

Minister
of National Defence



Ministre
de la Défense nationale

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0K2

17 June 2024

Ms. Shaila Anwar
Clerk of the Senate and
Clerk of the Parliaments
The Senate
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A4

Dear Ms. Anwar,

Enclosed for tabling in the Senate, pursuant to the rule of the Senate 12-23(3), are copies in both official languages of the Government Response to the Sixth Report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security, Defence and Veterans Affairs Entitled: *Arctic Security Under Threat: Urgent Needs in a Changing Geopolitical and Environmental Landscape*.

Sincerely yours,

The Honourable Bill Blair, PC, C.O.M., M.P.
Minister of National Defence

17 juin 2024

Mme. Shaila Anwar
Greffière du Sénat et la
greffière des parlements
Le Sénat
Ottawa (Ontario)
K1A 0A4

Madame Anwar,

Vous trouverez ci-joint, pour dépôt au Sénat, conformément à l'article 12-23(3) du Règlement du Sénat, des exemplaires dans les deux langues officielles de la réponse du gouvernement au rapport du Comité sénatorial permanent de la sécurité nationale, de la défense et des anciens combattants intitulé *La sécurité de l'Arctique menacée : Des besoins urgents dans un paysage géopolitique et environnemental en évolution*.

Veillez agréer, Madame, l'expression de mes meilleurs sentiments.

L'honorable Bill Blair, C.P., C.O.M., député
Ministre de la Défense Nationale

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE SIXTH REPORT OF THE STANDING SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, DEFENCE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS ENTITLED: ARCTIC SECURITY UNDER THREAT: URGENT NEEDS IN A CHANGING GEOPOLITICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL LANDSCAPE

Recommendation 1: That the Government of Canada include, in the next defence policy, a section on Arctic security and defence. Recognizing that the international security environment is deteriorating, this section should outline how Arctic security and defence issues have evolved since the previous defence policy was released in 2017. As well, it should identify the Government's plans to address – on an expeditious basis – threats to Canada, including to the Arctic, as well as new threats that could enter North America through the Arctic.

The Government of Canada agrees with this recommendation.

The Government of Canada remains committed to ensuring the security and defence of the Arctic. In Canada's 2017 defence policy, *Strong, Secure, Engaged* (SSE), the Government laid the foundation for long-term Arctic security and defence and identified the region as an "important international crossroads where issues of climate change, international trade, and global security meet." Since the publication of SSE, and consistent with its core responsibility to detect, deter and defend attacks against Canada, the Department of National Defence (DND) and the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) have monitored changes in the strategic landscape and taken steps to ensure that Canada has the required capabilities to advance its priorities and continues to meet the modern security environment.

Though SSE correctly identified multiple global security challenges and set ambitious targets to meet them, the international security environment has deteriorated faster than expected and in ways that impact Arctic security. This is why, as announced in April 2024, the Government reviewed and updated SSE with *Our North, Strong and Free: A Renewed Vision for Canada's Defence*. This defence policy update reaffirms the defence of Canada and North America as a priority, noting that investments in Arctic and continental defence will ensure that Canada can engage in the world and deploy forces into the Arctic more persistently, as needed. The 2024 defence policy update also complements the efforts to modernize NORAD announced in 2022 and expounds the Government's plan to increase Canada's Arctic and continental defences to address threats to Canada, including in, to, and through the Arctic. For example, section four of the 2024 defence policy update describes how Canada will be acquiring airborne early warning aircraft and specialized maritime sensors, building a new satellite ground station, and establishing northern operational support hubs to improve DND/CAF's ability to detect, deter, and respond to threats across the Arctic and the North, while supporting benefits to Indigenous partners and northern communities, wherever possible. In this context, the 2024 defence policy update articulates that DND/CAF will establish a CAF Cyber Command and, with the Communications Security Establishment (CSE), create a joint Canadian cyber operations capability that will enhance Canada's capacity in the cyber domain to support Canadian interests. Additionally, CSE also works to make sure the Government of Canada has the necessary intelligence to safeguard Canada's Arctic sovereignty.

Recommendation 2: That the Government of Canada provide an annual update about Canada's Arctic-related security and defence priorities and plans. Such updates should be provided to relevant stakeholders, including the premiers of Canada's provinces and territories, as well as the leaders of local Indigenous organizations and governments. When providing these updates, the Government should ensure that discussions with stakeholders relating to Arctic security and defence are both open and honest.

The Government of Canada agrees in principle with the recommendation.

The Government already has several collaborative governance mechanisms in place to engage directly with all relevant partners and stakeholders, share information, and provide updates about current Arctic-related security and defence activities and plans. Notably, the Government of Canada continues to regularly engage with northern, provincial, territorial, and Indigenous

governments and organizations, including through the *Arctic and Northern Policy Framework* (ANPF), to build relationships, learn about their priorities and have discussions on Arctic security and defence that are open and honest. The ANPF outlines a whole-of-government approach and guidance for the Arctic and North until 2030. Canada's 2024 defence policy update reiterates commitments made under the ANPF to engage Indigenous peoples and northern communities in Arctic defence activities and initiatives. DND/CAF is engaged with relevant Indigenous peoples and stakeholders through ANPF governance mechanisms, such as the ANPF All Partners' Working Group, the ANPF Leadership Committee, as well as the Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee (ICPC), to ensure that it delivers defence capabilities that are relevant to, and inclusive of, all Canadians, and underpinned by meaningful dialogue with Arctic and northern partners. For example, at the 2022 and 2023 ANPF Leadership Committee meetings, chaired by the Minister of Northern Affairs, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence engaged with partners on Arctic and northern security and defence to ensure that their priorities and contributions to a safer and more secure North were appropriately reflected.

In addition, DND/CAF collaborates closely with municipal, territorial, and Indigenous stakeholders and rights-holders in the context of the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) modernization investments, as well as of Operation NANOOK, Canada's signature northern operation. Likewise, in partnership with territorial governments, the CAF co-hosts biannual meetings of the Arctic Security Working Group (ASWG) to bring together federal and territorial departments and agencies, Indigenous governments, non-governmental organizations, academics, the private sector, and other stakeholders with an interest in Arctic and northern issues to share information and enhance coordination.

