

## TRUENORTH

Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies Monthly Bulletin

**MARCH 2025** 





ARCTIC AND EXTREME COLD WEATHER OPERATIONS

**FEBRUARY 2025** 

# TSC supports US warfighter readiness in new Arctic operations manual

The Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies recently played a role in shaping the U.S. Army's newly published Arctic and Extreme Cold Weather Operations manual, reinforcing the Department of Defense's commitment to readiness in one of the world's most challenging environments.

ATP 3-90.96/MCTP 12-10E, Arctic and Extreme Cold Weather Operations, is a dual-designated Army/Marine Corps manual that provides Soldiers and Marines with concepts and techniques associated with conducting arctic operations.

The collaboration, sparked through the TSC's Arctic Regional Security Orientation Course (ARSOC), exemplifies how specialized knowledge and operational requirements can converge to drive doctrinal improvement.

**Continued on Page 3** 



## TSC strengthens German delegation's understanding of US Arctic security challenges and opportunities

Against the backdrop of Alaska's expansive terrain and unpredictable elements, senior German military officers and civilian defense leaders immersed themselves in the challenges and complexities of Arctic security during a two-day senior executive Arctic seminar hosted by the Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies.

The delegation from the German National General/Admiral Staff Officer Capstone Course (NGASOC), based at the Bundeswehr Command and Staff College, visited Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson March 12–13 for a deep dive into the strategic landscape of the High North. The event marked the first stop of their multinational Arctic study tour, which also included Canada, Iceland, and Norway.

As part of their capstone course, "The Arctic Region – Current and Future Challenges in the High North," the NGASOC participants engaged in a series of lectures, discussions, and scenario-based exercises led by the School for Arctic Security Studies.

To set the tone, the course began with an orientation led by Matthew Bell, Dean of the School for Arctic Security Studies. Using a large map of Alaska, Bell visually demonstrated the vastness of the U.S. Arctic—reinforcing the central theme that understanding the region begins with appreciating its immense scale and complexity.

"The tyranny of distance in Alaska is real," Bell said. "I've operated in this region for decades, and yet it still takes eight hours just to reach the forward

**Continued on Page 2** 





#### Continued from German delegation story on Page 1

edge of the mission space. No one service or nation can tackle this alone—that's why interoperability matters."

On the first day, the NGASOC delegation also received a command-level briefing from Alaskan Command and the Alaskan North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) Region, bridging strategic insights with operational realities and setting the stage for more hands-on exploration.

At the start of the second day, Bell emphasized the importance of connecting strategy with execution. "Yesterday morning we discussed Arctic policy and strategy from the soft-power, people-centered side of the house," he said. "Then in the afternoon at Alaskan Command, you saw the operationalization of those ideas—the tactical approaches to that 'Art of War,' shaped by the region's harsh realities."

Participants were asked to reflect. Projected on the screen was a single question: "What surprised you about the Arctic?" Answers pointed to the speed of change in the operational environment, the fragility of infrastructure, and the intricacies of coordinating across domains and nations.

Bell elaborated, "It's not just about operational environmental change—it's about institutional adaptability. We need to be nimble enough to adjust our infrastructure, strategy, and partnerships as the Arctic evolves. That's why these engagements matter."

TSC Director Randy "Church" Kee used the opportunity to stress the importance of historical awareness and lived experience in Arctic operations. "Success in the Arctic often comes down to understanding the people who live there," Kee said. "Listening and learning from those who call the Arctic home—that's often the difference between mission success and failure."

Kee also highlighted the distinct nature of the North American Arctic—particularly along the North Pacific rim—pointing out volcanic activity, vast wilderness, and extreme geographic isolation.

"This part of the Arctic is significantly different than the Eastern Canadian or European High North," he said. "Each region demands a tailored approach."

The lessons throughout the course supported key U.S. Department of Defense priorities by reinforcing integrated deterrence and strengthening international partnerships that enhance military security cooperation and capacity.

They also underscored the vital roles of U.S. Northern Command and NORAD in securing the homeland and maintaining a persistent presence in

the Arctic, while acknowledging U.S. European Command's leadership in advancing mutually beneficial security cooperation with NATO Allies.

