

STRATEGIC APPROACH FOR ARCTIC HOMELAND SECURITY

U.S. Department of Homeland Security



Homeland
Security

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*With honor and integrity,
we will safeguard the
American people, our
Homeland, and our values.*

Foreword

The foundational mission of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is to protect the Homeland, the American people, and our way of life from threats, domestic and international. This complex threat environment is no more evident than in the Polar Regions, where vast distances, limited resources, and the physical environment are both daunting and dynamic.

Strategic competitors, allies, and like-minded partners are increasingly prioritizing this region, contending for military, economic, and diplomatic advantage and influence. Nation-state actors continue seeking opportunities to exploit the Arctic for strategic benefit, declaring the Arctic a national imperative by making significant investments in new or refurbished capabilities and critical infrastructure. Of particular concern are threat

actors who remain intent, directly or indirectly, on exerting malign influence that undermines global security and the international rules-based order.

The 2020 DHS Strategic Approach for Arctic Homeland Security charts a vision that advances the Department's Homeland Security Arctic mission, one that is expanding by the day. As the overt United States Government (USG) presence in the region, DHS will fortify our long-standing role in the Arctic by seeking innovative and resourceful ways to address challenges from non-traditional actors of the DHS Enterprise. The Department leads homeland security initiatives across this Nation, with an increased focus on the Arctic, to defeat current and emerging threats across the breadth of the Department's authorities and Component



missions. Working with like-minded allies and partners, DHS will bolster adherence to the rules-based order and responsible, sustainable growth across the Arctic region. The dedicated men and women of DHS will safeguard Americans against threats, both foreign and domestic; respond to national emergencies and contingencies; and, preserve the Nation's economic prosperity and homeland security.

I am pleased to present the 2021 DHS Strategic Approach for Arctic Homeland Security.

*Chad F. Wolf;
Acting Secretary*

*U.S. Department of Homeland Security
January 11, 2021*

“Our mission is anything but easy. It is one that is increasingly complex and expansive: one that transcends borders, mission-sets, and threat-streams.”

- Acting Secretary Chad Wolf, State of the Homeland, September 9, 2020

Executive Summary

The Department is at a critical inflection point in its nascent history. Forged from the Nation-altering terrorist attacks of 9/11, DHS has grown and evolved during the past two decades to address all threats and hazards to the Homeland. While preventing the threat of terrorism by non-state actors like Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) continues to be a cornerstone of our homeland security strategy, DHS must also contend with Great Power Competition posed by nation-states such as the Peoples' Republic of China (PRC) and Russian Federation (RF), whose malign behavior is at its most acute point since the Department's creation. These actors increasingly deploy non-kinetic instruments of power and influence, including cyber-attacks, disinformation campaigns, and exploitation of our immigration and trade systems, to undermine the Homeland and our vital national security interests.

DHS stands ready to confront this evolving challenge. As an Arctic Nation, the United States must protect its citizens, sovereignty, and economic security interests throughout the region while bolstering the sovereignty and security interests of our like-minded allies and partners. As is evidenced by the June 9, 2020 Presidential Memorandum regarding Safeguarding U.S. National Security Interests in the Arctic and Antarctic Regions, DHS stands poised and well-positioned to play an expanding role in the Arctic Region. The Department will develop a coordinated approach that leverages the broad authorities and regional expertise of the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) while incorporating other unique DHS authorities and capabilities within U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), as well as other DHS Components.

In addition to Great Power Competition, DHS must also grapple with natural hazards increasing in both scope and scale. Upticks in natural events, including tsunamis, land fires, earthquakes, and other activities will increasingly necessitate expanded DHS presence. These challenges encompass a few of the many strategic and operational

challenges that DHS must be adequately resourced and positioned to tackle.

This strategic approach outlines DHS's unique role in the region and three goals the Department will endeavor to achieve in it:

1. Secure the Homeland through Persistent Presence and All Domain Awareness;
2. Strengthen Access, Response, and Resilience in the Arctic; and,
3. Advance Arctic Governance and a Rules-Based Order through Targeted National and International Engagement and Cooperation.

The Arctic's expanded relevance, coupled with the Department's significant regional investments,¹ requires DHS to have a unified, deliberate, and forward-looking approach. The Strategic Approach for Arctic Homeland Security fully leverages the broad range of DHS authorities, capabilities, capacity and partnerships to achieve the goals laid out in this document.

1. Reference Presidential Memorandum on Safeguarding U.S. National Interests in the Arctic and Antarctic Regions, June 9, 2020.