Furthermore, CSE's Canadian Centre for Cyber Security (Cyber Centre) has built connections with Indigenous organizations and works with Indigenous partners to help strengthen cyber security in their communities. The Cyber Centre is the Government's operational lead for cyber security and is also a member of the ASWG. As the cyber threat landscape continues to evolve rapidly, Indigenous organizations and Indigenous partners share important cyber threat information with government and critical infrastructure partners in various ways. For example, in 2022 and 2023, the Cyber Centre provided cyber security briefings to several organizations across Canada, including territorial governments and Indigenous organizations. As part of its mandate, the Cyber Centre is also collaborating with Indigenous partners on a variety of cyber security projects, as well as is sharing multiple resources, including at the Indigenous Technology Summit in Halifax in September 2022, the Assembly of First Nations Special Chiefs Assembly in Ottawa in December 2022, and at the Inuit Technology Forum in Iqaluit in March 2023.

Furthermore, Public Safety Canada (PS) collaborates closely with provincial and territorial partners on emergency management. A standing forum of federal, provincial, and territorial Senior Officials Responsible for Emergency Management (SOREM) is the primary mechanism for this collaboration. In its role, SOREM works to harmonize and improve emergency practices across the country, including in the Arctic and North, and is responsible for providing guidance and advice on how to enhance emergency management to the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Ministers Responsible for Emergency Management (FPT Ministers). SOREM is also responsible for providing direction, advice and support to committees and working groups and non-governmental organizations dealing with crisis and consequence management issues at a national level. In January 2019, FPT Ministers approved Canada's first ever Federal, Provincial and Territorial Emergency Management Strategy titled "Emergency Management Strategy for Canada: Toward a Resilient 2030". This strategy identifies federal, provincial, and territorial priorities that will strengthen Canada's resilience by 2030. It also provides a collaborative, whole-of-society roadmap to strengthen Canada's ability to assess risks and prevent, mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. The 2019 strategy is now complemented by a new strategy released in 2024 titled "Federal-Provincial-Territorial Emergency Management Strategy: Areas for Action". The 2024 strategy sets out a first-ever shared federal-provincial-territorial vision for strong, resilient communities and calls for strengthened collaboration among all partners in emergency management, in accordance with each government's respective priorities, roles, and responsibilities.

PS' portfolio agencies, namely the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the Canadian

Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), also engage with stakeholders in the Arctic and North to advise on broader security issues related to foreign direct investment, including with respect to critical infrastructure and resource projects. While investment in these regions is critical to their development, it is also important that investments do not come at the expense of Canada's sovereignty or access to vital resources. As geopolitical competition increases in the Arctic, Canada is potentially vulnerable to foreign state entities using investment as a means of establishing control, or access to resources and critical infrastructure. Territorial government representatives are also part of the PS-led Federal-Provincial-Territorial community of practice for Economic-Based Threats to National Security.

As the Arctic is an area of international strategic, military, and economic importance, with both Arctic and non-Arctic states expressing a variety of interests in the region's potential, the RCMP prioritizes its role in ensuring the Canadian Arctic and North and its people are safe, secure, and well-defended, in accordance with the ANPF. The RCMP has a large footprint across the northern region that includes three Divisional headquarters and multiple detachments that provide a first response to civil emergencies and national security threats. As part of its unique mandate in the Arctic, the RCMP maintains its position as a fundamental resource in criminal law enforcement on Arctic waterways and in deterring serious and organized crime activity, irregular migration, human smuggling, and national security threats in the North such as foreign actor interference. The RCMP offers leadership in addressing these malign activities and threats in accordance with the ANPF and in light of an increasingly transforming Arctic.

CSIS has recently developed a CSIS Arctic and Northern Framework to ensure a strategic and coordinated approach to its engagement in the region and alignment with the ANPF, which has allowed it to make significant progress in building trusted partnerships in the Arctic, including with Indigenous and territorial organizations and governments, and has provided in-person and virtual briefings to raise awareness on a range of issues facing northern communities. CSIS has also shared guidance documents with these partners and made information more accessible to Indigenous communities by translating them. In addition to being a member of the ICPC's Sovereignty, Defence and Security Working Group, CSIS participates in the ASWG and co-chairs the Northern Intelligence Interdepartmental Sub-Working Group (NIIWG), the latter of which is a forum for domestic and allied governmental departments and agencies that have an intelligence mandate within the Arctic region.

For its part, the Canadian Coast Guard's (CCG) icebreaking and ice escort services in the Arctic provide access to northern communities without road access to ensure critical goods reach them. These services are key enablers of community resupply activities and contribute to food, housing, and energy security. At the same time, the CCG's collaboration with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, and northerners has been foundational to enhancing local operational readiness and capacity in the maritime domain awareness space. For example, through its Auxiliary Model, which is underpinned by a network of volunteers with units across Canada, including in the Arctic, the CCG continues to create additional community-based capacity to lead and assist in maritime emergencies, including search and rescue and marine environmental and hazard response incidents. Continuing this collaboration in the Arctic with Indigenous peoples and northerners, including commercial operators, and provinces and territories is crucial for maintaining maritime domain awareness.

Recommendation 3: That the Government of Canada continue to work with the Governments of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and the United States to identify ways to strengthen cooperation regarding Arctic security and defence issues.

The Government of Canada agrees with the recommendation.

Canada continues to promote its vision for a stable and secure Arctic region through ongoing engagement with the governments of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and the U.S. on a broad range of Arctic and regional issues. Notably, the CAF is increasing its participation in multinational exercises, and continues to encourage key allies and partners to participate in joint activities in the Canadian Arctic, including Operation NANOOK, the CAF's signature northern operation. Canada is also working closely with allies and partners to foster information sharing, improve situational awareness, and enhance multinational operational cooperation in the Arctic through the Arctic Security Forces Roundtable (ASFR).

In addition, Canada is deepening strategic-level collaboration to help strengthen Arctic defence and security. Canada initiated a Foreign Ministry dialogue in 2021 and has convened Defence Ministerial and officials level discussions among these nations to discuss Arctic security. In August 2022, Canada also reinitiated annual meetings of the Arctic Chiefs of Defence Staff. Likewise, CSE chairs a multinational signals intelligence forum which focuses on the Polar regions as CSE works to make sure the Government of Canada has the necessary intelligence to safeguard Canada's Arctic sovereignty. These multinational fora allow Canada to exchange perspectives on Arctic defence and security issues with our Arctic allies and partners and will continue to provide valuable opportunities for collaboration on strategic challenges moving forward.

