Executive Summary

“When we think about the high north, we think about the value that the high north represents to all of us. It’s valuable to environmental security. It’s valuable to economic security. It potentially holds unspeakable resources. It is the pathway to trade for the future. Stability and security in the high north benefit all.”

– Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff USAF Gen. Paul J. Selva
CONTENTS
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ............................................................................................................. 3
INTRODUCTION .......................................................................................................................... 3
BACKGROUND ............................................................................................................................. 3
PROBLEM ..................................................................................................................................... 3
OBJECTIVE .................................................................................................................................... 4
OVERVIEW ..................................................................................................................................... 4
DETAILED SUMMARY .................................................................................................................. 6
RUSSIA OVERVIEW ..................................................................................................................... 6
CHINA OVERVIEW ....................................................................................................................... 7
JOINT, INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE – ARCTIC (JIATF-ARCTIC) ............................................. 8
KEY ALLIANCES REQUIRED ...................................................................................................... 9
GREYZONE WARFARE .................................................................................................................. 9
PANEL 1 SUMMARY .................................................................................................................... 11
PANEL 2 SUMMARY .................................................................................................................... 13
CONCLUSION .............................................................................................................................. 15
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION
Diminishing sea ice and intensifying worldwide competition for natural resources has rapidly increased international interest in the Arctic. Alaskan Command (ALCOM) recognizes challenges of synchronizing multiple combatant commands and service components within the Arctic, to include the ALCOM joint operations area (JOA), when 52% of that area extends over the maritime domain and 47% includes terrain above the Arctic Circle. The Arctic Senior Leader Summit 2019 (ASLS 2019) sought to advance defense and security-minded discussions on the Arctic in an era of rising competition between great powers and other nations seeking advantage of the diminishing ice environment of the circumpolar Arctic region. ALCOM’s ASLS 2019 convened experts from the Department of Defense (DoD), defense allies and partners in the Arctic region, and select Arctic oriented thought leaders from across the interagency and academia.

BACKGROUND
ALCOM (a subordinate unified command reporting to United States Northern Command--USNORTHCOM) conducted an inaugural Arctic Maritime Symposium (AMS-2018) at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson 14-16 August 2018. Aligned with U.S. National Defense and Security Strategies, and DoD Arctic Strategy, the principal goal of the ASLS 2019 was to build on the momentum of the Arctic Maritime Symposium and inform participants on defense and security concerns in the Arctic. These concerns were addressed from the perspective of the U.S. Office of the Secretary of Defense, Joint Staff, select members of the U.S. interagency and key senior leaders from each U.S. military service and from the Arctic-oriented U.S. unified military commands. ASLS 2019 advanced a new and growing network of thought leaders for Arctic security and defense matters. This network will serve as a bridge to Arctic-minded professionals across government, public and private organizations, and academia to inform the defense community in ways to better secure U.S. and allies’ interests in the Arctic.

PROBLEM
The rapidly changing environment in the Arctic and the increased presence of great power competitors, along with malign non-state actor’s challenges U.S. security interests in the region. Complicating an organized response is the region is located among the seams of multiple U.S. unified/combatant commands areas of responsibility. Therefore, a synchronized strategy in order to achieve improved unity of effort within the U.S. defense community in the Arctic is needed to counter near-peer competitor advances and malign actor activities.
OBJECTIVE
The objective of ASLS 2019 was to advance defense and security-minded discussions on the Arctic while expanding relationships and increasing understanding for future opportunities for collaboration, as well as identifying key leaders who contribute for successful implementation of U.S. Arctic strategies, suitably informed by allied and partner plans and activities.

OVERVIEW
ALCOM hosted Arctic Senior Leader Summit at the National Defense University on Ft. McNair, Washington D.C. 18 January 2019. The event drew upon the expertise of senior military leaders and Arctic subject matter experts (SMEs) to address the strategic challenges associated with Arctic operations and training. The event focused on providing participants with opportunities to engage with their cross-unified/combatant command (CCMD) and intergovernmental counterparts through panel discussions, and briefs led by experts in policy and joint operations.

During ASLS 2019, panelists and speakers described the Arctic as a region abundant in natural resources, challenging terrains, complex ecosystems and cultural significance not readily described through a single strategic narrative. The Arctic faces an incredible array of changes and challenges, as the physical environment transitions from a dominance of sea ice to one in which seasonal open oceans afford lower barriers of access. Human activities are now on the rise, which includes industry, non-state actors and an array of Arctic and non-Arctic nation states, including great powers. Competition for mineral wealth and control of access to and through the region are potential concerns and challenges to U.S. allied and partner nation security interests.

