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MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION

From: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: NAVY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR THE ARCTIC

Ref: (a) Navy Arctic Roadmap

Encl: (1) Strategic Objectives for the U.S. Navy in the Arctic
Region

1. The Strategic Objectives for the U.S. Navy in the Arctic Region are provided in enclosure (1). This document defines the Navy's desired end state as a safe, stable, and secure region where U.S. national and maritime interests are safeguarded and the homeland is protected, and specifies the objectives required to achieve this end.

2. Per reference (a), these strategic objectives shall be reviewed and updated following promulgation of each Quadrennial Defense Review or as required.


G. ROUGHHEAD
Admiral, U.S. Navy

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Strategic Objectives for the U.S. Navy in the Arctic Region

Purpose

To establish the Navy's strategic objectives in the Arctic region in support of the *U.S. Navy Arctic Roadmap*ⁱ. The Navy's desired end state is a safe, stable and secure Arctic region where U.S. national and maritime interests are safeguarded and the homeland is protected. Navy's strategic objectives for the Arctic region will guide its follow-on examination of ways and means to achieve the end state.

Introduction

The changing Arctic environment presents significant opportunities for the United States and the U.S. Navy. The Arctic Ocean is experiencing record lows in sea ice and the region is warming twice as fast as the rest of the globe. While uncertainty exists in projections for the extent of Arctic sea ice, the current scientific consensus indicates the Arctic will experience ice-diminished summers beginning sometime in the 2030s. As a result, commercial shipping, resource development, research, tourism, environmental interests, and strategic focus in the region are projected to reach new levels of activity.

While these developments offer new opportunities for maritime security cooperation, they also present potential sources of competition and conflict for access and natural resources. In order to develop a comprehensive and coordinated approach to the challenges posed in the Arctic region, Navy established Task Force Climate Change (TFCC). TFCC has developed the Navy Arctic Roadmap to guide Navy policy, investments, and action regarding the Arctic region.

Policy Guidance

National policy on the Arctic region is set forth in National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 66 / Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 25, *Arctic Region Policy*.ⁱⁱ It notes that: "The United States has broad and fundamental national security interests in the Arctic region and is prepared to operate either independently or in conjunction with other states to safeguard these interests." It also specifically calls out freedom of navigation as a top national priority, linking the rights and responsibilities relating to navigation and overflight in the Arctic region with our ability to exercise these rights throughout the world. While no new naval missions are specified in the national Arctic policy, the scope of naval operations in a future, ice-diminished Arctic region is very likely to increase.

The 2010 *Quadrennial Defense Review* (QDR)ⁱⁱⁱ "brings fresh focus to the importance of preventing and deterring conflict by working with and through allies and partners, along with better integration with civilian agencies and organizations." The 2010 QDR report establishes DoD's strategic approach to energy and climate change given their potentially significant role in the future security environment. The two most applicable DoD-wide objectives from the 2010 QDR for balancing Navy's resources and strategic risks in the Arctic region are: 1) preventing and deterring conflict; and 2) preparing to defeat adversaries and succeeding in a wide range of

contingencies. Navy's strategic objectives in the Arctic directly support these DoD-wide objectives.

In addition, the 2008 *National Defense Strategy* (NDS)^{iv} describes the overarching goals and strategy for the Department of Defense (DoD) and provides a foundation for DoD strategic guidance. Navy's objectives in the Arctic are informed by the NDS objectives to: 1) defend the homeland; 2) promote security; 3) deter conflict; and 4) win our nation's wars.

Finally, *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower* (CS21)^v is the unified maritime strategy for the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. It identifies the opening of the Arctic as an opportunity for growth and a potential source of competition and conflict. The strategic imperatives and core capabilities from the Maritime Strategy apply equally to the entire maritime domain— and the Arctic is primarily a maritime domain. The relevant objectives for Navy forces in the Arctic are to: 1) contribute to homeland defense in depth; 2) foster and sustain cooperative relationships; and 3) prevent or contain local disruptions before they impact the global system.

Navy's Strategic Objectives

Based on the national and DoD-wide objectives described above, the Navy's desired end state is a safe, stable and secure Arctic region where U.S. national and maritime interests are safeguarded and the homeland is protected. In order to best achieve this end state, Navy must enhance cooperative relationships with other services, U.S. government agencies, foreign partners and allies; and ensure Navy forces are both capable and ready to meet future requirements in the region.

The Navy's desired end state is a safe, stable and secure arctic region where U.S. national and maritime interests are safeguarded and the homeland is protected.

The Navy strategic objectives to achieve the desired end state include:

I. Contribute to safety, stability, and security in the region. Establishing and maintaining security at sea is essential to mitigating a multitude of threats, including conflicts over resources, territorial boundaries, or excessive maritime claims. Preventing or countering these threats protects our homeland, enhances regional stability, and helps to secure freedom of navigation for the benefit of all nations. The Navy and Coast Guard, with their different authorities, missions and responsibilities, face different requirements and timelines in the Arctic. The immediate needs in the Arctic region, Icebreaking, Search and Rescue, Marine Environmental Protection, Living Marine Resources/Law Enforcement, Marine Safety, and Waterways Management, are primarily Coast Guard missions. However, close cooperation and collaboration based on established agreements¹ will facilitate future success.