Canada also engages bilaterally with like-minded Arctic nations on Arctic defence and security issues. For example, in June 2023, Canadian and Norwegian Defence Ministers signed a Memorandum of Understanding that aims to enhance defence cooperation in several areas, including surveillance and situational awareness in the Arctic. Furthermore, Canada continues to engage regularly with the U.S. on Arctic defence and security, including through the expanded Canada-U.S. Arctic Dialogue. Canada is also working closely with the U.S. to ensure that NORAD is modernized to detect, deter, and, if necessary, defend against evolving aerospace threats to North America, including in the Arctic and northern regions. For example, as outlined in the June 2022 NORAD modernization announcement, Canada's investments will deliver new Arctic and Polar Over-the-Horizon Radar (OTHR) systems that will provide early warning and domain awareness over the northern approaches to North America. Through NORAD modernization, Canada will also invest in space-based surveillance and satellite communications in the Arctic, and in new or upgraded infrastructure and support capabilities in the North. Therefore, many of Canada's investments in NORAD modernization will significantly strengthen the CAF's capacity to launch and sustain northern operations as needed and contribute to defence and security in the Arctic.

Recommendation 4: That the Government of Canada, in the next defence policy, outline Canada's approach to deterring adversaries in the Arctic, including during the expected "gap period" between when adversaries could deploy new weapons systems and when the North American Aerospace Defense Command will have the technology to detect them.

The Government of Canada agrees in principle with this recommendation.

Canada's 2024 defence policy update committed to defending the Canadian Arctic and North and its approaches against new and accelerating threats through credible deterrence. This commitment is supported by initiatives to broaden Canada's ability to monitor our approaches and detect and deter threats before they reach Canada, and to defend against aerospace threats in partnership with the U.S. To better protect our Arctic and northern regions from emerging and existing threats, DND/CAF will acquire airborne early warning aircraft, specialized maritime sensors, a satellite ground station in the Arctic, and is exploring options to acquire ground-based air defences to defend critical infrastructure. These initiatives are focused, first and foremost, on ensuring that Canada strengthens its contribution to collective security, and has the ability to protect its Arctic and North and asserts its sovereignty.

In parallel to the 2024 defence policy update, DND/CAF continues to implement the Government's plan to modernize Canada's contribution to NORAD, which is supported by an investment of approximately \$38 billion over 20 years to ensure the CAF can launch and sustain a strong military presence across the country, including in Canada's North. Specifically, the Government's investments in NORAD modernization will deliver capabilities in five inter-related areas to bolster NORAD and the CAF's ability to detect, deter, and if necessary, defeat threats to Canada and North America, including in our northern and Arctic regions: next-generation surveillance, command and control modernization, air weapons systems, infrastructure and support capabilities, and science and technology. These areas are aligned with the priorities identified in the Joint Statement on NORAD Modernization announced by the Minister of National Defence and the U.S. Secretary of Defense in August 2021, and the statement made by Prime Minister Trudeau and President Biden during the President's visit to Ottawa in March 2023.

While these new capabilities will be phased-in incrementally, DND/CAF is committed to delivering them in a timely manner. As recently announced through Canada's 2024 defence policy update, improvements to the defence procurement system will also enable a faster, more effective approach to major acquisitions.

Recommendation 5: That the Government of Canada, during the development of the next defence policy, examine whether changes to Canada's policy on ballistic missile defence are required.

The Government of Canada takes note of this recommendation.

The Government agrees that Canada's adversaries are rapidly developing a broad range of air and missile capabilities with technological advances that will increasingly challenge North America's defences. China and Russia are investing in and testing advanced cruise, ballistic, and hypersonic weapons capable of striking from farther distances, from new platforms, with increased stealth, and at faster speeds. Moreover, non-state actors are increasingly employing advanced air and missile capabilities, including cruise missiles, ballistic missiles and uncrewed aircraft systems, to conduct long-range strikes against moving ships and infrastructure.

The Government recognizes the importance of adopting an integrated approach to air and missile defence. To address the increasingly complex missile threat, NATO as well as many of Canada's allies and partners are moving towards adopting Integrated Air and Missile Defence (IAMD), which aims to remove the gaps that exist between different types of air and missile defence systems, and optimizes the overall defensive architecture to meet the full range of threats.

In this context, Canada is committed to working with the U.S., through NORAD, to modernize North America's defensive architecture so that we can face modern threats. Many of Canada's investments in NORAD modernization will significantly increase the CAF's ability to deter, detect, and address rapidly evolving air and missile threats to North America, including those posed by advanced cruise and other high-speed missiles. As outlined in the June 2022 NORAD modernization announcement, DND/CAF is also pursuing ongoing research and development through Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC) to better understand emerging and disruptive technologies such as hypersonics and advanced cruise missiles and enable Canada to develop the capabilities to counter them.

Furthermore, Canada's 2024 defence policy update articulated a commitment to making further contributions to the IAMD of Canada and North America. This includes capabilities to help restore deterrence in the North in cooperation with the U.S. and address requirements beyond NORAD modernization. As noted above, for example, DND/CAF is acquiring airborne early warning aircraft to detect and manage airborne threats, as well as specialized maritime sensors to track and evaluate underwater threats along all three coasts. DND/CAF is also exploring options to acquire ground-based air defences to defend critical infrastructure from a diverse array of incoming airborne attacks, including drones and missiles.

Recommendation 6: That the Government of Canada use existing or new institutionalized mechanisms to partner with Indigenous peoples in the Arctic, including to obtain their views about security and defence in the region. These partnerships should be undertaken in accordance with the Indigenous rights outlined in modern treaties as they relate to the use and management of land and resources.

The Government of Canada agrees with this recommendation.

