

**ARCTIC MILITARY ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION (AMEC)
Information Sheet
April 2003**

Background:

AMEC can trace its roots to a March 1995 meeting between representatives from the U.S. DoD and the MoD's of Norway and Russia. Issues discussed included the effects of radioactive waste on human health and the environment in the Arctic, the decommissioning of nuclear-powered submarines, and the role of environmental risk assessments.

On September 26, 1996, in Bergen, Norway, U.S. Secretary of Defense William J. Perry, Norwegian Minister of Defence Jorgen Kosmo, and Russian Federation Minister of Defense Igor Rodionov launched a cooperative effort called the Arctic Military Environmental Cooperation (AMEC) forum. The Ministers signed a historic Declaration calling for contacts and cooperation among the parties to jointly address critical environmental concerns in the Arctic.

Since the March 1995 meeting, other actions by the international partners included the establishment of a steering group to identify and prioritize military environmental projects in the Arctic region, and the selection of those projects under the AMEC framework. Currently, there are fifteen projects approved under AMEC.

Questions and Answers:

What is AMEC?

The Arctic Military Environmental Cooperation Program -AMEC - is a forum for dialogue and joint activities among U.S., Russian, and Norwegian military and environmental officials. This forum addresses Arctic environmental issues that are related to our militaries' unique capabilities and activities.

Who are the primary directors of the AMEC Program?

AMEC is led by top environmental officials from the U.S. DoD, Norwegian MOD, and Russian MOD who are designated as the AMEC Principals. For the U.S. DoD, the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Installations and Environment (DUSD(I&E)), Mr., Raymond DuBois, provides policy oversight. DUSD(I&E) has designated Rear Admiral Robert D. Reilly, Jr., Director, Environmental Protection, Safety and Occupational Health Division, Chief of Naval Operations as the U.S. Principal; for the Russian MOD - Major General Alevtin Yunak, Director of Ecological Security is the Russian Principal; and for the Norwegian MOD - Rear Admiral Jan Eirik Finseth, Commander Naval Forces North Norway (COMNAVNON) is the Norwegian Principal.

What are the projects that fall under AMEC?

There are two categories of AMEC Projects: those involving radioactive wastes, the 1.X series and those involving non-radioactive wastes, the 2.X series. **Three project areas deal with radioactive waste technologies:** naval spent nuclear fuel management technologies, radioactive waste management technologies and radiation safety and monitoring technologies.

Two additional project areas deal with non-radioactive waste problems: technologies for remediation of hazardous waste on military bases in the Arctic (**this project involves only Norway and Russia**) and “clean ship” technologies for the collection and processing of ship-generated waste. Projects are approved by the AMEC Principals and are primarily focused on “**off the shelf**” **technology demonstrations**.

What is the completion status of initial AMEC projects?

Four of eleven funded projects are completed: an interim storage cask for spent naval nuclear fuel; demonstration of solid radioactive waste storage coating technologies; delivery of radiation dosimetry devices and training; and examination of technologies for the collection and comprehensive processing of non-radioactive ship wastes (such as oily water). Further projects involving US technical assistance are ongoing.

How much has been spent on AMEC programs?

Through the end of 2002, AMEC projects have received \$41.4M. These funds have been contributed from the three participating nations as follows: Norway, \$9.9; US, \$25M; Russian Federation, \$6.5M.

Will there be other projects in the future?

A Strategic Plan, approved by the Principals identifies additional projects for consideration. These new projects will consist of additional technology demonstrations focused on critical environmental concerns in the Arctic and Western Pacific.

Where are AMEC projects and activities conducted?

Meetings of the AMEC participants rotate among the U.S., Norway, and Russia. Most of the projects focus on the Arctic region or Russian sites that border the Arctic Ocean and surrounding waters. However, the U.S. is seeking Congressional authority to expand AMEC into the Western Pacific beginning in October 2002.

Why is there a need for the AMEC Program?

Although our militaries are committed to protecting the environment, there is inevitably the potential to cause harm to the environment, particularly a fragile ecosystem like the Arctic. The populations that border this region need an environmentally sound Arctic to ensure their health and, in some cases, their economic livelihood. These AMEC projects help ensure that the militaries of the respective countries do their part to help assess, preserve, and repair the Arctic environment.

Who implements the projects at the expert level?

Each country draws on scientists, engineers, and other Arctic professionals from within the ranks of the military and elsewhere, as needed. Within the U.S., this represents an interagency effort with the Department of Defense, Department of State, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Agency participating. The Department of Defense is the lead agency for the AMEC effort.

Have any other countries expressed interest in joining AMEC?

The United Kingdom has expressed strong interest in joining AMEC. Other countries have also expressed interest but there are no formal plans at this time. AMEC is currently a trilateral cooperation, however, other countries may take part in the individual AMEC projects after agreement between the three parties.

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