"We're giving you a very holistic U.S. government perspective," Kee told the group. "But what matters is that you ask the questions and form your own analysis. That's how we prepare for the future—together."

As the NGASOC delegation continued on to the next phase of their Arctic tour, the time spent with Ted Stevens Center faculty added a vital layer to their strategic education. For both nations, the experience reinforced the value of building security cooperation through education, research, and meaningful engagement.

"As you come face to face with the Arctic you begin to understand what needs to change," Bell said. "And that understanding is what helps shape the future of policy and defense planning in this strategically vital region."







#### Continued from Arctic operations manual story on Page 1

"The Ted Stevens Center's contributions to the Army's updated Arctic and Extreme Cold Weather Operations manual underscore the center's direct impact on warfighter readiness and defense preparedness in the Arctic," said Dr. Christine Duprow, Lead Curriculum Developer for the School for Arctic Security Studies. "Their insights directly informed revisions that strengthen force survivability, posture, and deterrence in one of the most strategically contested environments."

Duprow said the partnership demonstrates the value of regional specialization, inter-service cooperation and research-informed input in shaping doctrine aligned with the Pentagon's priorities.

"This collaboration demonstrates how regional specialization and research-informed insights enhance the Department of Defense's overarching goals—restoring the warrior ethos, reinforcing deterrence, and ensuring our military remains the most capable and resilient force in the world," said Matthew Bell, Dean for the SASS.

Bell also extended a special thanks to contributors from the TSC team, Dr. Kelsey Frazier, and U.S. Army Maj. Stephen Gagnon (TSC Arctic Fellow), whose efforts are formally recognized on page xiii of the manual.

"Their impact demonstrates how integrated expertise helps operationalize the Department's core priorities—defense, deterrence, and warrior ethos—in real and enduring ways," Bell said.

SCAN TO SEE THE NEW FULL MANUAL







SCAN TO WATCH THE LATEST EPISODE

### Assessing the US Arctic from an Ally's perspective

In case you missed it, Arctic Connections Episode 6, "Assessing the US Arctic from an Ally's perspective," provides an allied perspective on the U.S. strategic approach to the Arctic from Dr. Paal Hilde, Professor at the Norwegian Institute of Defence Studies, with host, Matt Hickey.

Hickey and Hilde discuss strategic competition in the Arctic, examining U.S. and Chinese interests. They also examine the role of Greenland in the Arctic. Finally, our guests provide a normative discussion on what this says about the Arctic as a region in the context of broader geopolitical affairs.



## Bridging frontiers: How the TSC is reframing Arctic readiness for US warfighters

As global competition intensifies across the northern latitudes, the Arctic is no longer seen as a remote frontier—it has emerged as a vital operational theater for U.S. homeland defense and power projection. From Feb. 24–27, the Society of American Military Engineers Anchorage Post hosted the Arctic Industry Forum, drawing more than 200 military and civilian professionals to examine Arctic infrastructure, energy resilience, and emergency logistics.

Staff from the Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies participated throughout the event, with Associate Director for Strategic Engagement Matthew Hickey delivering an opening overview on Arctic strategy and emerging security issues that framed the three-day agenda.

While infrastructure and science were central to many sessions, the conversations quickly evolved into something deeper: how Arctic expertise and operational capabilities

are no longer regional concerns they're essential components of national and international defense planning.

### The Arctic as a theater—and a gateway

At the heart of the forum was the concept of the "Arctic Pacific"—a growing recognition that Alaska's infrastructure, engineering knowledge, and strategic location directly support North American Aerospace Defense Command, U.S. Northern Command, and U.S. Indo-Pacific Command operations.

"I was surprised to see how many people were centering their discussion around the Arctic Pacific as a region with its own role to play in U.S. security," Moerbe said. "Every breakout group or briefing that I attended was strongly tied to defense directly or infrastructure that could be considered dual-use." From pre-positioned airfield repair kits at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson to runway construction techniques adaptable to both Arctic and Pacific climates, Moerbe said the forum helped highlight how Arctic solutions are increasingly "exportable" to address contingency planning and power projection challenges in the Western Pacific.