Introduction

Since the American flag was raised over Sitka, Alaska, in 1867, the United States has been an Arctic² nation with extensive rights and responsibilities. Our regional national security interests and mandates are significant and continue to expand, in part, due to diminishing sea ice and increased accessibility, fueling the emergence of Great Power Competition in the region. The Arctic's traditional utility as a geo-strategic buffer is eroding, as the changing physical environment and subsequent economic development have brought more access and interest to the region. Faced with the Arctic's changing landscape and the rise in nation-state ambitions throughout the region, DHS must recalibrate and reinforce its efforts to address emerging opportunities and vulnerabilities in the Arctic in close coordination with like-minded domestic and international partners to protect the sovereignty of the Homeland and our national interests.

The U.S. Arctic is dynamic; evolving environmentally, operationally, and strategically. A challenging landscape and seascape, combined with the sheer vastness of distance from the mainland United States, austere communications, and limited infrastructure, exacerbate the harshness of Arctic operations. Types and levels of commercial activity are also transforming, from a surge in oil and gas exploration nearly a decade ago to increases in vessel transits and recent expansion of eco-tourism. These changes in types and locations of activity, along with changes in the physical environment, are coinciding with the reemergence of Great Power Competition across the globe, which is exemplified in the Arctic.

The USCG has long held the primary USG role in overt – albeit resource-limited – presence in the Arctic, through both its base and facility presence in Alaska as well as expeditionary cutters and forces that deploy to the Arctic to execute the full range of its statutory missions. These roles and responsibilities include representing American interests in international navigation governing bodies, conducting search and rescue missions, ensuring vessel safety, fisheries enforcement, and pollution response across the entire region. These functions reinforce U.S. sovereignty, strengthen rules and norms

2. For definitional purposes, the Arctic consists of the Arctic Ocean, adjacent seas, and parts of Alaska (United States), Canada, Finland, Greenland (Denmark), Iceland, Norway, Russia, and Sweden. <https://arctic-council.org/en/about/states/the-united-states/>

for a safe and stable Arctic, enhance partner nation cooperation, and promote a resilient and secure Arctic. Although vast, the USCG's primary role in the region will continue to expand and evolve.

Changing geostrategic and environmental dynamics, however, necessitate an increasingly expansive and integrated leadership role for the Department in the Arctic. This new operating environment will not only require additional maritime security presence but will also necessitate new operational capabilities and additional resources to perform cyber and infrastructure security missions, trade and travel facilitation, and natural disaster response in the near term; and inevitably, additional mission sets.

VITAL NATIONAL INTERESTS IN THE ARCTIC

As mentioned above, Alaska's statehood makes the United States an Arctic nation with extensive sovereign rights and responsibilities to its citizens and the broader global community. Alaska is the only location within the United States where we share two international borders, one with Canada (our nearest ally) and the other with the RF, a strategic competitor. The Arctic is also vital to the Nation's geostrategic interests, both from an economic and security perspective. First, it is rich with natural resources. According to a 2008 U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) report, "[t]he extensive Arctic continental shelves may constitute the geographically largest unexplored prospective area for petroleum remaining on Earth." The USGS estimates that 13 percent of the world's undiscovered oil reserves (90 billion barrels) and 30 percent of undiscovered gas reserves (1,700 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 44 billion barrels of natural gas liquids) are in the Arctic.³ These estimated resources do not include the more than 240 billion barrels of petroleum reserves that have already been discovered.

The Arctic Region contains significant mineral deposits, with nonfuel mineral production in the State of Alaska valued at slightly more than \$3 billion in 2015, or 4.17 percent of total U.S. mineral production.⁴ Identified minerals include gold, zinc, palladium, nickel, platinum, lead, rare-earth minerals, and gem-quality diamonds with both intrinsic value and significant importance to industrial processes, defense supply chains, consumer products manufacturing, and technological innovation. Bolstering rare earth mineral production and capabilities, needed to produce technological tools (semi-conductors, chips, smartphones, etc.), will continue to grow in geo-political

3. USGS Fact Sheet 2008-3049: Circum-Arctic Appraisal: Estimates of Undiscovered Oil and Gas North of the Arctic Circle. <http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2008/3049/>

4. USGS 2015 Minerals Yearbook [Advance Release], <https://prd-wret.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/assets/palladium/production/atoms/files/myb1-2015-stati.pdf>

importance as digitalization continues and the PRC continues to consolidate control of these materials.

It is equally as important as a trading route, accounting for nearly 1,000,000 square miles of U.S. territorial waters and the Homeland's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), comprising more coastline than in the contiguous United States.

