

The peculiarities and vicissitudes of the regulatory approval system in the process of preparations of Joint International-Russian Arctic expeditions.

(Based on AARI experience)

Planning an expedition requires about a year of time for obtaining permissions from the national regulatory approval system, in particular when it is a first-time planning. The further expedition preparation could take another half year while awaiting permissions from the regulatory approval system, taking into account the gained experience and papers already correctly prepared.

In AARI, applications for the expeditions for the next year are collected centrally in May of the present year and are sent to Roshydromet in June and then follow the necessary procedure through the chain of authorities.

The major content of the approvals that have some (not fundamental) differences for clearance of marine and landbased expeditions are: the purpose and objectives of the expedition; national and international projects (contracts) of an expedition; the list of Russian and foreign partners with addresses, contact persons; venue of expeditions with geographic coordinates; list of instruments and tools (foreign-made or manufactured in Russia with the use of foreign technologies) that are used to obtain information, the list of observations for each item of the research program and timing and lines of transmission of information to foreign partners.

Special importance is given to the preparation of a list of instruments, named ITSNK (foreign technical means of observation and control), which is reviewed and approved by FSTEC of Russia (Federal Service for Technical and Export Control). Each instrument is characterized with several mandatory items: the name of the instrument; the model; the manufacturer; the country of origin; the serial number; the main parameters measured; the accuracy of measured parameters; whether it is a log device or a data transmitter via communication systems; the site of instrument setting; and the frequency of its use during the expedition.

Receiving of approval by FSTEC takes a lot of time. As a rule questions arise relating to clarification of information about an instrument provided by the applicant. Every additional question means an exchange of letters between the applicant and FSTEC, which takes at least a month. The arising questions can be multiple. It is useful to have direct contacts with FSTEC regional authorities of the Russian Federation to resolve issues dynamically. These relationships are usually forged after a few application processes. Besides observation instruments an application request should include so-called means of recording, processing and transmission of information or, in other words, computers. The personal computer of each participant of the expedition is to be included in the application with all necessary information listed above. The past experience of joint expeditions shows that this point could be checked rigorously (e.g. withdrawal of a computer and complete verification of its content in Russia). The applicant is not always able to produce the number of the PC a year ahead in

the application, because this computer may not have been purchased yet. In this case the number is forwarded to FSTEC upon receipt of the instrument.

After receiving the approval from the FSTEC, the application is to be approved in other authorities (at least in 5 authority borders of military and naval departments). After receiving a permission to use ITSNK in the Russian Federation in the case of land-based expeditions it is forwarded to Roshydromet or, in the case of marine expeditions, to the Ministry of Education and Science. From then on the expedition can be initiated. Now, the commitments of an applicant are just beginning to take effect. During marine expeditions an applicant should inform headquarters of the fleet about the vessel position twice a day. During land expeditions this is not required but during all expeditions any agency authorized to monitor observations may send an accompanying observer. Also, a FSTEC Commission can be sent to monitor the studies compliance at the venue of an expedition (on specific devices and types of observations).

After the expedition the applicant gives a short report within a months term. Then the procedure of transmission of the data to be received by a foreign party begins. Foreign participants can receive their expedition observational data only after the data examination by the relevant authorities. Therefore, the results of all initial observations are electronically transmitted to the Russian applicant, who organizes the expertise and obtains the permission to transfer the data to the foreign party. This work, which requires payment, takes at least 2 months. Foreign partners must also provide observational data to produce a report on the expedition, which is forwarded to the department of Database.

The export of collected samples to a foreign party (water, air, rocks, organic material, soil, etc.) is the most laborious and time-consuming procedure, which may be ineffective. According to the existing Russian regulations and laws the transmission samples to a foreign party requires a large number of documents which are prepared in advance before the start of an expedition (e.g., application of local land expedition to the regions of the Federation in Federal Service for Supervision of Natural Resource Usage authorities and Federal Agency on Subsoil Usage to include to the plans of these organizations and get the opportunity to export these samples out of expedition sites to St. Petersburg or Moscow or other regions of the Federation.) The same document is required for an export of samples outside Russia. On the expedition conclusion the samples are examined in St. Petersburg. The export permission is reviewed and then the approval is submitted to the Federal Service for Supervision of Natural Resource Usage in Moscow. There, the possibility of transferring of samples to foreign partners of the applicant is considered. If an approval is given, the documents are forwarded to the Ministry of Economy, where samples of rocks, water are considered not as scientific materials but as construction materials. Each type of sample demands its own expert review. For example, the bone samples can be exported from Russia only with the permission of the Ministry of Culture.

In general, obtaining a permit for the export of samples can take half a year or more. So far none of the applicants have passed the full procedure of receiving permission for a sample

export. At the moment we are trying to draw up the sample export to Germany following the complete procedure, but we do not have the guarantee of an entirely legal sample export. Therefore, any foreign partner wishing to work in the territory of the Russian Federation may be advised to process samples in Russian laboratories insofar as it is possible in the present conditions of cooperation.

Customs clearance of goods (mainly instruments arriving from abroad) is not a swift procedure either. One should calculate with at least one month for customs clearance when planning a complex expedition with dozens of instruments labeled by customs as a "temporary import" and related consumables that are released for free circulation. Import of chemicals, gases for instruments demand more complex clearance, cost and time.

Therefore it is better to order on Russian territory, taking into account that many foreign-made chemicals that are sold in Russia must be ordered at least 3 months prior to the departure of the expedition.

All participants of the joint expedition should get a pass for the work in the border zone of the Russian Federation. As a rule, all Arctic expeditions take place exactly in the border zone. The registration of personal or collective passes to the border zone for foreign participants takes 2 months, Russian participants need one month after producing relevant applications and documents to the territorial authority (statements, copies of passports, documents from the place of employment).

Visa support is also necessary. To obtain a visum at the Directorate of the Federal Migration Service takes up to 2 months for foreign participants.

Thus, the organization of international expeditions is troublesome and lengthy. Russian applicants for an international expedition must be ready for work in expeditions according the application and report on the expedition for the entire calendar year.

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