"These projects aren't just about Alaska," he said. "They're part of a broader effort to support the fight elsewhere, especially in the INDOPACOM theater."

That overlap is already fueling new research efforts at the TSC. Moerbe is currently leading a policy paper focused on maritime logistics in the Aleutian chain, aligning infrastructure development with the Navy's Distributed Maritime Operations concept. A colleague is developing a parallel analysis based on the Air Force's Agile Combat Employment (ACE) model.

"We both think that the Arctic and Alaska's Aleutian chain hold some potential to resolve that problem," he said. "And this forum helped us identify where research is already underway—and where there are still gaps."

#### Supporting USNORTHCOM and strengthening deterrence

As the Department of Defense's Regional Center for Arctic security studies, the TSC directly supports USNORTHCOM's Arctic mission and broader homeland defense responsibilities. The center also creates a unique space where

**Continued on Page 5** 

<u>Innovate</u> <u>Experiment</u> Educate Analyze Engage

#### Continued from Bridging frontiers story on Page 1

warfighters, engineers, researchers, and policy professionals can engage on issues that often remain stove piped within separate agencies.

"The combatant commands need not view each other as competitors for resources," Moerbe said. "They can solve some of each other's problems through coordinated effort in this Arctic-Pacific region."

That coordination reflects the Secretary of Defense's strategic priorities: Restoring the Warrior Ethos, Rebuilding Our Military, and Reestablishing Deterrence. For Moerbe, that means ensuring operational planning and strategic thinking remain rooted in the reality of what can be built, sustained, and defended.

"As an Army officer, I would not normally have a reason or the opportunity to interact with the industry people that can say it's possible—or it's not possible—to build something here," he said. "This gave me the opportunity to hear from the experts... and for them to hear from me about what I need as the person who's going to be utilizing the hardware or the infrastructure."

Moerbe also emphasized the value of these kinds of engagements in identifying operational challenges that don't always make it up through formal acquisition channels.

"It can be an effective way of alerting industry to problems that the warfighter at lower echelon might experience or might be grappling with," he said.

#### Innovation and infrastructure in the High North

Throughout the forum, speakers addressed the unique engineering, logistical, and energy-related challenges of operating in the Arctic. Permafrost degradation, seismic instability, and austere supply chains make infrastructure development far more difficult—and expensive—than in other regions.

Dr. Haliehana Stepetin, a faculty member at the TSC, said that Alaska's infrastructure suffers from a lack of redundancy. "Much of Alaska's critical infrastructure serves as the 'only' one of its kind," she explained, referencing roads, railways, and ports. "Resilience in the Arctic context... can be understood as the ability to withstand, endure, and recover from destruction."

Innovative solutions were also presented—ranging from 3D-printed construction materials to alternative concrete mixtures designed for cold-weather environments. But across every discussion, one truth remained: Arctic readiness is not optional. It is a prerequisite for national defense.

### A warfighter's perspective on the way ahead

For Moerbe the experience of attending the Arctic Industry Forum through the Ted Stevens Center was transformative. It bridged the gap between tactical-level experience and strategic-level planning, giving him tools to influence future military decision-making from a position grounded in both research and reality.

"I don't think I understood the value without being physically present at

this event and having a chance to be around people who are motivated to solve similar kinds of problems," he said. "It would only be partially successful if we didn't have military members present at these things—because they're the ones that are on the ground."

As the Department of Defense continues to adapt to new security challenges in the Arctic and beyond, Moerbe believes the Ted Stevens Center is helping prepare the next generation of warfighters and leaders —not just to think differently, but to plan and act decisively.

"That's how we build readiness," he said. "That's how we restore deterrence. And that's how we secure the Arctic—and the Pacific—with one integrated mindset."







#### Reflections from Arctic Multidomain Legal Course (AMLC) 25-01

The Arctic operational environment is undergoing significant transformation. The readiness of service members to accomplish their mission depends upon a foundational understanding of legalities across all domains. To train defense and security professionals in this regard, the School for Arctic Security Studies virtually hosted the Arctic Multidomain Legal Course (AMLC) March 4-6, 2025. With more than 50 participants from North American and European countries, participants developed basic knowledge of the legal principles, frameworks, and instruments relevant to the Arctic in the maritime and air domains.