CYBERSECURITY AND CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

As outlined in Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) 21, DHS has a leading role in coordinating and collaborating with public and private sector partners to bolster security and resilience of the Nation's 16 critical infrastructure⁵ sectors. This effort includes, but is not limited to, coordinating national efforts to reduce risk to communications, energy, transportation, commercial facilities, and emergency services, among other sectors.⁶ While the development of infrastructure and deployment of new technologies in the Arctic will provide opportunities, this development may also pose new vulnerabilities to the Homeland's critical infrastructure and subsequently present new challenges for DHS. This development is evidenced by the continued shift to intercontinental electronic communications through undersea cables, which account for more than 97 percent of communications driving international trade, official government communications, and citizen messaging via internet and phone.⁷ Alaska is an important submarine cable conduit linking global communications and transactions to and from the Continental United States. For example, in May 2020, a new fiber optic cable was laid linking Anchorage to the lower 48 states.⁸

Although there is built-in resilience for single point cable failures, a serious, multi-occurrence event (e.g., natural, adversarial, man-made, etc.) could have cascading impacts on U.S. trade and national security. The growing shift in digital infrastructure will require the Department, CISA in particular, to play an expanding

5. The term "critical infrastructure" has the meaning provided in section 1016(e) of the USA Patriot Act of 2001 (42 U.S.C. 5195c(e)), namely systems and assets, whether physical or virtual, so vital to the United States that the incapacity or destruction of such systems and assets would have a debilitating impact on security, national economic security, national public health or safety, or any combination of those matters.

6. Presidential Policy Directive -- Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience (PPD-21), [whitehouse.gov \(archives.gov\)](https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/05/21/ppd-21-critical-infrastructure-security-and-resilience).

7. Threats to Undersea Cable Communications, Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), September 28, 2017, (<https://www.dni.gov/files/PE/Documents/1--2017-AEP-Threats-to-Undersea-Cable-Communications.pdf>).

8. "New fiber-optic line connects Alaska to Lower 48 by Land," Liz Ruskin, Alaska Public Media, <https://www.alaskapublic.org/2020/05/26/new-fiber-optic-line-connects-alaska-to-lower-48-by-land/>.

role in supporting federal, state, local, territorial, and tribal (FSLTT) entities in the development of cyber- and infrastructure-security region becoming increasingly entangled in global transactions and digital messaging.

TRADE & ECONOMIC SECURITY

As previously noted, the changing physical environment will spur a plethora of economic opportunity and development in the region, including potential upticks in oil and gas exploration, critical mineral mining, trade route traffic, fishing, and tourism. Shorter shipping routes will attract competitors and increased vessel traffic through the Arctic. For reference, a shipping voyage to Japan from Rotterdam usually takes 25-30 days (via the Suez Canal or Panama Canal). Travel through the Northern Sea Route (NSR) would only take 18 days and avoid routes affected by piracy.⁹ The Department plays a crucial role in trade enforcement and commerce security on our seas and in our ports. CBP, specifically the Office of Field Operations (OFO) and Air and Marine Operations (AMO), must continue to proactively anticipate these changing trends, including illicit and nefarious activities precipitating increases in trade.

DISASTER RESPONSE

With rising commerce and traffic, the risks of natural and man-made disasters in scope, scale, and frequency will undoubtedly increase. Other DHS Components, specifically FEMA, must have the resources available to leverage their unique statutory authorities and resources, primarily designated under the Stafford Act¹⁰ to anticipate expanded recovery operation efforts in the region.

DEFENSE OF THE HOMELAND

The Arctic carries critical strategic significance as a buffer in fortifying our national defenses against nefarious actors, especially hostile nation-states. This vital national security interest lies at the intersection of DHS-led Homeland Security and Department of Defense-led (DOD) Homeland Defense missions, principally for DOD under the purview of the U.S.-Canadian North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM). As the only branch of the military within DHS, the USCG will play a vital role in implementing the Tri-Service Maritime Strategy “Advantage at Sea” in the Arctic. “The Coast Guard’s mission

9. The Emerging Arctic: Risks and Economic Opportunities, Council on Foreign Relations, Scott Borgerson, The Emerging Arctic: Risks and Economic Opportunities (cfr.org).

10. Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, PL 100-707, <https://www.fema.gov/disasters/stafford-act>

profile makes it the preferred maritime security partner for many nations vulnerable to coercion. Integrating its unique authorities—law enforcement, fisheries protection, marine safety, and maritime security—with Navy and Marine Corps capabilities expands the options [the Coast Guard] provide[s] to joint force commanders for cooperation and competition. In this era of long-term strategic competition, the Naval Service must be prepared to defend our national interests, anywhere – anytime. China’s and Russia’s coercive actions, their attempts to undermine our alliances and partnerships, and their aggressive military modernization efforts pose an undeniable threat to global security and prosperity.”¹¹

A “WHOLE OF DHS” APPROACH IS NEEDED

Due to changing dynamics, DHS must recalibrate and expand its regional operational aperture to address emerging opportunities and vulnerabilities in the Arctic.