¹ Operation of Icebreakers MOA; National Fleet Policy; Department of Defense Support to the United States Coast Guard for Maritime Homeland Security MOA; Inclusion of the U.S. Coast Guard in Support of Maritime Homeland Defense MOA; Use of U.S. Coast Guard Capabilities and Resources in Support of the National Military Strategy MOA.

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Clearly identified maritime security responsibilities detailed in international, national, and DoD documents (e.g. the Unified Command Plan (UCP)), deliberate communications of intentions and actions, and effective legal and regulatory structures accepted and enforced by all Arctic nations are examples of desired effects for this objective.

II. Safeguard U.S. maritime interests in the region. Access to the global commons and freedom of navigation are top national priorities. Preserving access and freedom of navigation in the Arctic region supports Navy's ability to exercise these rights throughout the world, especially in strategic straits. We cannot view the Arctic in isolation; the application of international law in the Arctic establishes precedent germane to all the world's oceans, straits, and sea lanes.

While the Arctic is a unique operating environment, it does not necessarily require a new treaty regime or system of governance. Customary international law, as codified in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), provides the appropriate legal framework for responsible cooperative development, use, and preservation of the Arctic. The U.S. accession to UNCLOS will enable and enhance Navy's ability to protect our maritime interests worldwide.

Desired effects for this objective include U.S. accession to UNCLOS, freedom of navigation for all, suitable weather forecasting and navigation information, and sustainable development that balances economic, energy, and environmental concerns.

III. Protect the American people, our critical infrastructure, and key resources. Navy's national security responsibilities in the Arctic are similar to those in any other maritime domain and are clearly articulated in the guiding policy documents and legal frameworks detailed above. Although the potential for conflict in the Arctic is low, Navy's core responsibility is to defend the United States from attack upon its territory at home and to secure its interests abroad.

Desired effects for this Navy objective include deterring or swiftly defeating threats to the U.S. interests and our homeland from state or non-state actors. Not only does the Navy need to be prepared to operate in the Arctic, it must be capable of supporting civil authorities in the event of an attack or natural disaster.

IV. Strengthen existing and foster new cooperative relationships in the region. Expanded cooperative relationships with the other Arctic nations to responsibly exercise sovereign rights and jurisdiction are essential to successfully addressing complex issues in an uncertain future. The best way to achieve security is to encourage peaceful change within the international system - Navy seeks to achieve this within cooperative relationships, not adversarial ones. Building and maintaining relationships with allies and international partners will contribute to the security and stability of the region. These relationships must be fostered and consistently reinforced over time to promote mutual respect and understanding.

Desired effects for this objective include increased cooperation between Navy and other services, and a continued strong relationship or increased cooperative relationship between the U.S. and the other member states of the Arctic Council.

V. Ensure Navy forces are capable and ready. Arctic-related security discussions should focus on addressing the consequences of increased human activity and the necessity to acquire the right capabilities at the right cost at the right time to meet national requirements for the region. While Navy has operated in the Arctic on a limited basis for decades, expanded capabilities or capacities may be required.

Navy must continue being the dominant, ready naval force across all maritime missions with appropriate force structure and strategic laydown, balancing limited resources with ever-expanding requirements. Navy's Task Force Climate Change is carefully reviewing these issues as they potentially represent a considerable commitment of funds during a resource-challenged time.

The desired effects for this objective include determining, developing, and maintaining the proper skill sets, training, experience, and capabilities required to operate effectively in Arctic conditions.

Way Ahead

These strategic objectives for the Arctic region are the Navy Arctic Roadmap's first deliverable and shall be reviewed and updated following each QDR or as required. They are intentionally focused on "ends" – the ways and means to achieve these ends will be analyzed and determined in the execution of all subsequent actions from the Roadmap in the following focus areas:

-*Strategy, Policy, Missions, and Plans*: Providing actionable direction to operational staffs to achieve the Navy's strategic objectives.

-*Operations and Training*: Developing competency in accomplishing Arctic missions assigned by combatant commanders.

-*Investments*: Providing weapon, platform, sensor and C4ISR capabilities, installations, and facilities required to implement Navy, DoD, and National policy regarding the changing Arctic region.

-*Strategic Communications and Outreach*: Informing internal and external organizations as well as the media, public, government, interagency, and international audiences regarding Navy's strategies, policies, investments, intentions, and actions regarding the changing Arctic.

Source Documents

ⁱ U.S. Navy Arctic Roadmap, October 2009.

ⁱⁱ Arctic Region Policy, National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD)-66 / Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-25, January 2009.

ⁱⁱⁱ Quadrennial Defense Review Report, February 2010.

^{iv} 2008 National Defense Strategy, June 2008.

^v A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower, October 2007.