Course participants enhanced their competencies through an in-depth exploration of critical legal and operational issues in the Arctic. Key areas of focus included the strategic significance of freedom of navigation in the region, the regulatory frameworks governing airspace operations particularly foundational elements of Air Defense Identification Zones (ADIZs), international norms on aircraft interception, and emerging legal considerations surrounding high-altitude unmanned balloon systems. Training also examined how China strategically employs lawfare to challenge legitimacy and erode established legal norms in the Arctic.

The program culminated in a capstone training simulating a United Nations Security Council session, during which participants demonstrated their proficiency by presenting legal arguments in a complex, scenario-based environment. Participant feedback emphasized the course's exceptional value, describing the AMLC as "stellar," "comprehensive," "engaging," and "timely." One participant encapsulated the general sentiment, calling it a "must-take" course to best prepare security and defense practitioners to deter war. The next virtual AMLC is scheduled for May 6-8, see QR code below to sign up.



SCAN TO REGISTER FOR THESE COURSES



### **UPCOMING COURSES**

**Arctic Regional Security Orientation Course (ARSOC)** 

• Virtual, April 21-25, 2025

**Arctic Multi-Domain Law Course (AMLC)** 

• Virtual, May 6-8, 2025



## TSC Alumni event highlights civil-military emergency cooperation across Arctic, and reinforces new DoD priorities

The Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies hosted its third Alumni event March 14, bringing together defense professionals from the United States and Canada to examine the evolving roles of military and civilian organizations in Arctic emergency management. The event, titled "Civil-Military Roles in Arctic Emergency Management," emphasized the importance of multinational cooperation in responding to Arctic crises while aligning with Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth's priorities of restoring the warrior ethos, rebuilding the military, and reestablishing deterrence.

Facilitated by TSC Alumni Specialist
Doug Hulsey, the virtual panel
featured insights from George Tolar,
TSC's Chief of Staff; Dr. Christian
Leuprecht, Professor at the Royal
Military College of Canada and
Editor-in-Chief of the Canadian Military
Journal; and Maria Jontén, Project
Director at the Swedish Defence
University's Strategic

Implications and Innovations Center.

The event drew 38 participants, including 19 U.S. military alumni and seven Canadian defense professionals, underscoring the Center's mission to promote a unified, security-focused Arctic community through sustained alumni engagement.

"As a Department of Defense Regional Center, the Ted Stevens Center supports the Arctic mission by developing professional, cross-national networks that strengthen regional security and increase domain awareness," said Hulsey. "That's exactly what we saw at this event—shared expertise and a shared commitment to cooperation across the Arctic region."

The 90-minute discussion addressed complex coordination challenges in Arctic disaster response and offered real-world examples of civil-military integration from the United States, Canada, and Sweden. Tolar, a former emergency management director with

experience in both federal and local-level crisis response, opened the discussion by framing the Arctic as a uniquely vulnerable and logistically challenging environment.

"The challenges operating in and around the Arctic are going to require innovative solutions going forward. We are joined here today with the shared idea that the Arctic is a logistical challenge, and it exists simultaneously as one of the world's most vulnerable, but also vital, regions," said Tolar. "This panel helps us better understand how Arctic nations organize, coordinate, and operate in this unique environment."

Panelists discussed how Arctic nations differ in their response frameworks but often face common obstacles—operational environment changes, limited infrastructure, and the increasing operational burden placed on militaries and security professionals. Leuprecht highlighted the strain placed on the Canadian Armed Forces in recent years due to increased domestic deployments, such as supporting wildfire evacuations and pandemic responses.

"We're seeing growth in the complexity and duration of these missions," Leuprecht said. "There's a tension between public expectations and military capacity—especially when resources and personnel are already stretched thin."

Jontén offered a Nordic perspective, describing how Sweden's "Total Defense" model integrates civil society and military forces in a comprehensive preparedness strategy. However, she acknowledged there is still work to do

**Continued on Page 8** 

#### Continued from Alumni event story on Page 7

in improving public-private cooperation and adapting traditional models to modern threats and geopolitical realities.