ASLS 2019 planners presented participants a series of background materials describing the Arctic from a geographic and geo-political vantage. ASLS 2019 comprised two keynote presentations by the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Assistant Deputy Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Planning and Capabilities. ASLS 2019 included two select panels: one for policy views on the Arctic from a security and defense vantage and the second from service and unified command “practitioners”...senior leaders who plan and conduct training and exercises of military forces.

The text of this summary contains specific quotes and themes from ASLS 2019 participants, but under Chatham House protocols, quotations are not attributed specifically to individual participants without their permission.
Following ALCOM’s Arctic Maritime Symposium in August 2018, ASLS 2019 served as a second step to adopting a joint and interagency approach to understanding and protecting America’s security interests in the Arctic region. Setting the scene from a Joint Force perspective in the Arctic, Lieutenant General Thomas Bussiere, USAF, Commander, Alaskan Command (CDRAlCOM) stated:

“The Homeland is no longer a sanctuary. This summit allows us to better understand threats to our interests, strengthen relationships, and deepen our knowledge of the shared responsibilities that an opening Arctic brings to America and our allies and partners. We cannot do this alone.”
- Lt. Gen Thomas Bussiere, Commander, Alaskan Command

Undeniably, a great power competition is taking place in the Arctic. Foreign direct investment, infrastructure development, and partnership building are all taking place outside of American spheres of influence, which ultimately threatens our security, prosperity, and values.

“For centuries, advantages have been gained by great powers that successfully exploit near-peer competitors’ vulnerabilities in order to expand influence and gain economic and security advantages. This is playing out in the high north.”
DETAILED SUMMARY

The United States is an Arctic Nation. The U.S. military secures the approaches to national territory and American national security interests in the Arctic through forces led by the unified commands and in coordination with American partners and allies. In light of rising competition by non-state actors and nation states in response to an increasingly diminished sea ice environment of the circumpolar north, U.S. defense forces have reason to review and renew planning, posture and presence within the region.

Attendees of the ASLS 2019 were guided through policy discussions and posture strategies. Protecting American interests starts with a better understanding of how U.S. security and prosperity interests are closely linked to American values. Arctic partnerships, which promote the rule of law, freedom of trade and commerce, while protecting the environment and cultures that exist in the high north is the start of creating a more secure American Arctic border.

The U.S. strategic interests in the Arctic region must first preserve and protect U.S. citizens and territory in the region. U.S. security interests include freedom of access and regional stability. ASLS 2019 participants are increasingly concerned from the malevolent behavior of great powers, particularly of Russia and China, who are underway via distinctly different approaches to securing their respective national interests. While noting these distinctions, both Russia and China are establishing increasingly aggressive postures, which challenge U.S. strategic objective of the peaceful opening of the Arctic.

ASLS 2019 participants note, the first step in miscalculation or lack of preemptive action between all parties could lead to conflict. Accordingly, it is imperative to find a way forward with clarity, and develop a strong (and coordinated) plan of efforts and activities to secure, preserve and protect U.S., allied and partner strategic interests in the Arctic region.

Therefore, ASLS 2019 is a stepping-stone to better understand the concerns, establish the context and create a pathway to address the challenges. Such an approach is needed in order to implement and support suitable strategy of posture and presence to ensure the security and stability of the region. ASLS 2019 participant’s note, each U.S. and associated allied and partner organization that has the time, expertise, knowledge and passion in this context is paramount to establishing successful engagement and creating mechanisms in presence and posture to ensure a future Arctic that is stable and secure.

RUSSIA OVERVIEW

A little more than a decade ago, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) responded to the Russian Federation’s publishing of their Northern Strategy. This spurred a response within the NATO alliance to reconsider the changing physical characteristics of the Arctic and its geo-strategic implications. One idealistic method towards addressing a recent rise in Russia/NATO tensions towards Arctic regional competition would be to seek discussion and diplomacy via established conventions (such as the United Nations and Arctic Council) to peacefully address differences regarding the Arctic.
It is clear however, the Russian Federation is very interested in increasing their infrastructure and presence in the region. In analyzing Russian “Arctic renewal” security and defense experts have a conundrum: is such an investment based on fear, opportunity or both?