The 2017 *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (NSS)¹² identifies the RF and PRC as strategic near-peer competitors challenging American power, influence, and interests. Both competitors are exploiting the evolving Arctic environment to their advantage, expanding capabilities, capacities, and influence in the region. The Arctic has taken center stage in the era of nation-state Great Power Competition; regional competition has intensified with states seeking to dominate coveted waterway access for trade routes and fishery access, military deployments, and resource extraction.

The *DHS Strategic Approach for Arctic Homeland Security* supports our national security strategy while providing strategic alignment and vision to protect the Homeland and secure prosperity in the region. This strategic approach complements the DOD Arctic Strategy, and embraces three overarching DHS equities: the Arctic as an emergent competitive space; the Arctic as the Homeland; and, the Arctic as a shared region for cooperation and collaboration.

The U.S. Arctic¹³ environment itself is also a strategic national asset. DHS has Living Marine Resource (LMR) management responsibilities, as well as an obligation to support tourism, and subsistence harvests (e.g., fishing, hunting, and whaling). The Bering Sea contains the largest seasonal marine mammal migrations in the world, including thousands of bowhead and beluga whales, hundreds of thousands of walrus

11. Advantage at Sea – Prevailing with Integrated All Domain Naval Power, December 2020, <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Dec/17/2002553481/-1/-1/0/triservicestrategy.pdf>

12. National Security Strategy of the United States of America, December 2017, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905-2.pdf>

and ice seals, and millions of migratory birds.¹⁴ In 2018, the five Arctic countries with coastlines bordering the Arctic Ocean – Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russia, and the United States – as well as China, Iceland, Japan, South Korea, and the European Union, signed a binding agreement preventing fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean until further study can be carried out. However, changing operating conditions could lead to commercial fisheries developing despite that agreement.¹⁵

DHS activities in the region span the Department’s entire portfolio, from emergency management to maritime, aviation, and border security, to natural resource protection, and the facilitation of commerce. This strategic approach, while broad in nature, seeks to decisively anticipate and guide the Department’s strategic and operational posture in anticipation of these rising challenges during the next 10-15 years. It will be supplemented by a more granular implementation plan that will be regularly reviewed and amended to reflect the changing regional environment.

13. There are many definitions of the Arctic – the official definition adopted by the US Government is described in Section 112 of the Arctic Research and Policy Act of 1984 (ARPA) as “all U.S. and foreign territory north of the Arctic Circle and all U.S. territory north and west of the boundary formed by the Porcupine, Yukon, and Kuskokwim Rivers; all contiguous seas, including the Arctic Ocean and the Beaufort, Bering, and Chukchi Seas; and the Aleutian Islands chain.”

14. Northern Bering Sea Marine Mammal Seabird Migration Map, Bering Sea Elders Group. http://www.beringseaelders.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Northern-Bering-Sea-Marine-Mammal-Seabird-Migration-map_high-res-2016.pdf

15. Declaration Concerning the Prevention of Unregulated High Seas Fishing in the Central Arctic Ocean. (<https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/departementene/ud/vedlegg/folkerett/declaration-on-arctic-fisheries-16-july-2015.pdf>)

Strategic Environment

As emphasized in the NSS and the DHS 2017 Homeland Security Trends Review, global dynamics are acting indirectly as threat multipliers and highlight threats to national security. Consistent with the National Strategy for the Arctic Region (NSAR), the Department's highest priority is to protect the American people, our sovereign territory and rights, natural resources and all national interests in the region. The following three factors have the greatest impact on the formation of a strong Strategic Approach for Arctic Homeland Security:

Intensified Geo-political Competition and the Race for Increased Influence through Persistent Presence and Strategic Influence

Expanded Arctic access, caused by a changing Arctic geographic environment, has spurred tremendous opportunity and unprecedented activity in the region for both allies and adversaries alike. Unrestrained, geo-strategic adversaries will seek to undermine a fragile rules-based order to extract previously inaccessible resources, and, in turn, undermine global norms that the United States and its allies have worked to uphold.

- ***Russia:***

As the nation with the largest territory and EEZ in the Arctic, the RF remains a key geo-strategic competitor in the region whose regional interests are compounded by economic reliance on the Arctic for natural resource extraction (such as oil, gas, and mineral), and control over zones, such as the Northern Sea route. Russia is seeking to bend the rules-based order to protect its vital interests in the region. The RF will regain Chairmanship of the Arctic Council (AC) from July 2021 through 2023 and could leverage its leadership in this capacity to advance its goals in the region. Its regional military presence has grown in the last decade with large investments in capabilities and infrastructure including air bases, ports, weapons systems, domain awareness tools, floating nuclear power plants, and the largest icebreaker fleet in the world. These dual-use capabilities significantly enhance its military capability,

capacity and shore infrastructure in the Arctic to support its national ambitions.

