



TRUE NORTH

Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies Monthly Activity Report

DECEMBER 2023



TSC leads Colorado Arctic Week

Earlier this month TSC completed the first Colorado Arctic Week in support of Canadian and U.S. defense and security practitioners at NORAD and USNORTHCOM. The TSC School for Arctic Security Studies led the way through several "professionalizing Arctic service" endeavors to include leveraging the Center's Arctic and Security Dilemmas for NORAD and USNORTHCOM senior leaders and a new Arctic Security Primer to assist in Arctic awareness for associated staff professionals at the two commands. It was an honor to support the teams at NORAD and USNORTHCOM, TSC looks forward to offering more educational events in Colorado in 2024.



Enhancing interoperability in cold weather operations

Members of the Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies joined representatives from 18 nations in Hamar, Norway, from Nov. 14-16 for the 2023 Cold Weather Operations Conference.

The conference aimed to highlight current and future geopolitical, strategic, and operational environment trends that have implications for developing cold weather operations as part of multi-domain operations. Throughout the week, conference participants heard from subject matter experts on various topics ranging from strategy development to cold weather equipment development.

Hosted by the NATO Centre of Excellence for Cold Weather Operations, the conference convened Arctic security practitioners to enhance

interoperability in cold weather operations. The Centre of Excellence is a Norwegian-sponsored organization providing NATO with expertise in warfighting readiness in cold weather. By convening allied and partner nations to discuss cold weather operations, conference participants were able to improve best practices, build partnerships, and enhance overall operational capacity.

Set in Hamar, Norway, just over an hour North of Oslo, conference participants were greeted with snowfall and below-freezing temperatures. The Norwegian Armed Forces have extensive experience and knowledge on how to survive and conduct military operations in cold weather, which NATO members benefit from tremendously through training, doctrine, and shared best practices.

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U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Brian Eifler, commanding general of the 11th Airborne Division, provides his insight during the 2023 Cold Weather Operations Conference.

As NATO's Northern flank becomes increasingly important in the evolving geopolitical environment, opportunities like CWOC 23 are vital to maintaining readiness and strategically aligning priorities. By leveraging the expertise of all alliance members, we will be stronger together.

At the conference, Esther McClure, Director of Arctic and Oceans Policy for the United States Department of Defense Office of Arctic and Global Resilience, previewed the forthcoming DoD Arctic Strategy set to be released in early 2024. McClure cited both the climate and geopolitical context as drivers of change in the Arctic region.

The new strategy will reflect the new strategic environment and nest within the 2022 National Strategy

for the Arctic Region and the 2022 National Defense Strategy. McClure previewed the 3 E's approach to the new strategy: Enhance, Engage, and Exercise.

Each line of effort underscores the importance of partnerships to maintain a stable Arctic region. Moreover, the updated strategy is indicative of the importance of the Arctic region for the U.S. and our partners and allies.

Also on the panel with McClure was the commanding general of the 11th Airborne Division, Maj. Gen. Brian Eifler who provided insights from the warfighter perspective. Eifler highlighted the achievements of the 11th Airborne in just a short time since activation in June 2022.

The 11th Airborne is a globally

responsive, multi-domain enabled land force trained to fight and win in extreme cold weather and mountainous terrain. Eifler emphasized the 11th Airborne Division's operational excellence in the Arctic and their ability to execute expeditionary operations rapidly within the Indo-Pacific theater. In addition, the 11th Airborne is working closely with allies and partners to deter aggression and fortify critical capabilities.

The Ted Stevens Center's participation in CWOC facilitated collaboration with partners and allies to achieve innovation and excellence in Arctic and cold weather conditions on land, air, sea, and space. These efforts are essential to maintain effectiveness and develop expertise across the Joint Force. Furthermore, as the center actively builds future curricula to support Arctic readiness across the Joint Force, opportunities for shared knowledge allow our team to refine and enhance our curriculum to serve our stakeholders better.