ASLS 2019 participants note, much of the Russian Arctic frontier investment is likely attributed as both defensive and opportunistic. Russia has the longest border in the Arctic region to defend, while also seeking, (from a position of strength) to dominate the Arctic, in order to access to immense resources, whilst shifting the power of influence in the circumpolar north. As Arctic regional warming further advance a diminished sea ice regime, the Arctic becomes more readily navigable for longer seasons, favoring yet further investment in establishing infrastructure and forces to secure Russian territory, control Arctic shipping lanes in Russian littorals and protect resource extraction and dominate the overall region.

ASLS 2019 participants note, the Russian Federation and the U.S. likely share different views on what is considered “strategic space” within the Arctic region. Russian claims to the seabed to the extended continental shelf (in particular, the Lomonosov and Mendeleev Ridges extending into and across the Arctic basin), create potential for contest in resource extraction in regions normally considered international waters. Accordingly, achieving security and stability in the region require a set of imperatives that can be brought to the negotiating table, to includes, (but not limited to) trade routes and resource development.

CHINA OVERVIEW
China has identified itself as a “near Arctic” nation, yet over 90% of China is located south of Seattle, Washington. In posted and published narrative, conversation and rhetoric, the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) national leaders market the PRC as a near-arctic nation in order to gain access to Arctic-related strategic forums on the world stage to include the Arctic Council. This raises concern because of the PRC’s questionable activity with other countries and PRC approach to trade and infrastructure development. ASLS 2019 participants note, the PRC is a mercantile, and not a maritime nation. In order to drive the economic engine of the nation, PRC state supported industry cannot afford to simply purchase resources at market rates, so the PRC uses trade and infrastructure investment, as a means of power and coercion to gain resources needed to fuel Chinese manufacturing. Continued growth of the Chinese economy is critical for Chinese internal stability.

ASLS 2019 participants note, PRC relies on fish proteins from the sea. ASLS 2019 participants further noted, that if PRC did not have access to the ocean, China would eventually be unable to feed its people. Accordingly, access to externally provided food stocks and resources for manufacturing, fuels an ever-expanding effort by PRC leaders to extend into new markets and locate new sources of extractable resources to ensure internal control and stability of the nation.

Concerns with China’s lack of environmental stewardship is particularly concerning when viewing PRC interests in the Arctic. As an example, PRC has established a dismal record of environmental activities in the South China Sea. Within that region, ASLS 2019 noted PRC
purposely destroyed the seabed to build an island without bothering to consider the environmental ramifications of such activity would have on the region. Accordingly, such a destructive method of expansion and the effect overall that Chinese trade and exploitation of lesser sovereign territories should be a wakeup call as PRC leaders set their sights on the high north.

“China’s actions in the South China Sea demonstrate they are driven by self-interest with little consideration to the environment. There is no indication that China’s actions in the Arctic will be any different.”

JOINT, INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE – ARCTIC (JIATF-ARCTIC)
During ASLS 2019, participants raised a question regarding a follow-up item from the Arctic Maritime Symposium 2018; namely, what sort of Arctic framework in a command and control entity, could best integrate the various U.S. federal agencies in addressing security and defense concerns in the Arctic? Specifically, ASLS participants noted, that achieving “unity of effort” in crisis response and better coordination in addressing challenges to security and defense concerns would be desirable. Accordingly, ASLS participants opined that a framework in which interagency, state, international partners, and first-nation representatives could gain understanding, form cooperative plans and coordinate security related activities could potentially be achieved via a Joint, Interagency “Task Force” – Arctic (or JIATF-Arctic)? An alternative term in lieu of “task force”...could be “coordination center.”

The case and point of the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps participation in Trident Juncture (a USEUCOM Tier 1 Field Training Exercise with NATO allies in the Arctic) as a good example of high north cooperation under the umbrella of a Geographic Combatant Command’s (GCC) joint force maritime component command (JFMCC). Trident Juncture 2018 exercise was the largest in a decade and served as a deliberate action signaling capability to the global defense community.

Establishing a security and defensively oriented JIATF-Arctic (or JIACC) will likely build a higher degree of military presence and competence in operating in the high north. Such a framework could also build relationships similar to the search and rescue operations currently ongoing with the DoD and U.S. Coast Guard in Alaska. Conducting military and security activities in the Arctic, and Alaska in particular, is complex and should carefully consider all aspects that include cultural, tribal, environmental, economic, and resource equities. Creating a security and defense-oriented organization that inclusively addresses the need to preserve and protect Arctic related national interests is likely an important step for the United States. Such a framework, aligned with partner and allied plans and activities, would likely advance a responsible approach in achieving a peaceful opening of the Arctic in a time of rising great power competition.
KEY ALLIANCES REQUIRED
Another question raised in ASLS 2019 regarded capabilities and alliances; namely how does the United States hold key terrain in the Arctic, complicated in a confrontational or contested environment without more capabilities and stronger alliances?