"Today's Arctic demands flexibility," Jontén said. "The climate is less predictable, infrastructure is sparse, and we can no longer assume traditional roles will apply. Cross-border and civil-military partnerships are essential."

Throughout the session, audience members engaged through a live Q&A, posing questions about command integration, policy constraints, and the use of military resources in public health and disaster scenarios. As participants discussed shared challenges, the event reinforced the role of alumni in building interoperable, multinational networks.

In his closing remarks, Hulsey connected the event to the Secretary of Defense's priorities, framing the alumni community as a force multiplier for Arctic readiness and resilience.

"Our mission is the same," Hulsey said. "Reflecting on Secretary Hegseth's priorities—we are all part of restoring the warrior ethos, rebuilding our militaries, and reestablishing deterrence regardless of our nationalities."

He emphasized that restoring the warrior ethos requires a shared sense of purpose among security professionals across borders.



"Our alumni network provides you all the opportunity to cooperate to meet our various nations' goals and Arctic objectives," Hulsey said.
"Whether from the civil or military side, we collectively represent the capability needed to meet Arctic challenges head-on."

In calling for greater collaboration, Hulsey underscored that unity among Allies signals strength to potential adversaries.

"Reestablishing deterrence means standing by our Allies," he said. "That puts our enemies on notice. You are a cohort of security and defense professionals brought together by a common mission."

As the Stevens Center continues to expand its programming and deepen alumni engagement, upcoming events will continue to foster multinational dialogue and professional development in support of a free, stable, and secure Arctic.

"Let us know how we can help," Hulsey said. "This alumni network is here for you."

#### MARITIME RISK SYMPOSIUM Protecting and Defending U.S. Arctic Maritime Sovereignly Interests through Deference



TUESDAY MAY 13, 2025

8 am - 4 pm (AKDT 12 pm - 8 pm (EDT)



Hosted this year by the Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies, the 16th annual Maritime Risk Symposium provides a vital platform for interdisciplinary collaboration and informed discussions on the evolving risks and opportunities in the Arctic maritime domain. This year's theme, "Protecting and Defending U.S. Arctic Maritime Sovereignty Interests through Deterrence," underscores the importance of safeguarding national interests in the region. MRS 2025 will take place on May 13, 2025, from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. (AKDT), as a virtual event, with limited in-person attendance

An optional Arctic Fundamentals Seminar will be offered on May 12, 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. (AKDT), providing critical insights into Arctic governance, security dynamics, history, and international frameworks. For more information scan the OR code.

Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska.



at Joint Base

SCAN TO LEARN MORE ABOUT MRS2025



Volume 2 marks another milestone in the development of the Ted Steven Center for Arctic Security Studies as we contribute through research, education, and engagement to the growing body of knowledge on behalf of the Department of Defense. As you read on, you'll recognize that Volume 2 is dedicated to Defense with a "Capital D" versus other aspects of security and security cooperation. As global competition grows and deterrence is measured in demonstrated capabilities across the NATO alliance, this volume sets out to consider hard power and strategic competition in the Arctic.

#### Check out this month's JAS article highlight!



"China's Quest for Power in the Arctic: Protecting Navigational Freedom and Safeguarding Fishery Resources"

by U.S. Coast Guard Cmdr. JoEllen Arons

In the era of Great Power competition, China and the United States are vying for power across the globe. As the operational environment changes, China, a non-Arctic nation, demonstrates a consistent interest in the strategic Arctic region. This article explores the depth of China's Arctic strategy and its impact on the United States' maritime security.

#### ICE-PPR

### Nav/ISR

Navigation, Intelligence, Surveilland & Reconnaissance Workshop

The ICE-PPR NavISR Research Warkshop will bring together researchers, operators, and planners from the US joint force and partner nations to share current research, identify research priorities, and examine proposed international project arrangements for Arctic situational awareness challenges at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels.

PHASE 1
VIRTUAL EVENT

29 APRIL - 1 MAY 2025



Co-hosted by the Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies and the Cold Region Research and Engineering Laboratory, phase one of the event will be held virtually. Pending updated U.S. government travel guidance, an in-person phase two followis tentatively scheduled for June 17-18 at CRPEL in Hanover, New Hampshire.