The Government acknowledges that Indigenous peoples in the Arctic and northern regions have a key role to play in the defence and security in their homelands and that advancing meaningful relationships with them is fundamental to defending the Arctic region against threats. First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities in Inuit Nunangat and the North have historically contributed to Arctic security and sovereignty and continue to be trusted partners in ensuring our collective safety and security. The Government is committed to advancing reconciliation and renewing its relationship with Indigenous peoples in accordance with treaty obligations and with larger policy commitments to collaborate on work that takes place in Indigenous

territories, or that affects Indigenous rights, lands, and resources. Canada's recently announced 2024 defence policy update and the 2022 NORAD modernization plan align with the ANPF guidance to engage closely with Indigenous partners under the principle of "nothing about us, without us". For example, DND/CAF is leveraging NORAD modernization investments in the North to engage early with relevant northern Indigenous communities and map out local priorities and perspectives for consideration in project planning where possible. As NORAD modernization implementation continues, engagements will become increasingly project-specific and localized. DND/CAF will continue to enhance its ongoing engagement to seek additional opportunities to collaborate and maximize broader benefits of defence investments where possible.

DND/CAF is also engaging with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis leadership through existing bilateral mechanisms like the ICPC and modern treaty relations, as well as through multilateral fora such as the ANPF Leadership Committee and the ASWG. These institutionalized mechanisms put special emphasis on seeking mutually beneficial solutions to security and defence challenges in Inuit Nunangat and the North, including eliciting Indigenous partners' views about security and defence in their homelands. In the same vein, DND/CAF is building on emerging opportunities like the 2021 *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (UNDA) to actively listen to northern Indigenous peoples and to work with them to align defence work with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) objectives. For example, the *Indigenous Reconciliation Program* has been set up to support these objectives and provide \$9.5 million in funding over five years to Indigenous communities to facilitate dialogue and relationship building on shared defence and security priorities. Likewise, DND/CAF and Inuit partners have co-developed action plan measures in the UNDA Action Plan 2023-2028, aimed at supporting Inuit self-determination in Inuit Nunangat, including through fair access to procurement and, where feasible, multi-purpose infrastructure.

In the same vein, PS and its portfolio agencies regularly engage with Indigenous partners in the Arctic and North on policy and program initiatives related to the enforcement of laws and community safety that may impact their rights and interests. In addition to the initiatives outlined in response to recommendation 2, CSIS is the only security intelligence agency in the world to have commitments in the UN Declaration, aimed primarily at supporting national security information sharing with territorial and Indigenous partners. Likewise, in 2024, PS stood up the Indigenous Emergency Management Working Group to identify opportunities for further collaboration on shared priorities in emergency management. Indigenous membership includes the Métis National Council, the Assembly of First Nations, and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK). As the only police service in much of the Arctic, and sole territorial police service, the RCMP represents a federal presence in the northern territories and provides first response to civil emergencies and national security threats. The RCMP's presence in the Arctic includes 59 detachments and three divisional headquarters to provide police services to over 600 Indigenous communities. The RCMP remains committed to working closely with Indigenous people to advance security and defence issues, and reconciliation within the region. For example, the RCMP is developing a framework to better support its divisional headquarters with implementing individual community profiles to ensure regular members have access to the specific Indigenous languages, cultures, and traditions to reduce any barriers, strengthen relationships, and contribute to a culturally-sensitive and results-oriented policing organization.

Additionally, the recommendations made in the 2021 National Inuit Action Plan on Missing and Murdered Inuit Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ People have supported the RCMP and the ITK to increase levels of collaboration to address gaps and priorities in policing, with the goal of building transparency and trust between Inuit communities and the RCMP. The work plan includes priority items for both ITK and the RCMP that improve upon safety and security in the Arctic such as protecting Inuit women, girls and gender-diverse people from human traffickers; data-sharing on issues of suicide; and recruiting and retaining Inuit police officers, among other things. The RCMP has also been collaborating with Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada since 2021 on a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that establishes a formal working relationship to improve the protection and safety of Inuit women, children, and gender-diverse persons. The MOA commits each organization to work together to implement the recommendations in the 2022 Pauktuutit's report titled *Addressing Gendered Violence against Inuit Women: A review of police policies and practices in Inuit Nunangat*. Regular meetings are occurring between the two organizations' national leadership and at the working level to explore areas of common

interest.

For their part, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and CCG Arctic Regions are currently developing regional governance frameworks with self-governments and land claims organizations to support collaboration planning and prioritization on an ongoing basis. These unique governance models co-developed with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, align with the UNDA and with ICPC priorities and contribute to implementation of the *Inuit Nunangat Policy*. Since announcing the CCG's Arctic Region in 2018, collaboration has been the focus of delivering programs and services "*in the north, for the north, by the north.*" Within two years, the CCG led more than 60 engagements with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis governments, organizations, and communities. These engagements have paved the way for DFO and CCG Arctic Regions approaches that reflect the diverse interests of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples across operations, programs, and services in the Arctic.

The Government will continue to engage directly with all Arctic and northern partners through the aforementioned mechanisms in view of its commitment to respect Indigenous rights and to work in collaboration with Indigenous peoples while delivering on its mandate.

Recommendation 7: That the Government of Canada, through the National Search and Rescue Secretariat, establish – by 31 March 2024 – a permanent Arctic search and rescue roundtable. This roundtable should comprise representatives of federal, territorial and Indigenous governments, and of community-based organizations and government entities involved in search and rescue, including the Canadian Rangers. Its goals should include the development of a comprehensive Arctic search and rescue strategy.

The Government of Canada agrees in principle with the recommendation.

PS, through the National Search and Rescue Secretariat, will consider options for re-establishing a permanent Arctic search and rescue (SAR) roundtable. A permanent roundtable would serve as a vital link between various strategic initiatives that include or touch upon elements of SAR, such as the 2019 whole-of-government ANPF, as well as Canada's participation in the Arctic Council, the Arctic Coast Guard Forum, and the Arctic Council's Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response Working Group.

Arctic SAR is unique in Canada where time, distance, and the hostile environment play a critical role in survivability. Given the resources required to affect a timely response, close collaboration of SAR partners across all levels of government is paramount. These partnerships can also play a significant role in prevention thereby reducing the frequency, duration, and severity of SAR incidents. PS will seek to explore the feasibility, resource requirements, and other considerations in establishing a permanent roundtable through existing and established fora.