Based on these critical findings, TSC will integrate analysis and lessons learned into developing our research and education. TSC is committed to providing the highest quality resources to our Arctic practitioners based on real-world experience in and across the Arctic. In doing so, we hope to provide our stakeholders with the best possible resources to make informed policy decisions regarding the Arctic region.



Senior Advisor for Arctic Security Affairs, Randy "Church" Kee participates in a discussion panel during the Rovaniemi Arctic Spirit Conference 2023.

Ted Stevens Center strengthens Arctic security collaborations in visit to Finland

The Ted Stevens Center strengthened existing partnerships and built new ones in a November visit to Helsinki and Rovaniemi in Finland, NATO's newest member nation. Senior Adviser for Arctic Security Affairs, Randy "Church" Kee, and Associate Director, Joel Kopp, met with officials from the U.S. Embassy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defense, and Parliament, as well as with local organizations and media in order to share the Ted Stevens Center's "building while doing" story, learn how Arctic security is evolving in the wake of Finland's NATO membership, and identify practical areas of collaboration with our new NATO ally.

U.S. Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission, Chris Krafft, and other Embassy section heads updated the Ted Stevens Center delegation on the strong bilateral relationship and Finland's Arctic security posture and policies, including the Government of Finland's strong support for the Arctic Council and its focus on territorial integrity along its more than 800-mile border with Russia. In a public diplomacy event at the Embassy, Kee discussed with local media representatives the origin of the TCS and how Finland's membership in NATO strengthens the international Arctic security regime.

The delegation met with Finland's senior diplomat covering Arctic issues, Ambassador Petteri Vuorimaki, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and with Director General for

Defense Policy, Janne Kuusela, at the Ministry of Defense. These meetings deepened the delegation's understanding of Finland's Arctic policy and Arctic security priorities and raised awareness within these ministries of the work of the TSC and potential areas for partnership. Vuorimaki said he was looking forward to returning to Alaska to participate in TSC events.

Kee and Kopp also met with two international affairs advisors for the Parliament of Finland – Sari Wessman and Teemu Vuosio. Among their duties is supporting the Parliament's Arctic engagement and policy work, especially that of the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region. (Wessman acts as secretary for the Finnish delegation to that committee). The committee addresses a range of Arctic issues. Wessman and Vuosio were interested to hear about the USG's National Strategy for the Arctic Region (NSAR) and its new Implementation Plan, and Kee provided an overview of the center's work and how it fits into the NSAR strategy.

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Arctic Security Working Group gathers in Yellowknife to address changing Arctic landscape

The Ted Stevens Center was proud to participate in the Nov. 29-30 meeting of the Arctic Security Working Group (ASWG) in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories (NT), Canada. Canadian Brigadier General Dan Rivière, Commander of Joint Task Force North, and NT Deputy Minister, Kyle Seeley, co-chaired this important event, which was held under Chatham House rule. Senior Arctic Affairs Advisor, Randy "Church" Kee, provided the in-person audience of nearly 100 (with more attending virtually) an update on the Ted Stevens Center's development, recent activities, and upcoming events.

In keeping with the meeting theme of "All Domain Awareness," the ASWG discussed malign hybrid activities currently or potentially targeting the Arctic region; how Arctic data, information, and knowledge are being or could be obtained and used; and where the current domain awareness gaps lie. "We don't consider ourselves at war, but they (malign actors) consider themselves at war with the West," noted one speaker. Canadian Armed Forces interlocutors spoke about the challenges of responding to low-level hybrid warfare techniques that are below the threshold of kinetic conflict but nevertheless pose significant potential threats. Canadian interlocutors also spoke



Senior Advisor for Arctic Security Affairs, Randy "Church" Kee provides Arctic insight to participants during the Arctic Security Working Group in Yellowknife, Canada.

on the need to understand past and present environmental and operational baselines so that changes in the Arctic can be accurately measured and understood. Canadian Ranger and stewardship programs, in cooperation with Indigenous Inuit groups, are helping to accomplish this in the Canadian Arctic, and adding to collective knowledge on changing operational environments, ice patterns, and the growing presence of maritime traffic, among other elements. Greenlandic speakers discussed a similar "Guardian" program in use there. Both programs invest in building expertise in these communities through training and periodic exercises. Interlocutors from Canada's long-running scientific Polar Continental Shelf Program

provided a summary of their scientific operations throughout the Canadian Arctic, noting their significant personnel, aircraft, and facilities in the region.

