



Alaskan Command, in coordination with trusted partners, conducts homeland defense (HD), civil support, mission assurance, and security cooperation within the ALCOM Joint Area of Operation (JOA) to defend and secure the United States and its interests.

ALCOM is headquartered at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, and falls under U.S. Northern Command as a subordinate unified command. DoD forces in Alaska include more than 22,000 U.S. Air Force, U.S. Army, U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps personnel, and 4,700 Guardsmen and Reservists.

For questions about Alaskan Command, Alaskan NORAD Region or 11th Air Force please contact Public Affairs at 907-552-2341.

ALCOM FACTS

Alaskan Command, along with trusted partners, conducts homeland defense, civil support, and mission assurance in Alaska to defend and secure the United States and its interests. Alaskan Command (ALCOM) is a subunified command of U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM).

ALCOM is headquartered at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER), Anchorage, Alaska.

Alaska-based forces include more than 20,000 Air Force, Army, Navy and Marine personnel, and 4,700 Guardsmen and Reservists.

HISTORY

ALCOM traces its origins to the Alaskan Command established on January 1, 1947, as one of the first unified commands under the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). The command was founded based on lessons learned during World War II, when a lack of unity of command hampered operations to drive the Japanese from the western Aleutian Islands of Attu and Kiska.

Its three Service components were the Alaskan Air Command (AAC); United States Army, Alaska (USARAL); and the Navy's Alaskan Sea Frontier (ALSEAFRON). In recognition of the importance of air power to the defense of Alaska, ALCOM commanders were drawn from the ranks of the United States Air Force. ALCOM and its components were charged with the defense of Alaska and its surrounding waters.

The Alaskan Sea Frontier was inactivated in 1971 as part of post-Vietnam military manning reductions. Responsibility for the defense of the Aleutian Islands was

transferred to U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM), again creating a lack of unity of command for Alaskan defense. USARAL was deactivated in 1974 and replaced by the 172nd Infantry Brigade (Alaska), and ALCOM was then deactivated in 1975 and replaced with Joint Task Force Alaska (JTF-AK) and Joint Task Force Aleutian (JTF-AL).

In 1987, the problem of disjointed command was highlighted in Fortress Gale 87, the first exercise in the Aleutians since World War II. FORCES COMMAND (I Corps - Fort Lewis, Wash.) was responsible for land defense, USPACOM for sea defense, and the Alaskan NORAD Region (ANR) for air defense. The lack of unity of command was highlighted in the JCS Remedial Action Plan and corrected in July 1989 with the disestablishment of JTF-AK and JTF AL and the activation of a new Alaskan Command as a subunified command under USPACOM. ALCOM was given responsibility for unified defense, less aerospace defense, of the land and territorial water of the State of Alaska including the Aleutian Islands, and other missions as assigned such as air rescue and civil support.

Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the establishment of USNORTHCOM, responsibility for the land and maritime defense of Alaska and civil support were transferred from USPACOM to USNORTHCOM. Joint Task Force Alaska (JTF-AK) was established in February 2003 to plan and conduct USNORTHCOM mission responsibilities in Alaska (less maritime defense).

In October 2014, Commanders of USNORTHCOM and USPACOM came to an agreement to transfer ALCOM from USPACOM to USNORTHCOM and for ALCOM to absorb the responsibilities and mission sets of JTF-AK. Upon the Secretary of Defense approval Oct. 27, 2014, ALCOM transferred to USNORTHCOM.

While the responsibility for defense of Alaska remains divided between NORAD and USNORTHCOM, the ALCOM Commander - who also serves as the Alaskan NORAD Region Commander - provides unity of command for U.S. and Canadian forces and all Department of Defense missions in Alaska.

FORCES IN ALASKA

11th Air Force

The 11th Air Force (11 AF) provides forces to maintain air superiority in Alaska and support Alaska-based ground forces, and combat-ready air forces for employment by combatant commanders to preserve the national sovereignty of the United States and defend U.S. interests overseas.