Please direct questions to matthew.schell.6@us.af.mil or john.p.nugent15.mil@us.navy.mil.

#### ICE-PPR Nav/ISR Workshop now virtual + in-person phases

The 2025 International

Cooperative Engagement Program for Polar Research (ICE-PPR) Navigation, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Workshop has shifted to a two-part format. Join us virtually April 29-May 1 for daily 3- to 4-hour sessions featuring expert **presentations** and interactive discussions. Pending updated U.S. government travel guidance, an in-person follow-on is tentatively scheduled for June **17–18** at the Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory (CRREL) in Hanover, New Hampshire. This expanded format increases access while continuing to foster Arctic security collaboration. For more details about this update, contact matthew.schell.6@us.af.mil or john.p.nugent15.mil@us.navy.mil.





Scan the QR code to see the latest Journal and the JAS Writer's Guide

## Journal of Arctic Security, Volume 4 Call for Papers

The Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies announces an article submission deadline of **May 31, 2025**, for contributions to JAS Vol. 4 for release in fall 2025.

Through the release of national defense and security strategies, the U.S. and its Allies and partners have demonstrated a commitment to supporting and strengthening Arctic governance—the actors, institutions, frameworks, legal principles and norms that comprise the current rules-based order. Researchers are invited to submit papers on topics related to Arctic governance, including but not limited to:

- Evaluation of the challenges to the **rules-based order in the Arctic** and implications for national defense and security
- The future of the Arctic Council in light of tensions related to the war in Ukraine
- Assessments of existing frameworks, management, regulation, and enforcement
- New or improved Arctic governance framework opportunities for the U.S. and its Allies
- Implications of Russia's threatened exit from UNCLOS
- Evaluation of **U.S. position on UNCLOS** as customary law
- Ramifications of the U.S. Extended Continental Shelf announcement
- Governance as it relates to economic and infrastructure development
- And, research furthering academic discourse on topics from Volumes 1-3.

Submissions of 4,000 – 6,500 words in APA Style with author's curriculum vitae will be accepted by the editorial staff at **TSC-JACSS@groups.af.mil**.

JAS is a peer-reviewed academic publication. Articles are unclassified, and readers can access articles from all over the world. Submissions will be accepted in English language, clearly written for an informed audience of defense and security affairs professionals and academics.



Dear and Distinguished Colleagues,

As winter transitions to an early spring here in Alaska, the Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies remains dedicated to advancing relevant measures of education, analysis, and engagement in support of U.S. and Allied defense of the Arctic. This month, the Stevens Center continued the vital work of strengthening international partnerships and cooperative security frameworks to enhance deterrence.

We were honored to welcome a senior German delegation as part of their National General/Admiral Staff Officer Capstone Course, reinforcing the Center's growing role in strategic-level education and transatlantic cooperation. Our experts also contributed directly to the U.S. Army and Marine Corps' updated Arctic and Extreme Cold Weather Operations manual, ensuring our warfighters are better prepared for success in the world's most austere conditions. Additionally, our virtual alumni event fostered multinational dialogue on civil-military emergency management, emphasizing the importance of interoperability, domain awareness, and professional networks in Arctic crisis response. Finally, preparations for the Arctic-Pacific Security Dialogue continue, ensuring a premier

forum for discussing strategies to defend U.S. interests in the Pacific.

As part of a growing network of professionals committed to advancing security and defense in the Arctic region, your engagement, insights, and analysis make our community stronger. I am sincerely grateful for your continued support of our Center and respectfully invite you to stay connected with us through our newly updated website.

Very Respectfully, Maj. Gen. (ret.) Randy "Church" Kee Director, Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies

#### Follow us online













# DIRECTOR'S MONTHLY READING RECOMMENDATION

## The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century by Thomas L. Friedman

In this book, the award-winning New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman demystifies the brave new world for readers, allowing them to make sense of the often bewildering global scene unfolding before their eyes. With his inimitable ability to translate complex foreign policy and economic issues, Friedman explains how the flattening of the world happened at the dawn of the twenty-first century; what it means to countries, companies, communities, and individuals; and how governments and societies can, and must, adapt.