Accordingly, ASLS 2019 noted more assistance is required to increase facilities and equipment. The U.S. historically relied heavily on submarines cruising underneath the arctic icecaps.

NATO will likely shoulder the burden of high north defense. In accordance with Article 5 of the NATO treaty, if a NATO ally territory were attacked in the Arctic, the U.S. and fellow allies would come to the defense. However, in terms of Arctic defense capability, ASLS 2019 participants noted Denmark and Norway are the most prepared for high north defense. The Russian Federation has demonstrated familiarity and relative benign acceptance to the presence of the Danish and Norwegian forces.

GREYZONE WARFARE
ASLS 2019 noted that defense professionals often think about security in the terms of regular warfare and are well prepared in that type of defense, but the reality is that the bigger risks stem from the growing trend of irregular warfare, referred to as “Greyzone warfare.” Such a term does not necessarily mean conflict involving force or the use of arms. Greyzone warfare does utilize means of co-opting and coercing to achieve goals that advance respective interests at the expense of others.

In order to illustrate, the PRC use a greyzone warfare technique employing a strategic façade consisting of ‘predatory lending’. The PRC loans large sums of money to build up infrastructure and holding immense promise on return of investment, yet return to the party obligated for the debt with further loans, while charging exorbitant interest rates that leaves the lender able to establish in a foothold in the region so invested. Accordingly, the PRC’s self-interested global presence is a current and growing security risk for the U.S. and American allies. Through the “polar silk road initiative,” such economic malpractice is now emerging in the Arctic.
On the other hand, The Russian Federation successfully advances their national agenda in a Greyzone warfare approach to advance coercion via sustained presence, but at a level, carefully managed to preclude or limit response by the United States and American allies and partners.

The Russian Federation continues to conduct “snap exercises” where Russian Armed Forces construct infrastructure in support of the exercise, but of an enduring nature to effect capability for a real-world reception and staging capability poised to support future operations. Such investments as concrete pads, warehouses and billeting become useful to readily re-populate in response for operational readiness. The Russian method of using “snap exercises” has created a repeated pattern of infrastructure development, which may provide a key insight into areas prioritized for defense.

Here is what Russia’s military buildup in the Arctic looks like¹.

PANEL 1 SUMMARY

Achieving National Defense, DOD and other policy strategy - What is needed to advance U.S. security interest in the Arctic. Panel 1 was a panel of distinguished U.S. government leaders who shape policy, strategy and/or direct activities that influence U.S. national interests emanating within or through the Arctic region. Panelists were asked to describe from their current position and/or recent experience, their near and medium term view of challenges, concerns, needs, and opportunities as relates to great power competition in the Arctic and associated effect such competition creates on U.S. national interests in the region. Panelists considered comparing and contrasting views of policy/policy priorities to address U.S. national interests in the Arctic in light of demands, concerns, and corresponding interests from other regions. Panel 1 was challenged to compare and contrast views of policy and policy priorities as they relate to improving national security and defense interest in the Arctic.

There is a need for well-funded and strong support of research facilities supporting the Arctic. In addition, Americans need to think about what other communities need to be brought forward in the interest of the Arctic domain as well.

“We have determined that the homeland is not a sanctuary. The Arctic is and will continue to be contested which requires a presence. One considerable fear is that our peer adversaries are building campaign plans (not greyzone warfare) but actual military buildup and modernization and the asymmetric plans that target our operational capabilities.”

The current era is such an interconnected world, with ever-growing interdependence on technologies that in even the most remote locations malignant entities are can locate, find and exploit weakness.

Most of the critical infrastructure in the Arctic is owned and operated by commercial entities, therefore any plan for Arctic defense, cannot simply focus only on defensive aspects. Accordingly, military defense measures necessitate comparable cyber offensive capability. Panelists sketched a scenario where a strategic competitor advanced a regional objective to influence activity by launching a campaign that shapes, deters and coerces the U.S. government into action where it is not postured well and lacked the capability to operate.

ASLS 2019 Panel one, noted China has two icebreakers and the capacity to build more on demand. Panel one related the PRC “research” icebreaker Snow Dragon traveled through the Northwest Passage under the semblance of research. Panel one opined the Arctic region is effectively a “new ocean”...with a new coastline opening and the need to consider U.S. competitor moves into the region.