- ***China:***
The PRC continues to use nefarious methods to undermine international norms and institutions governing the Arctic to elevate its standing as a dominant global power. In 2018, the PRC published a China Arctic Policy white paper, articulating the importance Beijing places on securing a dominant foothold in the region, despite being a non-Arctic State. To carry out its intentions, the PRC invested in foreign infrastructure to include air and sea ports, developed plans to extract natural resources, satisfied growing domestic food demands through Arctic fishery extraction, and desires to control Arctic trade routes to meet a growing demand for resources as well as their internal motivation to be a “great power”.¹⁶ China also has two icebreakers with plans to construct more, which include a nuclear-powered vessel. With continued investment, China could outpace U.S. icebreaker capacity and polar access by 2024.
- ***Like-minded Partners (Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Iceland, Japan, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom):***
Like-minded Arctic and non-Arctic nations advocate for enhanced USG leadership in the region, specifically upholding the international norms that ensure the stability, security, and in the case of Arctic Nations, their rightful economic stake. Left unchallenged, Russia and China will continue malign activities in the region to further their insular agendas and desire for dominance in the Arctic Region. Absent a strong, visible DHS presence, a leadership vacuum could allow a new de facto governance system to take hold, favoring Russian and Chinese strategic intent.

Changing Physical Environment

The changing geographic environment is elevating the risks to American citizens in the Arctic, including increased frequency and severity of storms, coastal erosion, and thawing permafrost. The changing environment also continues to unlock previously inaccessible resources and trade route opportunities for both Arctic and non-Arctic states. If left unchecked, increased human activities across the U.S. Arctic and under-governed maritime spaces could outpace DHS’s ability to detect, deter, prevent, and respond to those changes and activities. As the Arctic region continues to open, DHS must anticipate and respond to activities and intentions with security and

prosperity implications to the homeland in the competition continuum.¹⁷

Vast, Underdeveloped and Undergoverned Spaces

Extreme weather conditions, complex logistics and supply chains, and sparsely inhabited locations pose unique challenges for the Department. In a region with an inherently difficult operating environment, presence equals influence. Due to the evolving threat and need for a more robust DHS presence, the Department will need to develop additional capabilities and capacities in the form of maritime presence, at first, and supporting infrastructure to follow to fully conduct and sustain its statutory missions in the region.

16. China will use coercion as well as economic and scientific inducements to expand physical presence and strategic influence in the region. Although a non-Arctic State, China has formally established its Polar Silk Road strategy in support of broader efforts to achieve global power status by 2050.

17. "Competition Continuum," Joint Doctrine Note 1-19, 03 June 2019, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/jdn_jg/jdn1_19.pdf

Strategic Goals

The opening of the Arctic region has given way to increased access to waterways, creating unprecedented opportunity for resource extraction, tourism, fishing, and expanded military presence. Changing geopolitical, geographic, and technological circumstances will require DHS Components to expand mission execution in unfamiliar surroundings, garner additional resources, and develop strategic and operational plans to address the Department's missions of today and in the years to come.

The United States is an Arctic Nation – and for more than 150 years the USCG has served as the lead federal agency for homeland security, safety, and environmental stewardship – however geopolitical and environmental challenges necessitate an increasingly whole-of-government approach to the region.

The increasing development and deployment of information and communications technology (ICT) are crucial linkages to commerce and communication that will continue to necessitate CISA's attention. Diminished ice and increased waterway access for trade and tourism, in turn, will require an expanded operational footprint for the USCG and CBP, who will need to adapt to changing trade and travel patterns. ICE will continually evaluate criminal and civil enforcement of federal laws governing border control, customs, trade, and immigration in the Arctic Region. FEMA and the USCG will continue to assess and prepare for both environmental and man-made disasters in the Arctic to preserve and protect American lives and prosperity.

DHS will leverage Component and other government agencies' presence in the region, including co-location of facilities, joint strategic operational planning, cross training, and shared assets. All DHS Components will utilize sound information and maximize the use of intelligence for planning purposes. Components will seek innovative means to bolster their mission areas in the Arctic, to include the use of rapidly developing technologies such as artificial intelligence and Unmanned Systems (UxS), and leverage relationships within U.S. and foreign governments, academia, and industry partners.