A panel on search and rescue (SAR) emphasized the difficulty of emergency response in a vast, rural, and harsh region like the Arctic, and the importance of close working relationships with Arctic communities, whose members are often the volunteers for SAR efforts and have intimate knowledge of the geography, local travel patterns, and dynamic risk factors that could threaten SAR efforts.

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Ted Stevens Center members stand united with Ukrainian participants during the 2023 Cold Weather Operations Conference in Hamar, Norway.

Permafrost and Pathogens

Workshop: On Nov. 2-3 our Research and Analysis and Special Programs teams partnered with Cold Regions Research Laboratory and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in a Permafrost and Pathogens Workshop in support of USNORTHCOM. This 24-person event connected academia, national labs, and NORAD/USNORTHCOM with OSD's efforts on personnel readiness and training, part of the adaptation portfolio in Arctic and Global Resilience office.

Aleutian and Bering Sea

Initiative: Dr. Haliehana Stepetin represented the TSC during the Aleutian and Bering Sea Initiative steering committee in Anchorage, Nov. 6-7. ABSI focuses on resilience through partnership: where the needs of communities, resource managers, and industry meet. Their work is a collaboration of many partners including industry, federal and Tribal governments, and academia with the goal of developing the science and unique

connections needed to take on the 21st century's challenges and opportunities. During the meeting TSC and ABSI considered future areas of collaboration.

Arctic Spirit: A delegation from TSC participated in Rovaniemi Arctic Spirit Conference 2023, Nov. 13-15 in Finland. This year's theme for the conference was "Towards New Horizons." Senior Adviser for Arctic Security Affairs, Randy "Church" Kee, had the opportunity to present in two plenary panel events, including one with Esther McClure, Director of Arctic and Oceans Policy in the Office of Arctic and Global Resilience in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Maritime Risk Symposium: The TSC was once again honored to support the U.S. Coast Guard in this year's edition of the Maritime Risk Symposium that was held Nov. 14-16 at the State University of New York Maritime Academy. MRS provides superb forums to address the range of Maritime practitioner challenges, including those of the high latitudes. The TSC team engaged with maritime industry leaders, port representatives, researchers, and other government agencies on critical maritime security issues. TSC looks forward to serving as the co-chair of MRS 2024 with the Naval Post Graduate School and in 2025 the TSC will be hosting MRS in Anchorage with an Arctic maritime focus for practitioners.

Association for Canadian Studies in the United States

Conference: Dr. Kate Friedman represented the TSC during the Association for Canadian Studies in the United States (ACSUS) 26th Biennial Conference in Washington, D.C. Based on Friedman's exceptional reputation as a CANUS Policy expert, she was a participant in a number of panels to include a roundtable entitled, "Comparing Circumpolar Futures and Changing Borders in the Arctic and Antarctic." The roundtable centered around a discussion and critique of the recently released book entitled, "Polar Cousins: Comparing Antarctic and Arctic Geostrategic Futures." This is the first book to comprehensively and systematically examine the two polar regions. Friedman discussed the different chapters of the book and also provided her perspective on Arctic security trends on the horizon and suggested that a comparison to security concerns on the horizon in Antarctica may be deserving attention.



Senior Adviser for Arctic Security Affairs, Randy "Church" Kee with Esther McClure, Director of Arctic and Oceans Policy.