Recommendation 8: That the Government of Canada ensure that standards relating to the cruise ship sector in the Canadian Arctic complement management plans developed by Indigenous governments and organizations, and that such standards respect Indigenous lands, waters and people. As well, the Government should strengthen cooperation with Indigenous governments and organizations on issues pertaining to that sector in the Arctic, including in relation to vessel management and marine environmental protection.

The Government of Canada agrees with the recommendation.

Canada's commitment to strengthening its relationships with Indigenous governments and organizations remains steadfast. In the case of vessel management and marine environmental protection, the Government has established conservation targets with the objective of protecting 30% of its lands and 30% of its oceans by 2030. In the Arctic region, these objectives are being achieved in close collaboration with Indigenous partners and land claim organizations through the creation of marine protected areas, national wildlife areas, other Indigenous protected and conserved areas, marine refuges, and migratory bird sanctuaries.

For collaborative efforts relating to shipping activities in the Arctic region, the Government is working closely with Indigenous partners to address and manage their concerns with this sector

under the Oceans Protection Plan initiative. Transport Canada also works to ensure that the cruise industry adheres to standards advocated by Indigenous governments and organizations through both facilitating productive dialogues between Indigenous partners and the cruise industry and subjecting the cruise industry to assessments for land use conformity and environmental impact. Likewise, from a compliance point of view, the Government is ensuring the safe and responsible operation of cruise vessels in Arctic waters through confirming they comply with the Polar Code, reviewing cruise vessel voyage plans and risk mitigation measures, and conducting inspections. Additionally, through the Arctic Council Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME) Working Group, Canada coordinates efforts with Indigenous organizations to collect data, develop best practices and create recommendations related to cruise ship operations in the Arctic. PAME considers how cruise ship activities will interact with environmental protection efforts, as well as develops best practices and recommendations on how to minimize impacts from potentially impactful activities, such as biofouling or the creation of underwater noise.

Furthermore, as mandated under the *Oceans Act*, the CCG provides services for the safe, economical, and efficient movement of ships in Canadian waters through the provision of ice breaking and ice management services. The provision of icebreaking services to cruise ships is considered in conjunction with existing CCG operating standards and procedures. For example, acknowledging that ice fastened to the shoreline (“fast ice”) is an extension of the land, the CCG notifies communities or Indigenous leaders before icebreaking operations are performed to minimize the impacts on nearby communities. The CCG also updates information on ice conditions daily and makes it available to maritime stakeholders and communities to limit traffic when and where fast ice exists to minimize the impact of shipping for ice users.

Finally, the Government has fostered partnerships with Inuit governments and organizations to discuss and advance Inuit priorities in the Arctic through regular meetings with Inuit leadership, including through the ICPC structure. This includes international priorities, such as ensuring the views of Inuit are shared with the Inuit Circumpolar Council and Canadian delegations to inform positions presented at international fora, including the International Maritime Organization.

Recommendation 9: That the Government of Canada, in the absence of designated cruise ship border clearance facilities in the Arctic, review options for processing travelers entering Canada in the Arctic. Alongside the existing practice of dispatching border services officers to the port of arrival, the options reviewed should include the use of telecommunications. The Government should publish the results of this review by 31 December 2024.

The Government of Canada agrees in principle with the recommendation.

The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) is considering options to modernize traveller processing, including in remote areas such as the Arctic. The *Customs Act* was recently amended via the 2023 *Budget Implementation Act No. 1* to provide travellers arriving in Canada with the option of presenting themselves in-person or by a means of telecommunications, where offered by the CBSA. Brought forward in support of the CBSA’s Traveller Modernization initiative, these amendments allow the CBSA to provide more innovative, technology-enabled service options for travellers seeking to enter Canada where possible. Use of these authorities will be considered as the CBSA explores options to modernize traveller processing. Work is also under way on regulatory changes to support the use of Traveller Modernization processing technologies, which will be deployed through 2029. As international tourism and trade continues to increase in the Arctic region, the CBSA will continue to review and adjust how and where it operates. A preliminary assessment of the options will be completed by December 31, 2024, but will be further informed by the planning phases of the Traveller Modernization initiative which come later. As such, the Government may publish results at a later timeline.

Recommendation 10: That the Government of Canada work with territorial, local and Indigenous governments and treaty rights holders to develop a framework and associated mechanisms that would result in a better understanding of the environmental impacts in the Arctic of current and planned activities pertaining to security and defence. This framework should outline measures to mitigate the impacts of permafrost thaw on infrastructure, regarding which consideration should be given to locating new security and defence infrastructure in areas less vulnerable to permafrost thaw. The Government should publish

this framework by 30 June 2024.

The Government of Canada agrees in principle with this recommendation.

The Government has a long-standing commitment to reconciliation and, as part of this, is working in collaboration with territorial, local and Indigenous partners on various frameworks and associated mechanisms to facilitate dialogue in the area of rights and environmental impact. Notably, the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act* (NUPPAA), the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* (MVRMA), the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* (YESAA), the Environmental Impact Screening Committee Process (EISC) within the Inuvialuit Final Agreement, and in some instances the *Impact Assessment Act* (IAA), are the cornerstone of integrating scientific information and Indigenous knowledge into decision-making processes related to projects in the Arctic and North.

The NUPPAA, MVRMA, EISC, and YESAA establish the environmental impact assessment processes relative to projects in Inuit Nunangat jurisdiction. These relevant federal statutes and process were created from modern treaties, including the Nunavut Agreement, Inuvialuit Final Agreement, James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement, and Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement. These Acts also encapsulate the legal standards surrounding engagement and consultation requirements with Indigenous groups. The Government will continue to apply this existing legal framework to relevant projects in the Arctic and North, which DND/CAF has integrated into project management policies and processes.

With respect to measures to mitigate the impacts of permafrost thaw on infrastructure specifically, DND/CAF considers environmental and climate change data in its real property portfolio planning through integrating environmental and climate change vulnerability information into options analysis and selection, design, construction, and operation of buildings and infrastructure. The results of environmental impact assessments for projects meeting the IAA criteria are published on the public registry managed by the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada, or on other public registries associated with the other relevant federal statutes. DND/CAF is also initiating a research project starting in 2024 to investigate approaches for energy-efficient designs for the built environment in polar regions, which will include examining the impacts of permafrost thaw.