The largest subordinate units in 11 AF are the 3rd Wing at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson and the 354th Fighter Wing at Eielson AFB, near Fairbanks, Alaska.

The 3 WG, the largest unit within 11 AF, trains and equips an Air Expeditionary Force lead wing comprised of more than 2,200 Airmen and E-3B Sentry, C-17 Globemaster III, C-130 Hercules, F-22A Raptor and C-12F Huron aircraft. It provides air supremacy, surveillance, worldwide airlift, and agile combat support forces to project global power and global reach. The 3 WG also maintains the installation for critical force staging and throughput operations in support of worldwide contingencies.

The 354th Fighter Wing provides world class training ranges and aggressor support, combat ready forces for world-wide deployments and facilities for incoming forces capable of reaching anywhere in the Northern Hemisphere at a moment's notice. The 354 FW operates F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft, and prepares joint and allied Combat Air Force's aircrew for tomorrow's victories through challenging, realistic threat replication, training, test support, academics, and feedback.

The 611th Air and Space Operations Center (611 AOC) provides personnel and resources to conduct the ANR mission of maintaining air sovereignty over North America and also supports ALCOM's missions.

Remote locations of 11 AF are operated by the Pacific Air Forces Regional Support Center (PRSC) at JBER, Alaska. Those locations include: King Salmon Airport and Eareckson Air Station on Shemya Island, and a network of 15 Air Force radar sites throughout Alaska. The PRSC provides surveillance radars, arctic infrastructure, communications and worldwide-deployable support for homeland defense, decisive force projection, and aerospace command and control.

When mobilized, the State's Air National Guard becomes an integral part of ALCOM. The Alaska Air National Guard (AKANG) maintains KC-135 Stratotanker, C-130 and HC-130 Hercules aircraft and HH-60 Pave Hawk combat search and rescue helicopters.

U.S. ARMY ALASKA

U.S. Army Alaska (USARAK), a subordinate element of U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC), is headquartered at Joint Base Elmendorf-RichardsonFort Richardson, Alaska, with units stationed also stationed at Fort Wainwright and Black Rapids.

The organization, commanded by a major general, provides USARPAC with focused, early entry battle command capability and acts as the Joint Force Land Component

Commander for homeland defense and civil support in Alaska. USARAK's mission is to be prepared to deploy rapidly in the Pacific theater and elsewhere in support of contingency operations, USPACOM objectives and U.S. national interests.

U.S. Army Alaska is home to two infantry brigade combat teams and, a combat aviation brigade., a maneuver enhancement brigade, and Reserve Component units. The 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division is headquartered at Fort Wainwright, near Fairbanks, Alaska, along with 16th Combat Aviation Brigade.

The Northern Warfare Training Center at Black Rapids is the Army's only high-altitude, Arctic training facility, and U.S. Army Garrison Fort Wainwright. Headquartered at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson are the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th ID, and the 3rd Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, the Sgt. 1st Class Christopher R. Brevard Noncommissioned Officer's Academy., and U.S. Army Garrison Fort Richardson.

Tenant organizations include the DoD Missile Defense Agency (Fort Greely) and the USA Medical Department Activity-Alaska, USA Dental Activity-Alaska, 59th Signal Battalion, and the Bureau of Land Management.

The Reserve component units located throughout the state include a National Guard infantry group (Scout) consisting of three infantry battalions, a support battalion, an aviation battalion, an Army Reserve engineer battalion and a reserve hospital.

MILITARY IMPORTANCE OF ALASKA

Alaska lies across the great circle routes connecting the Asian-Pacific theater with North America, making it an ideal refueling location for aircraft using polar or near-polar routes. Military installations in Alaska are much closer to Asia and Europe than most in the contiguous United States, providing an ideal staging location for a rapid military response capability.

Alaska's mineral wealth is considerable. The State provides 25 percent of U.S. oil production and an estimated 30 percent of U.S. oil reserves lie in Alaska. Commercial fisheries in the State provide more than 50 percent of the U.S. harvest and nearly 65 percent of U.S. zinc production comes from Alaska. Large amounts of natural gas, coal, iron, gold, tin, platinum and copper are also prevalent throughout the State.

