

Date: Jan 24, 2012 10:30 a.m.

Location: Room 1295, National Science Foundation, Arlington, VA

Remarks of
Mr. Gordon O. Tanner,
Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Reserve Affairs)
To the Antarctic Logistics Blue Ribbon Panel

Distinguished members of the Blue Ribbon Panel,

It is the view of the Department of Defense that the active and influential United States presence in Antarctica maintained by the U.S. Antarctic Program directly advances our foreign policy objectives in the Antarctic Treaty system and globally. The Department of Defense (DoD) has a rich history in supporting United States Antarctic Program (USAP) policy objectives by providing equipment, personnel, and the air, land and sea operations necessary for the safe and successful accomplishment thereof.

The June 1994 Presidential Decision Directive, "United States Policy on the Arctic and Antarctic Regions," outlined four fundamental Antarctic policy objectives for the United States that remain relevant today. In brief, they are: environmental protection, scientific research, international cooperation, and sustainable living resource management.

To ensure flexibility and operational reach, DoD is poised to develop, in collaboration with the National Science Foundation, logistical arrangements and cost structure required for effective and responsive support at a minimum cost. DoD oversight is provided by the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) SAF/MR who has Executive Agent responsibility to ensure DoD compliance and stewardship of the USAP's mutually dependent roles of science and diplomacy in Antarctica.

United States activities in Antarctica are managed in a single integrated program that adheres to the principles of the Antarctic Treaty of 1959. The Treaty provides that Antarctica shall be used for peaceful purposes only, and that there shall be prohibited, any measures of a military nature, such as the establishment of

military bases and fortifications, the carrying out of military maneuvers, and the testing of any type of weapons. However, it does not prevent the use of military personnel or equipment for support of scientific research or for any other peaceful purposes.

DoD policy directs that components involved in the planning for, conducting of, or participation in operations in the Antarctic area observe and are compliant with the terms of the Antarctic Treaty. It is important that our military presence reflects US Antarctic diplomacy efforts, which places a premium on conduct of science and care of the environment.

The U.S. scientific research program in Antarctica continues to be the principal expression of our national interest and policy in Antarctica. Pursuant to the single agency management concept that has been assigned to NSF, it is the policy of NSF to employ a mix of military and commercial program support managed as a single package with cost structures that ensure effective and responsive program support at minimum cost. A civilian organization exercising funding control over operational military units is a departure from normal military command procedures and requires an exceptional amount of understanding and flexibility by all parties involved.

Lead by the Joint Task Force Support Forces Antarctica (JTF-SFA), Operation DEEP FREEZE (ODF) consists of Active Duty, Guard and Reserve personnel from the USAF, USN, US Army, and USCG as well as DoD civilians. This construct provides the detailed planning and execution capability required to meet the scope of the USAP core mission as well as providing the quick reaction required during urgent situations.

USAP policy provides for NSF to invite relevant senior DoD DVs to visit the ODF program. The intent is to expose senior leaders, commanders and policy makers to ODF, allowing them to see firsthand the unique aspects and challenges surrounding Antarctic operations that make science possible. The value of this program cannot be overstated.

The U.S. government's commitment to Antarctic peace and security is underscored and promoted by the fact that the United States has the greatest presence of any nation in Antarctica as measured by personnel, funding, logistics and station size. Peaceful use of military resources plays an important role in achieving USAP objectives and promoting bilateral ties between the United States and other Treaty Parties. Safe transport of foreign officials and dignitaries, such as

the King of Malaysia in support of the Antarctica New Zealand program and Norwegian Prime Minister in December to mark the Centennial of Amundsen's arrival at the South Pole, and rescue coordination center response efforts for distressed foreign vessels are examples of how the military is used to help contribute to our foreign policy objectives in Antarctica and globally.

DoD technology and research collaborations can only strengthen the NSF/DoD partnership and better capitalize on resources. A clear process for exploring emerging, innovative research and development concepts through institutions like the Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory (CRREL) and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) will maximize efficiency and cost-effectiveness for sustainable USAP science and operations.

Autonomous vehicles, innovative energy solutions, waste management practices, and force sustainment solutions are examples of areas where the DoD can assist in improved operations in extreme and austere environments. US Navy assistance with the design and build of a research vessel, LC-130 Crevasse Detection Radar (CDR), Common Support Science Pod (CSSP) and the NP2000 propeller system initiatives as well as the C-17 Night Vision Goggle and Polar Aerial Delivery programs are capability enhancers that are currently being explored and expanded upon.

It is true that DoD policy and budgetary decisions must be aligned to affect flexibility and operational reach by means of a cost structure that promotes effective and responsive support at a minimum cost. Doing so will allow the posturing of DoD to sustain its obligations in Antarctica in order to ensure the conduct of cutting edge scientific research, and to promote international cooperation and good will.

The future of airlift and information technology in Antarctica, U.S. icebreaker capability and strategic deployment and distribution solutions will determine how DoD adapts to the evolving US Antarctic Program. Setting the framework now for collaborative logistics advancements, best use of resources and the facilitation of process improvements are essential to realize USAP goals.