Recommendation 11: That the Government of Canada expeditiously implement recommendations 16 to 20 in the June 2019 Special Senate Committee on the Arctic's report entitled *Northern Lights: A Wake-Up Call for the Future of Canada*. By 31 March 2024, the Government should provide the Senate with information about actions taken to address these recommendations, with a focus on science, Indigenous knowledge and environmental conservation.

The Government of Canada agrees in principle with the recommendation.

In March 2021, the Government responded to the Fourth Report of the Special Senate Committee on the Arctic, titled *Northern Lights: A Wake Up Call for the Future of Canada*. As part of this detailed response, CIRNAC and other government departments provided the Senate with information on science, Indigenous knowledge, and environmental conservation, including actions to implement best practices for the inclusion of Arctic and Indigenous perspectives in science and research.

The Canadian Council of Academics also published a report in December 2023, titled *Northern Research Leadership and Equity*, which follows on the work of the Special Senate Committee on the Arctic and is available on its publicly-accessible website at: <https://cca-reports.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Arctic-EN-final-digital>. This report was written under the guidance of an expert panel that included Arctic and northern Indigenous perspectives. It addresses many of the structural and systemic barriers to research in the northern region of Canada and also points to successful transdisciplinary research programs operating in collaboration with Indigenous groups, academics, governments, and other actors.

Furthermore, the shared vision to recommendations 16 to 20 of the aforementioned Senate's report was articulated in the ANPF as a cohesive space for policymaking that respects the

unique rights, interests and circumstances of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. Since the release of the ANPF in September 2019, work began on science and research with a renewed focus on an all-partner approach to the Arctic and North. This work includes leading and funding science and research in, and pertaining to, the North and Arctic, through a broad network of federal departments and organizations, including territorial governments, Indigenous organizations, academia, industry, non-governmental organizations, and northern communities by using collaborative, partnership, and co-development approaches.

This unprecedented level of collaboration has been accompanied by two important principles designed to examine priorities and activities in the Arctic and North through the lens of Indigenous peoples. First, that Indigenous knowledge is a fundamental part to the co-creation of new knowledge. Second, that existing federal government initiatives are linked to the science and research needs and views of Arctic and northern residents and governments. This includes programs and assets under the National Adaptation Strategy, the Climate Change Preparedness in the North Program, the Climate Change and Health Adaptation Program - North, the Northern Contaminants Program, the Canadian High Arctic Research Station, the Knowledge Management and Engagement Program, the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund, the Guardians Program, and the Delegation to the Arctic Council Working Group on the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment.

For example, the Arctic Council PAME Working Group, of which Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) is the Head of Delegation for Canada, coordinates efforts with Indigenous organizations on science, Indigenous knowledge, and environmental conservation matters in the Arctic. PAME generates a number of reports, holds workshops, and hosts conferences on these topics, through which DFO has worked to advance the profile of Indigenous peoples, including through measures such as sponsoring travel to conferences, supporting input to reports and documents, and advocating for consultation and representation in processes. Likewise, the CIRNAC-led Northern Contaminants Program has three decades of experience in engaging northerners and Indigenous organizations in priority-setting and funding decision-making with respect to research and monitoring of long-range contaminants in the Arctic. Funding decisions and the program's strategic priorities are made by the Program's Management Committee, whose members include representatives of territorial and regional governments like health and environment representatives from the Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Nunavik and Nunatsiavut; Indigenous partners from the Council of the Yukon First Nations, Dene Nation, Inuit Circumpolar Council, and ITK; and the Chairs of Regional Contaminants Committees in Yukon, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Nunavik, Nunatsiavut, and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region.

Given the above, the Government has no supplementary information as part of this recommendation.

Recommendation 12: That the Government of Canada evaluate whether changes to the size, locations or nature of the Canadian Armed Forces' presence in the Canadian Arctic are required. The Government should publish the results of this evaluation by 30 September 2024.

The Government of Canada takes note of the recommendation.

The Government continues to place particular emphasis on the evolving Arctic security environment and the need to enhance the CAF's mobility and reach in the region. Canada's 2024 defence policy update underlined that the top priority of the CAF is the defence of Canada and Canadians. It expounded the path forward of a secured Arctic and North by committing to increase the presence, reach, mobility and responsiveness of the CAF in the region through a network of northern operational support hubs, a fleet of airborne early warning aircraft, deployable sensors on our coasts and underwater, a satellite ground station in the Arctic, and new tactical helicopters. For example, the network of northern operational support hubs, consisting of airstrips, logistics facilities and equipment and stockpiles of spare parts, will enable the CAF to better assert Canadian sovereignty by establishing a greater year-round military presence across the Arctic and North. They will increase military responsiveness and the ability to address challenges in remote northern regions on shorter notice and for longer periods, when required. These hubs will present significant opportunities to establish

multi-purpose infrastructure that serve the CAF, other federal partners, territorial governments, Indigenous partners, and northern communities, wherever possible.

In addition, as committed to in Canada's 2017 defence policy SSE, the Government of Canada is investing in 15 Canadian Surface Combatant ships and is acquiring six Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ships (AOPS) for the RCN. Four of the AOPS are already in service, and the remainder are scheduled to be delivered to the RCN by 2025. These will allow the RCN to have direct access to areas of the Arctic that were previously inaccessible. The Government is also acquiring two AOPS for the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) as part of the National Shipbuilding Strategy. Construction of the first CCG AOPS is underway, and construction of the second ship will begin by fall 2024. The intent is to maintain an annual presence by multiple AOPS in Arctic waters during the navigable season. Additionally, while limited to ice-free waters due to lack of icebreaking capability, Kingston-class Maritime Coastal Defence Vessels (MCDVs) and Halifax-class frigates will continue to partake in Operation NANOOK, Canada's signature northern operation, along with the AOPS in the eastern approaches to the Canadian Arctic between Baffin Island and Greenland.