The panel noted Russia is responsible for deterioration in the security environment in Europe. The annexation of Crimea in 2014 demonstrated malignant influence and aggressive flexing of power. Their attempt to annex Georgia in 2008 led to the Russian occupation of...
nearly 20% of this region. Accordingly, defense policy makers and planners must discern at the effects of continued malign actions, which continue at levels below those, which result in protest or reaction. In frankness, panelists questioned if prior U.S. and allied actions were effective in deterring or dissuading Russian aggressive behavior. Further, panelists were concerned that such behavior could also manifest in the Arctic.

Panelists noted the Russian strategy is to make the U.S., allies and partners believe cooperation is achievable in the Arctic, which seems positive. Certainly, the U.S. Coast Guard and their Russian counterparts maintain a reasonably effective waterways management in the Bering Sea, Straits and Chukchi Sea. However, the Russian Federation has also demonstrated repeated instances in coercive activities (such as Crimea, Ukraine and Georgia) when such efforts were deemed suitable and achievable. Accordingly, the U.S. should consider outreach in the spirit of cooperation and dialogue, but continue heavy skepticism.

Observations by the panelists discussed how Russia views the Arctic through a great power lens, knowing that access would increase their economic growth and alter the global power dynamic. Russian holds 14% of the estimated Arctic oil reserves as well as significant access to the most economically viable marine access route in the Arctic (the Northern Sea Route along Russia’s northern littoral). Panelists note, the Russian Federation continues to observe refurbishment of old Soviet bases and Russia is gaining an asymmetric advantage in the Arctic against NATO by such efforts. However, NATO’s unity challenges Russia’s objectives. Russian Federation possesses the longest border in the Arctic drives their perceived vulnerability. In sum, panelists reaffirmed a need to try to work with the Russians when they demonstrate cooperative behavior, but leverage the unity and strength of the NATO alliance to address challenges and enforce Arctic cooperation.

When looking at the Arctic through an environmental and economic lens, panelists noted that weather and environmental information are vital to domain awareness in the Arctic. Weather system tracking is important for the joint forces operating in the Arctic in support of DoD interests. Additionally, charting Arctic waters is critical to providing up-to-date information to our maritime forces in order to maintain the “high ground” in the ocean.

Panelists also noted fisheries are important for economic security as well as the socioeconomic stability in a rapidly changing Arctic. Accordingly, panelists related the importance of advocacy for partnerships that perform the job of law enforcement to preserve these critical habitats and fisheries. American private sector partners are excelling in this regard. The use of drones to expand domain awareness and regional knowledge is an emerging and critical capability that helps all had better understand the changing dynamics in the Arctic. Leveraging the power of autonomy of technology is advantageous and should be considered moving forward as we increase presence and understanding in the Arctic.
PANEL 2 SUMMARY

Practitioner-focused panel. Gaining and sustaining improve presence and posture in the Arctic. Better harnessing the power of operations, exercises, and training to advance strategic interests. Panel #2 was a distinguished panel principally of flag and general officers, representing DoD Unified Combatant Commands, responsible for U.S. military activities or DHS Security missions across the circumpolar Arctic region, or service providers to GCCs. Panelists considered describing (from their current position), corresponding views of challenges, concerns, needs, and opportunities that could better orient operations, exercises, and training activities creating sustained effects of increased presence in the Arctic.

Panelists opened the discussion describing there are 600 Marines on rotation in Norway for the Trident Exercise Series. Accordingly, this has caught the attention of U.S. competitors.

The Arctic brings a clear challenge to U.S. expeditionary forces. Environmental factors for personnel in this harsh environment led to the establishment of the Marine Corps Cold Weather Training Center. Additional investment is required to modernize U.S. military equipment to improve expeditionary capability in the high north. In order to better deter and dissuade, U.S. forces must operate and exercise in the Arctic to build near, mid-term and long-term capabilities suitable for this type of environment.

U.S. forces learned a great deal from recent exercises in the Arctic. For example, U.S. forces learned of the need to create de-icing capabilities on surface combatants, which historically has been used for just aircraft de-icing. Military planners need to consider the cooperative and collaborative roles of the U.S. National Guard, allies and international partners as we seek to modify equipment to perform better in the Arctic to ensure our Marines do not just survive in the Arctic, but thrive.

