

# 2024 U.S. Arctic Strategy: Summary and Key Points

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## 1. Executive Summary

The 2024 U.S. Arctic Strategy is a comprehensive document aimed at safeguarding U.S. security and defense interests in the Arctic region. The Department of Defense (DoD) is guided by this strategy to ensure that the Arctic remains a stable region, secure the U.S. homeland, and protect vital national interests.

## 2. U.S. Defense Interests in the Arctic

The U.S. possesses significant defense infrastructure in the Arctic, including territories like Alaska. This region hosts air and maritime warning systems through the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD). Additionally, the Arctic supports U.S. operations in the Indo-Pacific and forms a critical northern flank for projecting military power into Europe.

## 3. Strategic Environment

The Arctic is becoming an area of increasing strategic competition. Key factors include Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Finland and Sweden's accession to NATO, and the growing collaboration between China and Russia. Furthermore, accelerated climate change is making the Arctic more accessible, leading to increased human activity and raising the risks of accidents, miscalculations, and environmental degradation.

## 4. Approach to Managing New Challenges

The DoD plans to enhance Arctic capabilities, deepen cooperation with allies and partners, and improve readiness for operations at high latitudes. This strategy supports the 2022 National Security Strategy and the 2022 National Strategy for the Arctic Region. The DoD aims to achieve these objectives through three main lines of effort:

1. Enhancing the Arctic capabilities of the Joint Force.
2. Strengthening collaboration with allies and partners.
3. Demonstrating presence in the Arctic through independent and joint training.

## **5. Investments and Initiatives**

The DoD is investing in sensors, intelligence, and information-sharing capabilities to monitor changing environmental conditions and competitor activities in the Arctic. Additionally, the review of existing equipment and infrastructure is planned, along with the development of options to maintain a monitor-and-respond approach. These investments aim to mitigate risks associated with insufficient early warning and air defense sensors in the Arctic.

## **6. Challenges and Threats**

The Arctic poses numerous challenges that the U.S. must balance against global commitments and other resource requirements. The reduction of sea ice due to climate change is making maritime chokepoints like the Bering Strait and Barents Sea more navigable, increasing their economic and military importance. Insufficient Arctic preparedness could raise doubts about the effectiveness of the Joint Force in the region.

## **7. Conclusion**

This strategy envisions the U.S. working alongside allies and partners to protect security interests in the Arctic. The DoD will continue to monitor changes in the Arctic and take necessary steps to respond to national security threats as they arise. The strategy provides a roadmap for the DoD to enhance its Arctic capabilities, increase cooperation, and demonstrate presence in the region.

## **Source**

US Department of Defense, (2024). 2024 Department of Defense Arctic Strategy. <https://media.defense.gov/2024/Jul/22/2003507411/-1/-1/0/DOD-ARCTIC-STRATEGY-2024.PDF>.

(Academia)