Furthermore, as part of its plan to modernize NORAD, which was announced in 2022 and is supported by an investment of approximately \$38 billion over 20 years, the Government of Canada will invest in infrastructure and support capabilities to launch and sustain a strong military presence, when required, across the country to support CAF missions, including in the North and the Arctic. Specifically, the Government will upgrade infrastructure at the Forward Operating Locations used by NORAD in Inuvik, Yellowknife, and Iqaluit, and the Deployed Operating Base at Goose Bay, as well as improve fighter infrastructure and NORAD Quick Reaction Alert capabilities at several operating bases across Canada to support the arrival of the F-35 fleet. Investments in the NORAD Northern Basing infrastructure project will also increase the RCAF's ability to operate in the Arctic more frequently and for longer periods of time due to increased capability to support and sustain a multitude of aircraft types performing CAF missions.

Likewise, the Strategic Tanker Transport Capability project (air-to-air refueling), paired with the new F-35 fleet and Defence of Canada Fighter Infrastructure project, will provide the RCAF with a greater ability to conduct operations at the far reaches of the Canadian Arctic. These will complement other investments such as OTHR systems, which will provide long-range surveillance of Canada's northern approaches; the Remotely Piloted Aircraft System, which will increase the persistence of airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance and provide timely operationally relevant information; and the Defence Enhanced Surveillance from Space Project, which will modernize the CAF's space capabilities, and improve situational awareness and identification of threats, including in the Arctic. Similarly, upgrades to the CAF's command, control, and communications capabilities and systems will support more robust and agile operations throughout Canada and North America. These include upgrades to NORAD and CAF command and control systems, radio and air navigation upgrades, satellite communications, line-of-sight communications in the Arctic, air operations, and air weapons control coverage.

Recommendation 13: That the Government of Canada conduct a thorough assessment of the Canadian Armed Forces' infrastructure north of the 60th parallel and its infrastructure in southern Canada that support Arctic operations. The goal of the assessment should be to identify infrastructure that requires immediate repairs and upgrades. The Government should publicly release the results of this assessment by 30 June 2025.

The Government of Canada agrees in principle with the recommendation.

DND/CAF conducts regular surveys of its infrastructure to assess building condition and asset suitability. This information is taken into consideration in the development of Master Real Property Development Plans (MRPDPs) and Site Development Plans (SDPs). Through an analysis of current and future requirements, and the identification of gaps, opportunities, and constraints, the MRPDPs and SDPs are strategic documents that provide a short-term (0 to 5 years) and long-term (up to 30 years) vision for DND/CAF. However, these plans are typically intended for internal use only and are not available to the public, as they are used to inform future military requirements to support operations and future investment decisions, and can contain sensitive information related to DND/CAF capabilities.

The Northern Regional MRPDP, which includes Inuit Nunangat, was originally developed in 2015 and is outdated. The development of a new MRPDP will begin in 2024-25 and will reflect work being done as part of NORAD modernization. In addition, work is underway to develop SDPs in relation to NORAD Northern Basing Infrastructure. In exceptional circumstances, such as the case with the NORAD Northern Basing Infrastructure project, DND/CAF shared severed versions of SDPs with community partners, stakeholders and rights-holders in Inuvik, Iqaluit, and Yellowknife as they relate to ongoing work in the region and help contribute to advancing reconciliation, transparency and early engagement with northern communities. DND/CAF will also share SDPs with community partners, stakeholders and rights-holders in Goose Bay in the fall of 2024 as part of this project.

Additionally, DND/CAF continues to routinely consider assets that are critical to military activities in the Arctic and across Canada as part of contingency and forward planning for the defence of North America. Like the MRPDPs and the SDPs, these assessments are considered sensitive in nature and this information is not made available to the public.

Recommendation 14: That the Government of Canada expeditiously address challenges that are negatively affecting the recruitment and retention of Canadian Rangers. As part of these efforts, the Government should both ensure that the Canadian Rangers have adequate access to equipment and make necessary changes to their compensation.

The Government of Canada agrees with the recommendation.

DND/CAF is aware of the challenges in recruiting and retaining Canadian Rangers. DND/CAF is working to increase the efficiency of processing of Canadian Ranger applications by ensuring internal systems can seamlessly share information. Moreover, as part of this effort, DND/CAF is also exploring the possibility of conditional enrollment to allow a prospective Canadian Ranger to participate in training prior to completion of all the requisite administration.

As for the use of personal equipment by Canadian Rangers, DND/CAF continues to work on appropriate compensation and benefits for the Canadian Rangers. The recent streamlining of the process for compensation for lost or damaged equipment and the establishment of compensation for use of Canadian Ranger personnel equipment at fair market value are examples of this. These two benefits are expected to positively affect recruitment and retention. Access to adequate equipment will increase the operational effectiveness and training of the Canadian Rangers. This is why DND/CAF, through the Canadian Rangers Enhancement initiative, is focused on identifying what equipment the Canadian Rangers require to accomplish their assigned tasks, and properly resource them to execute their mission now and into the future.

Recommendation 15: That the Government of Canada publish, by 30 June 2024, an update concerning the status of the Canadian Ranger enhancement program.

The Government of Canada agrees with the recommendation.

The Canadian Army is completing an analysis of the pillars that underpin the Canadian Ranger Enhancement program, including training, equipment, structure, staff, policies, and infrastructure. DND/CAF will publish a plan for the desired future state of the program, or an executive summary of this plan outlining the overall intent, desired outcomes and paths forward, by the summer of 2024.

Recommendation 16: That the Government of Canada develop a plan to support the well-being of members of the security and defence forces stationed in the Arctic, including the Canadian Armed Forces and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The Government should publish this plan by 31 March 2025.

The Government of Canada agrees in principle with this recommendation.

CAF members have access to robust services and programs in support of their mental, physical, and spiritual well-being. In March 2022, DND/CAF released the *Total Health and Wellness*

Strategy that supports health and resilience in the workforce and promotes a culture of healthy behaviour. Likewise, the *RCMP Employee Well-being Strategy 2021-2024* focuses on the provision of support services, early detection, intervention, and treatment of employee mental health challenges as part of building a healthy, safe, inclusive, productive and respectful workplace.