To that end, the National Guard has partnerships with Norway’s Home Guard in the form of exchange programs. Northern Strike and Arctic Eagle exercises are conducted a regular basis, which has led to many of the SAR agreements with Russia and Canada. The Alaska National Guard also integrates with Canadian forces through annual exercises, which helps to feed the National Guard’s Arctic Interest Council, a think-tank that solves war-fighting problems in extreme cold weather.

“We have to operate in the Arctic with our allies as a Combined Force.”

There is an appetite to explore greater joint and interagency operability with tactical operation combined with other branches of our government. Unmanned systems could use further exploration taking into account National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) efforts. Panelists affirmed the essential need to work with Canada and the Nordic countries to address concerns in that region in order to keep the competitors “second guessing.” This includes capacity and priority capability to ensure forces are seen.
Additionally, there will be more return on investment by leaving infrastructure behind and will give the adversary something to think about.

“With regards to Alaska, there is no better place to strive and thrive together as a joint force.”

Training in extreme cold weather mountainous terrains as well as the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC) provides the joint and coalition forces with the best training in the world. The JPARC includes designated land, sea and air operations areas with over 1.6 million acres that are unmatched from a joint training opportunity perspective. Arctic Edge serves as a living laboratory and is an opportunity to integrate the joint force.

“There is a financial challenge, but by increasing these joint exercises and integrating more, our services will yield a great return on investment.”

Readiness is the goal USNORTHCOM’s Training and Exercise program. Specifically, the Unified Command Plan (UCP) serves U.S. defense leadership by providing a pathway for combatant commands to collaborate, and find ways to source what individual commands are not able to achieve singularly. In order to execute homeland defense missions in the Arctic, planners need to access USINDOPACOM forces (some of which are stationed in Alaska), USEUCOM requirements and perspective, and our international partners to build a coalition of the willing. USNORTHCOM executes just under 200+ exercises over a five-year cycle.

“In order to address Arctic security, we must be innovative, think faster, and be unpredictable and agile so we can execute global integration. Concentrating on the global challenges with integrated exercises allows everyone to get their forces to greater level of readiness, including civil authorities for homeland defense. Great power competition in the Arctic can only be addressed through globally integrated exercises and must include participants from each combatant command and service components.”
CONCLUSION

In addressing a strategic summit question...how do we best address joint operations in the Arctic? ASLS 2019 participants note the critical need and utility to develop a DoD strategy that encourages global integration of U.S. joint, allied and partner forces in the Arctic. U.S. military leaders need stronger advocacy and coordination from U.S. military services to provide presence and posture that displays dynamic force employment, which serves to deter and dissuade. Accordingly, U.S. military leaders must advocate for exercises that pull forces together across all domains, but more importantly, we must share our individual domain awareness and understandings with each other, to include our allies, in order to build needed and defense relationships and interoperability.

ASLS 2019 participants noted the important opportunity with USNORTHCOM as lead in the Arctic to combine resources from each combatant command for a truly integrated exercise that directly addresses the great power competition in the Arctic. ASLS 2019 participants were encouraged to submit their Arctic Exercise proposals to the Joint Staff J7 to best communicate and advocate for financial resources to the Joint Staff. Accordingly, ASLS advanced each Arctic oriented unified/combatant command’s request for a globally integrated exercise in locations that cross the seams of multiple GCCs.

“Globally integrated exercises in the Arctic region have the greatest potential to address our strategic goals with our near-peer adversaries while also identifying significant shortfalls in combatant command integration and joint command and control in the high north.”

ASLS 2019 provided an opportunity to address defense and security concerns and opportunities aligned with rising competition and increasing threat and risk to U.S. and allies’ security interests across the Arctic. ASLS 2019 planners appreciated the investment of time and effort by all participants in the increasing importance of addressing Arctic security in light of a diminishing sea ice environment.

As the overall ASLS 2019 lead, Alaskan Command will continue dialog with our interagency, tribal, commercial, and private sector partners at another senior leader summit within six months in Alaska. As the great power competition continues to take place in the Arctic, ALCOM will continue to build relationships and alliances to ensure our ability to maintain security, prosperity, and values in the Arctic.
For more information on the Arctic Senior Leader Summit or follow-on events, please contact:

Ms. Veronica N. Clark  
Alaskan Command Arctic Planner  
(907) 552-7766  
veronica.clark.2@us.af.mil

Maj Gen (Ret) Randy “Church” Kee  
Executive Director  
Arctic Domain Awareness Center  
University of Alaska  
rakee@alaska.edu