The Department will meet the opportunities and challenges presented in the region as it focuses departmental resources to support our national policy objectives. The following goals, and supporting objectives, will guide our efforts:

GOAL 1: SECURE THE HOMELAND THROUGH PERSISTENT PRESENCE AND ALL DOMAIN AWARENESS

U.S. sovereignty, through robust domain awareness, persistent presence, and leadership (particularly in the maritime space) is critical to advancing U.S. national and economic security while curbing malign activity by Great Power Competitors. This goal requires additional DHS capabilities and capacities, both assets and people, equipped and trained to operate and lead in this austere environment. To accomplish this goal, DHS will:

- **Accelerate USCG Icebreaker Acquisition, Procurement, Deployment and Sustainment** – In the Arctic, presence equates to influence. DHS will invest and deploy a capable, modernized fleet of polar security icebreakers and potential medium class icebreakers capable of deploying in year-round conditions, as appropriate, and integrate operations across Components, including multi-use platforms such as UxSs, to safeguard our nation’s interests in the Arctic Region. These assets, and their accompanying support infrastructure, will ensure the USCG is able to maintain persistent presence and conduct its regional statutory and national missions.¹⁸ In the maritime space, DHS will prioritize and invest in icebreaking capabilities that enable the Department to access domestic regions and advance into international spaces to deter nefarious actors and support scientific research.
- **Strengthen Technological Capacity and Capabilities to Secure All Domain Awareness** – DHS must invest in technological tools and trainings to expeditiously, efficiently, and cost effectively enhance its awareness of Arctic activities. Unmanned Systems will be vital to understand, track, and monitor, suspicious and non-threatening activities across harsh terrain in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The Department, working through its various offices, including the Science and Technology Directorate, will seek the funding and resources needed to prioritize the procurement, training, and increased usage of unmanned systems technology to conduct its vital mission in the Arctic region.

This effort will involve expanding coordination, training, and cooperation with interagency partners, particularly the DOD (U.S. Air Force and U.S. Space Force), along with our FSLTT partners. The Department will also pursue opportunities to expand awareness and foresight of physical developments that drive changes in the types, location, and timeframe of both commercial activity and geostrategic interests and actions. Proactivity will enable the Department to shape the Arctic as a secure, stable region that promotes responsible governance and economic growth.

- **Enhance High Latitudes Communication Systems Development, Deployment and Sustainment** – Effective presence requires continuous, reliable and secure connectivity. The lack of infrastructure in the Arctic translates to a lack of assured communications. Voice and data information sharing for internal or external systems are extremely limited. For DHS to effectively field and leverage assets for year-round operations, continuous digital connectivity to interagency operations centers are vital, including the technological advancement and deployment of satellite technology in the Polar regions. DHS will prioritize Arctic investments in developing and fielding reliable and secure continuous year-round communications for its assets and capabilities in the Arctic, leveraging joint and commercial capabilities whenever possible.
- **Expand Trade and Travel Facilitation Capacity** – DHS has a critical economic security mission, one that continues to regionally expand by the day. Cruises, and other tourism industries, are continuing to augment Arctic operations as interest in leisure travel increases. The cruise industry, for example, is planning to produce an additional 29 ice-breaking expedition ships through the Northwest Passage by 2022, almost tripling production from 2019.¹⁹ DHS also expects additional demands in transshipments, resource extraction, and an overall expansion in public and commercial maritime activity and port infrastructure. Ship traffic, stemming from increased trade and travel, has increased 25 percent from 2013 to 2019, and is expected to continue.²⁰ These increasing trends, particularly in commerce and associated travel, will require CBP and USCG to augment capacity in the Western Arctic and procure the resources and support (infrastructure, personnel, assets)

18. "Memorandum on Safeguarding U.S. National Interests in the Arctic and Antarctic Regions," Presidential Memorandum, June 9th, 2020 (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/memorandum-safeguarding-u-s-national-interests-arctic-antarctic-regions/>).

19. Cruise Industry News: 2018 Expedition Market Report, 2018 Expedition Market Report | Cruise Industry News Online Store

20. Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME), Arctic Ship Traffic Data, Arctic Ship Traffic Data (pame.is)

needed to facilitate upticks in trade and travel.

GOAL 2: STRENGTHEN ACCESS, RESPONSE, AND RESILIENCE IN THE ARCTIC

The Department must build the capability and capacity which will enable its Components, and other interagency and private sector partners, to protect, respond to, and recover from both natural and man-made threats and hazards in the Arctic. This effort includes strengthening FSLTT institutions and resilience against adversarial threats across multiple layers of government and society. To achieve this goal, the Department and its Components will:

- **Conduct Roles and Missions Studies** – While some DHS Components have long-standing, historic missions in the Arctic Region, several outfits are just beginning to contemplate their anticipated mission sets in a relatively unfamiliar area of operations. As such, DHS Components will assess and report to the Secretary their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding the Arctic. DHS Components will analyze how internal agencies or offices will be affected by a need for their services, what their roles will be, what capabilities will be necessary, and how they will meet national expectations for their services. This effort will include scoping resourcing and decision-making on the changing threat environment. The Department will use these studies to inform future resource decision-making.
- **Bolster Resilience from Man-Made and Natural Events** – By focusing on leveraging partnerships and infrastructure in a surge capacity, DHS and its Components will be able to focus on prevention and response, rather than overall footprint. In particular, DHS will lead engagement with Alaskan Natives representing generations of experience often seen as critical “first responders” in the region. In support of Executive Order 13175, DHS Components will “strengthen United States government-to-government relationships” with federally recognized tribes and bolster Arctic Governance through Targeted, Enhanced National and International Engagement and Cooperation.²¹
- **Enhance FSLTT and Private-Sector Partners’ Ability to Detect and Deter Nefarious Foreign Investment/Influence** – As a critical representative on the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS), DHS is concerned

21. Consultation and Coordination With Indian Tribal Governments (Executive Order 13175), <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2000/11/09/00-29003/consultation-and-coordination-with-indian-tribal-governments> (November 9, 2000).

that nation-state competitors, the PRC for example, are expanding their foreign investment in Alaska, particularly in SLTT entities. What initially appears to be lucrative and legitimate to local businesses and governments, in aggregate, could significantly undermine U.S. national security. This circumstance holds particularly true with the unchecked purchasing of coveted natural resources, such as zinc, cobalt, and other important resources that could adversely impact the Nation's critical supply chains. DHS will work with FSLTT partners to identify and deter untoward foreign financial or business transactions in critical areas of the Arctic Homeland while fostering responsible investment and development.

- **Safeguard Critical Infrastructure** – The digital age has ushered unprecedented improvement in living standards and increasing dependence on technological networks. This development has presented security challenges with respect to critical infrastructure in the Homeland, including information communication technologies and the transportation sector (pipelines, railways, ports, etc.). New undersea cables, laid across Alaska and the Arctic in recent years, have increased connectivity between continents in once-remote regions. CISA and USCG will continue to identify and allocate resources and personnel, where necessary, to mitigate vulnerabilities to U.S. digital and physical infrastructure.

In close conjunction with public and private sector partners, DHS is, and will continue, assessing the condition of critical infrastructure in the U.S. Arctic. These vulnerability assessments and recommendations are intended to inform the security and resilience posture of owners and operators of critical infrastructure in the State of Alaska. Subsequent maritime zones assessments and recommendations will focus on enhancing the security and resilience of the U.S. Arctic, while better positioning the Homeland to meet the challenges of Great Power Competition. This effort includes partnering with local public and private entities to conduct voluntary critical infrastructure resilience assessments under the Regional Resiliency Assessment Program (RRAP).²² Recommendations from the current assessments place primary focus on Transportation Systems, Energy, and Communications critical infrastructure sectors as well as associated sector-specific and cross-sectoral challenges.

- **Sustain Arctic Region Freedom of the Seas** – In line with the NSS and NSAR, DHS is committed to the Arctic as a free and open region in the international spaces. DHS has complementary roles with DOD in protecting the free flow of licit travel and trade and will work to sustain legitimate economic operations and strengthen these international norms through operations that build precedence, and deter misuse. The Department will stand with the United States’ allies and partners in protecting sovereign rights to offshore resources, consistent with obligations under international law²³ and in defense of freedom of the seas and respect for sovereignty.²⁴
- **Secure Future United States Energy Prosperity** – As noted in the NSS and the NSAR, U.S. global leadership is heavily predicated on bolstering America’s responsible extraction, production, and distribution of energy, both at home and abroad. With significant natural resource deposits in the U.S. EEZ, the Arctic presents strategically valuable opportunities to enhance our production of rare earth minerals and energy resources. Without the capabilities, assets, or relationships to maintain domain awareness, the USG cannot deter illicit energy and rare earth mineral extraction from nefarious actors in its own territory. The Department, through USCG and FEMA, will work with other federal and state agencies in support of public and private commercial interests to ensure extraction of resources from the U.S. Extended Continental Shelf is done safely, securely, and responsibly in accordance with U.S. laws and regulations without unwelcome or illicit extraction by unauthorized entities.