Arctic Futures: On Nov. 28 Deputy Dean Tracy Smith represented the TSC on the panel “A Safe and Secure Arctic,” at Arctic Futures in Brussels, Belgium. The annual Arctic Futures Symposium brought together local and national policymakers, Arctic Indigenous peoples, scientists, academics, and representatives of industries operating in or with interests in the Arctic.

Arctic Shipping Summit: Active Communications International (ACI) held their 17th Arctic Shipping Summit Nov. 29-30 in Montreal, Canada. As the chair of the Arctic Shipping Summit, Kelsey “Doc Freeze” Frazier represented the TSC, and played a pivotal role in steering the conference. She kicked off the event with an insightful discussion on the multifaceted challenges confronting shipping companies, governments, and communities in the Arctic region. The conference brought together approximately 70 attendees from industries and agencies such as arctic shipbuilders, Arctic Indigenous community leaders, representatives from government agencies, icebreaker captains, academic researchers, and attorneys specializing in international and Arctic legal frameworks. Throughout the summit, Frazier was instrumental in keeping the agenda on track and fostering a congenial atmosphere, engaging in amiable conversations with participants and ensuring an enjoyable experience for all attendees. Notable organizations in attendance were the U.S. Coast

Guard, U.S. Department of Transportation, Canadian Coast Guard, Adventure Canada, American Bureau of Shipping, and DNV.

North Atlantic Arctic Crisis Response Workshop: TSC co-hosted the North Atlantic Arctic Crisis Response Workshop with the University of New Hampshire, Center for Spills and Environmental Hazards at the UNH campus in Durham, N.H., Dec. 12-13. The workshop was a scenario-based, research-oriented event, aimed at bringing together security practitioners, decision makers, and regional leaders from U.S. inter-agencies, Arctic allies, and the Arctic communities. This workshop was about gaining and maintaining strategic advantage in an increasingly accessible and competitive Arctic. We examined the existing international crisis response framework in the context of increasing geopolitical competition and changing operational environment.

ICE-PPR Workshop: From Dec. 14-15, TSC participated in a U.S. Situational Awareness Working Group of the International Cooperative Engagement Program for Polar Research (ICE-PPR) workshop focused on Arctic communications. ICE-PPR is a multi-national defense focused polar research collaboration. The workshop examined the gaps and

shortfalls in Arctic operational communications with a particular focus on creating international project arrangements for communications solutions to Arctic communication challenges.

Arctic Multidomain Legal Course (AMLC): The School for Arctic Security Studies held a virtual session of AMLC, Dec. 12-14. This course provided an informative educational experience to participants as they developed a basic understanding of the legal frameworks, instruments, and concepts related to the Arctic in relevant domains. AMLC equips participants with analytical tools to identify, assess, and understand Arctic legal issues as related to current challenges.



Highlights from the North Atlantic Arctic Crisis Response Workshop.

TSC connects with Maj. Gen. Rose

Recently TSC leadership had the pleasure of connecting with Maj. Gen. Michelle M. Rose, former USNORTHCOM Director of Logistics and current Assistant Deputy Commanding General of Army Material Command. Rose is not only a master of the U.S. military's great asymmetrical advantage of logistics, but also someone who understands the unique challenges and opportunities of the Arctic.



Deputy Commander of NORAD visits TSC

TSC leadership was honored to welcome Lieutenant-General Blaise Frawley, Deputy Commander, North American Aerospace Defense Command and Commander of the Canadian Element NORAD to the center on Dec. 12. Frawley toured the future TSC facility and heard from center leadership on our mission to advance security priorities in the Arctic region. The Stevens Center is committed to supporting NORAD's operations by building interagency and international partnerships to understand and address Arctic and security challenges. Through innovative and collaborative research, education, and engagement, we can identify solutions and best practices to support our partners and allies in the Arctic region.



