientists and community members. BASC is supported financially by NSF.

Construction of a new research station has just started. More information available at: <http://www.sfos.uaf.edu/basc/>

Professor Menguha Wei presented the plan for the Chinese Earthquake Administration to set up a seismic station in Barrow, Alaska by 2006, following several years of work with Barrow Arctic Science consortium.

### **3.6 CHUKOTKA SCIENCE SUPPORT GROUP (CSSG)**

Gennady Zelenskiy, Executive Director of the Chukotka Science Support Group (CSSG), gave a brief description of its recent activities.

BASC (see 3.5) is offering logistical support and assistance with obtaining all necessary permits for scientists wishing to conduct research in Chukotka. CSSG has been formed by two Chukotka based native organisations for support to science projects in Chukotka.

Please visit the website mentioned under 3.5 and then click on *Chukotka* for more information.





### **3.7 RUSSIAN ARCTIC OCEAN**

Dr Sergey Priamikov, AARI, gave an up-date on North Pole drifting research ice camps. Deploying NP will now be made by ship (Akademik Fedorov). NP33 will start its drifting at about 85°N, north of the Novosibirskye Island.

Observational programmes for: met. data, atmospheric observations, oceanic measurements, sea-ice and snow, plankton.

This year there will be a Norwegian participant.

### **3.8 AIR OPERATIONS**

Dr Leonid Bogdanov, POLUS, reported that they had supported ice camps at 89°N since 2002. They had built up good practical knowledge and experience by flying in equipment and cargo airdropping, as well as building short-term ice runways.

### **3.9 ASSW 2006**

AWI and the French Polar Institute invited to ASSW 2006 in Potsdam (outside Berlin) towards the end of March 2006.

The invitation was warmly welcomed.

USA has earlier offered to host ASSW 2007.

### **3.10 CLOSURE**

The Chair thanked all participants for their contributions, and welcomed operators back for a closed session after lunch.





## FARO 2005 – Open Session

### Forum of Arctic Research Operators

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## 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Arctic Research Planning

Copenhagen 10 - 13 November 2005

February 21, 2005

Dear Simon:

Several months ago we spoke about FARO assisting with the ICARP II Working Group on Infrastructure. You had agreed to pull together a group to examine the Working Group reports when they are available to examine them and quantify infrastructure needs. I am very pleased that you will be able to do so. The WG reports will be available in late summer and I will make sure that you receive a copy of them at that time.

The ICARP II SG met in Copenhagen in January. During that meeting, several members of the SG raised concerns that FARO may not have the scope to deal with all the different types of infrastructure that will be addressed in the WG reports. For example, does FARO include within its purview meteorological and hydrological stations? I am unaware myself of the scope of FARO, thus my question to you. If you do not currently have this expertise, could it be added for purposes of this review, or for the long-term?

The SG felt that it might aid your review of the WG reports and drafting of your report to the Conference if we provided some clear guidance. I have, therefore, drafted guidelines for your review and discussion.

### Guidelines for FARO review:

- Objective is to review the WG reports and quantify the infrastructure needs of the various WGs and to report the findings at the Conference.
- Some of the infrastructure needs will be currently available and some will be planned or currently in production or testing. The report should clearly make a distinction between new technologies and research platforms and those already in use.
- The infrastructure needs of the various groups will be very wide including not only platforms for making observations, but also including data management and networking. The report should be able to identify all of these needs, show where they are available and where additional resources will need to be added in order to implement the science plans. Of course, research platforms for IPY will be an issue at the time of the Conference.

I look forward to an opportunity to discuss this with you. I plan to attend the ASSW meeting in Kunming, and perhaps I can meet with FARO at that time in order to clarify any questions you have.

Thank you for your consideration and help with this important aspect of ICARP II.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Corell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "C".

Robert Corell  
Chair, ICARP II Steering Group