GOAL 3: ADVANCE ARCTIC GOVERNANCE AND A RULES-BASED ORDER THROUGH TARGETED NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT AND COOPERATION

Advancing national security interests in the Arctic calls for an integrated whole-of-government approach, requiring partnering and propagating shared values and norms with like-minded allies, both bilaterally and multilaterally, with nearby allies (such as Canada) and those worldwide. Advancing these shared values and global norms are necessary to promoting stability and prosperity in the Homeland and international

22. CISA Website, <https://www.cisa.gov/what-critical-infrastructure>

23. “U.S. Position on Maritime Claims in the South China Sea,” Michael R. Pompeo, Secretary of State. Available at <https://www.state.gov/u-s-position-on-maritime-claims-in-the-south-china-sea/>

24. Ibid

spaces. To accomplish this goal, DHS will:

- **Protect the Integrity of Arctic Governance and Cooperation Fora** – DHS, in coordination with the Department of State (DOS), will enhance cooperation with international partners to ensure international institutional bodies like the Arctic Council, International Maritime Organization, and the Arctic Coast Guard Forum to advocate for robust and healthy governance practices to counter adversaries who might seek to undermine global norms and the rules-based order. DHS, in conjunction with DOS, will continue to engage with partners to preserve the integrity and utility of these bodies.
- **Bolster Collaboration and Cooperation with Like-Minded Arctic Partners** – The Department will work with like-minded partners, especially Canada and our European allies, to uphold the rules-based order. While this effort will include continuing to protect EEZs to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing, it will also include enhancing and expanding direct operational relationships with partner nations to share information, strengthen security, and protect trade. The North Pacific Coast Guard Forum and the North Atlantic Coast Guard Forum are potential areas to further mutually beneficial maritime safety and security standards.

DHS, particularly CBP, USCG, and TSA, will further trade and travel facilitation enforcement and cooperation of anticipated expansions in operational mandates, particularly along our two international borders in the Arctic – Canada and Russia. Fostering greater advocacy with Canada and Russia, particularly in aviation security and custom's enforcement, allows DHS to mitigate security and safety challenges caused by the increase in trade and traffic.²⁵

25. The North Pacific Coast Guard Forum and the North Atlantic Coast Guard Forum are potential areas to further mutually beneficial maritime safety and security standards.

Guiding Principles

DHS will follow three guiding principles to ensure success in implementing the goals we pursue outlined in this Strategic Approach, understanding that our presence and actions in the Arctic reflect our national values and role in the global community.

- **Commit to transparency and the sharing of information**, which must be a hallmark of all DHS activities in the region. Transparency encourages good behavior and builds trust – but only if the information that DHS and its Components obtain and use can be shared with the interagency, the public, and international partners.
- **Engage in practical cooperation** throughout the vast Arctic Region. Operational partnerships based on mutual benefit and the realities of distance and extreme weather will necessitate a level of partnership that exceeds what most entities are used to in other parts of the Continental United States.
- **Collaborate to safeguard stability and peace** upholding Arctic norms and the rules-based order. DHS, in concert with Alaskan Natives, partners, and allies, will work to strengthen these norms. The Department will also preserve the Arctic region as a free and open area, supporting and preserving international legal principles of freedom of the seas, overflight, and other lawful uses of the sea, and unimpeded lawful commerce.

Conclusion: Achieving Success

This Strategic Approach outlines the goals and accompanying objectives necessary to achieve success, proactively chart DHS's anticipated role in the region, and fulfill the Department's responsibilities to the Nation in the Arctic.

To accomplish these goals, DHS will execute a planned, carefully reasoned, whole-of-Department approach, through close collaboration and cooperation with our partners, both at home and abroad. By developing a comprehensive understanding of the dynamic regional operating environment, the Department will enhance regional security and protection while facilitating the growth of legitimate enterprises.

As in all our strategic efforts, DHS will rely on innovation and transparency in our approach, communicating frequently with our oversight committees, in our pursuit to implement novel solutions that fit the unique Arctic conditions we face, which ultimately serves as a model for better unity of effort within the Homeland Security enterprise.

Through this Strategic Approach for Arctic Homeland Security and forthcoming implementation plan, DHS will play a prominent role in shaping the strategic environment in the Arctic by building and deploying capability and capacity necessary to counter near-peer competitors, in close cooperation and coordination with our friends and allies, while creating the conditions needed to advance U.S. economic prosperity, safety and security for all across the region.

ABBREVIATIONS USED

AMO – U.S. Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations

CBP – U.S. Customs and Border Protection

CISA – Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency

DOD – Department of Defense

DHS – Department of Homeland Security

FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency

FSLTT – Federal/State, Local, Tribal, Territorial

ICE – U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

LMR – Living Marine Resources

NSAR – National Strategy for the Arctic Region (2013)

NSS – National Security Strategy

OFO – U.S. Customs and Border Protection Office of Field Operations

PRC – People’s Republic of China

RF – Russian Federation

US – United States

USC – United States Code

USCG – United States Coast Guard

USG – United States Government

USGS – United States Geological Survey

UxSs – Unmanned Systems



Homeland Security

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SAFEGUARD THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, OUR
HOMELAND, AND OUR VALUES

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