MITRE representatives visit TSC

On Dec. 7 leaders from TSC welcomed representatives from MITRE to discuss the unique security and research challenges in the Arctic region. During the visit we discussed the unique operational and security challenges in the Arctic region, and how building strong networks will advance expertise and cooperation in the Arctic. By working together with a range of partners, TSC will continue to undertake a whole-of-government and community approach to realizing an Arctic region that is peaceful, stable, prosperous, and cooperative.

TSC welcomes new faculty member

Dr. Cody J. Dees joined the professorial ranks of the Ted Stevens Center on Dec. 3. Prior to coming to the Ted Stevens Center, Dees served as an active-duty Air Force 1A8 (Airborne Linguistic Cryptologist), where he acted as a modern day “*Wind Talker*,” performing real-time encryption, decryption, and translation of target communications, personally ensuring the safety and success of joint force engagements within his target theatre. Following his discharge and pursuit of his academic career, Dees proceeded to establish himself within the field of educational program administration, most recently holding the position of ‘Chief of General English Curriculum’ for the Defense Language Institute English Language Center (DLIELC) JBSA Lackland, where he reestablished the institute’s foundational design frameworks, recreated the flagship English Language Training pipeline, and re-drafted internal policies which reduced development costs while improving process continuity and productivity.

Dees holds an interdisciplinary PhD based in *Second Language Acquisition and Teaching*, which has been tailored to focus on the unique sociological aspects of educational culture and in applied language contexts. Having pioneered research in *Values Theory*, Dees’ research has created a new awareness of the intrinsic links between values systems and the immersion and transmission of culture, particularly within cross-cultural educational settings.

Born in Midland, Texas, Dees currently resides in Anchorage, Alaska. He is an artist at heart, a wood and metal worker, musician, linguist, electrician, jewelry designer, silversmith, plumber, freelance author and photographer, and he eagerly seeks out new skills and experiences to add to his repertoire. When asked about his broad range of personal, academic, and professional interests, he stated that they all stem from the desire to better understand “*how people people, and why.*”



BEHIND THE SCREENS AT THE TSC



A dedicated team of Department of Defense civilians and contractors work tirelessly behind the screens to ensure the seamless execution of the Ted Stevens Center’s School for Arctic Security Studies online courses. Checkout the QR code below to learn how their efforts make our virtual courses possible.

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The Senior Advisor's Monthly Note



Dear and Distinguished Colleagues,

With only a few days left in the year, I'd like to take a moment to offer my reflections on all the Stevens Center has accomplished in 2023.

In keeping with the center's core values, we continued to demonstrate innovation and experimentation in and across the Arctic region. The School of Arctic and Climate Security Studies delivered five iterations of the Arctic Regional Security Orientation Course (ARSOC) and

two iterations of the Arctic Multi-Domain Legal Course (AMLC), fielding over 800 alumni this year. The Research and Analysis Division launched the inaugural edition of the Journal of Arctic and Climate Security Studies with senior leader perspectives and practitioner focused research. Our Strategic Engagement Division hosted convening events from Nuuk, Greenland to Utqiagvik, Alaska, bringing security practitioners into the North American Arctic to experience the unique environment firsthand. The Mission Support Division remained our institutional backbone as we progress towards full operational capacity, building our team to now 27 DoD civilian employees and 14 contractors. These are just a few of the highlights.

In sum, the expert and dedicated professionals of the TSC leaned forward to accomplish our

important mission and build partnerships across the Arctic region.

Finally, as we celebrate the holiday season, we're particularly mindful that many who serve in our military are deployed overseas and unable to join their loved ones back home. We are so very grateful for all you do for our country.

On behalf of the Ted Stevens Center, I want to express my gratitude for your continued support and interest in our growing regional center. We wish you and your families the very best this holiday season and have a Happy New Year!

Very respectfully,
Church

UPCOMING EVENTS AND COURSES

Arctic Regional Security Orientation Course (ARSOC) 24-02
Virtual, Jan. 22-26

Arctic Multi-Domain Law Course (AMLC) 24-02
Virtual, Jan. 30-Feb. 1

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