Alaska offers a unique environment for military training. The State is home to some of the largest airspace ranges in the world and more than 1.5 million acres of maneuver areas. Premier combat airpower exercises are conducted throughout the year and all military Services train with an emphasis on perfecting joint warfighting doctrine and tactics.

In recent years, an accelerating disappearance of multi-year ice in the Arctic Ocean has highlighted the implications of increased human activity in the region. The United States is an Arctic nation solely because of the State of Alaska, giving the nation a compelling interest in the possibility of increased shipping traffic and natural resource potential in the region. Homeland defense and civil support missions are becoming increasingly important concerns for national policy due to increased activity in the region, and ALCOM, continues to play a critical role in executing these missions.

(Current as of April 2, 2015)

Previous Commanders

Commanders-in Chief, Alaskan Command
Established 1 January 1947 as Unified Command

Commander Date Assumed Command

Maj. Gen. Howard A. Craig Jan 1947-Oct 1947
Lt. Gen. Nathan F. Twining Oct 1947-Jul 1950
Lt. Gen. William E. Kepner Jul 1950-Mar 1953
Lt. Gen. Joseph H. Atkinson Mar 1953-Sep 1956
Lt. Gen. Frank A. Armstrong, Jr. Sep 1956-Jul 1961
Lt. Gen. George W. Mundy Aug 1961-Jul 1963
Gen. Raymond J. Reeves Aug 1963-Jul 1966
Lt. Gen. Glen R. Birchard Jul 1966-Jun 1967
Maj. Gen. Robert A. Breitweiser Jun 1967-Jul 1969
Lt. Gen. Robert G. Ruegg Aug 1969-Aug 1972
Lt. Gen. James C. Sherrill Aug 1972-Aug 1974
Lt. Gen. James E. Hill Aug 1974-Jul 1975

Commanders, Joint Task Force Alaska

JTF-AK was established as contingency command, replacing ALCOM when it was disestablished 1 July 1975. The Commander, Alaskan Air Command, position was upgraded to a lieutenant general and he became Commander, JTF-AK in a dual hat role.

Commander Date Assumed Command

Lt. Gen. James E. Hill Jul 1975-Oct 1976
Lt. Gen. Marion L. Boswell Oct 1976-Jun 1978
Lt. Gen. Winfield W. Scott, Jr. Jun 1978-Mar 1981
Lt. Gen. Lynwood E. Clark Mar 1981-Aug 1983
Lt. Gen. Bruce K. Brown Aug 1983-Sep 1985
Lt. Gen. David L. Nichols Sep 1985-May 1988
Lt. Gen. Thomas G. McInerney May 1988-Jul 1989

Commanders, Alaskan Command

ALCOM was re-established as a subordinate unified command under USPACOM 7 July 1989. The Commander, Alaskan Air Command also served as Commander, ALCOM in a joint billet. The Alaskan Air Command was redesignated 11AF on 9 August 1990.

Commander Date Assumed Command

Lt. Gen. Thomas G. McInerney Jul 1989-Jul 1992
Lt. Gen. Joseph W. Ralston Jul 1992-Jul 1994
Lt. Gen. Lawrence E. Boese Jul 1994-Aug 1996
Lt. Gen. Patrick K. Gamble Aug 1996-Dec 1997
Lt. Gen. David J. McCloud Dec 1997 - Jul 1998
Lt. Gen. Thomas R. Case Oct 1998-Sep 2000
Lt. Gen. Norton A. Schwartz Sep 2000-Sep 2002
Lt. Gen. Carrol H. Chandler Sep 2002-Oct 2005
Lt. Gen. Douglas M. Fraser Oct 2005-May 2008

Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins May 2008-Nov 2011

Lt. Gen. Stephen L. Hoog Nov 2011 - Aug 2013

Lt. Gen. Russell J. Handy Aug 2013 - Aug 2016

Lt. Gen. Kenneth S. Wilsbach Aug 2016 - present