With respect to health care specific to CAF and RCMP personnel stationed in the Arctic, these personnel undergo individual medical, psychological, and dental screening prior to selection for deployment and other potentially hazardous duty to ensure their individual health service support requirements can be reasonably met in these challenging environments. Members in isolated posts have all the same mental health services as other members, including access to virtual services through their suite of health care benefits. In this context, the internet-delivered therapy for Public Safety Personnel (PSP) NET, a clinical unit located at the University of Regina within the Canadian Institute for Public Safety Research and Treatment (CIPSRT), is evaluating internet-delivered Cognitive Behaviour Therapy specifically tailored for current and former PSP, including RCMP employees stationed in the Arctic.

In the same vein, to minimize the health risk in challenging environments, the Canadian Forces Health Services (CFHS) provides primary and emergent care at Canadian Forces Station ALERT, located on Ellesmere Island, Nunavut, and at CFHS Clinics located in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, and Goose Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador. This care is supplemented by virtual services and consultation from larger Base/Wing clinics when required. Members stationed in the Arctic also have access to a 24/7 phone referral service for counselling and peer support.

The aforementioned strategies and activities align all existing health services and programs, and the CAF and RCMP have already identified new areas of focus where gaps exist, with a view of improving the health and wellness of all DND/CAF and RCMP members. As such, the Government will not publish a new plan at this time.

Recommendation 17: That the Government of Canada provide Parliament with ongoing updates about the modernization of the North American Aerospace Defense Command. These updates, which should occur at least annually, should include information about potential delays or difficulties in delivering related procurement projects on time and on budget, and about how challenges are being addressed.

The Government of Canada agrees in principle with this recommendation.

DND/CAF officials routinely provide updates, information, and answers to Parliament on various aspects of the 2022 NORAD modernization plan through parliamentary committee appearances and written responses to questions from parliamentarians as they arise.

In addition, DND/CAF will continue to provide details and regular updates on NORAD modernization project timelines on its publicly-accessible website at:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/allies-partners/norad/facesheet-funding-norad-modernization.html>

The Government remains committed to providing updates, information, and responses to Parliament on the modernization of NORAD and potential delays or difficulties in delivering related projects through these and other existing parliamentary mechanisms.

Recommendation 18: That the Government of Canada consider whether the two Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ships procured for the Canadian Coast Guard should carry armaments in order to improve the protection of Canadian sovereignty, as well as secure the country's Arctic coasts and waters.

The Government of Canada takes note of this recommendation.

The CCG plays an important role in safeguarding Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic through establishing a visible presence of the Government of Canada, enabling response operations, and the advancement of maritime domain awareness in Canada's Territorial Waters and Exclusive Economic Zone. The Government will continue to explore means to enhance the role

of the CCG in protecting Canada's sovereignty and increasing its maritime domain awareness of Canada's Arctic coasts and waters, including in collaboration with the CAF.

Recommendation 19: That the Government of Canada include, in its next defence policy, a section on underwater domain awareness and underwater threats. This section should outline a plan for expeditiously replacing Canada's existing submarines with submarines that could operate better in the Arctic.

The Government of Canada takes note of this recommendation.

Canada's 2024 defence policy update outlined three new initiatives to increase the CAF's maritime underwater surveillance capability to meet the imperatives of Canada's domestic, continental, and allied defensive capacity particularly against Russia and China, including in the Arctic. First, the Government committed to acquiring specialized maritime sensors that can be equipped on *Harry DeWolf*-class AOPS to conduct ocean surveillance for the detection of underwater threats such as vessel-launched missiles, submarines, underwater systems, and ships. Second, the Government committed to exploring options for enabling these AOPS to embark and operate the CAF's new tactical helicopters at sea to conduct search and rescue, and surveillance and reconnaissance in the maritime and subsea domains. Thirdly, the Government committed to exploring options for renewing and expanding the RCN's submarine fleet with under-ice capable, conventionally-powered submarines. In addition to increasing Canada's ability to assert its sovereignty in the Arctic and North, these initiatives complement the approach to maritime domain awareness articulated in SSE and the ANPF both of which committed Canada to strengthening its ability to monitor activity in the Arctic, including by integrating a range of new sea, land, air, and space capabilities systems to bolster surveillance of our northern approaches to North America.

Canada has also made important investments in its broader military maritime surveillance capabilities for the Arctic. Notably, DND/CAF is acquiring a new fleet of Boeing P-8A Poseidon aircrafts to replace the CP-140 Aurora fleet. This new Canadian Multi-Mission Aircraft (CMMA) capability will be specialized in Anti-Surface Warfare and Anti-Submarine Warfare and optimized for Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4ISR). The P-8A is a modern and upgradeable platform that is interoperable with Canada's allies and will support the CAF in defending Canadian domestic security and sovereignty, particularly in the Arctic, and promoting peace and security globally. The Government is also making additional investments into space-based surveillance capabilities over Canada's territorial and maritime approaches, which will contribute to maritime domain awareness.

Recommendation 20: That the Government of Canada make efforts to join the trilateral security partnership among Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States, known as AUKUS. In doing so, the Government should communicate the ways in which Canada could contribute to intelligence gathering and intelligence sharing.

The Government of Canada agrees in principle with this recommendation.

AUKUS is intended to strengthen the ability of Australia, the U.K., and the U.S to support their security and defence interests in the Indo-Pacific region. The partnership is based on two "pillars". The first pillar is focused on facilitating Australia's procurement of nuclear-powered submarines. The second pillar is focused on the development of joint advanced military capabilities in six key technological areas (i.e., undersea capabilities, quantum technologies, artificial intelligence and autonomy, advanced cyber, hypersonic and counter-hypersonic capabilities, and electronic warfare), and two broader functional areas (i.e., defence innovation and information sharing). AUKUS members have indicated that their focus under the second pillar is on generating momentum within AUKUS, but have also announced that they have agreed upon principles and models for additional partner engagement on individual Pillar 2 projects.

DND/CAF is very interested in opportunities to bring unique Canadian value to specific projects under Pillar 2, and this has been conveyed to AUKUS members. The Government recognizes that working together would allow partners to leverage the combined strength of their

industrial bases, expertise, and investments to accelerate and deepen joint development and delivery of advanced military capabilities. DND/CAF is looking forward to next steps for Canada's potential contributions to AUKUS Pillar 2 projects, which are being defined.

DND/CAF remains open to exploring opportunities to contribute to activities within the advanced military capabilities efforts of AUKUS in the future. In the meantime, DND/CAF, along with CSE, are collaborating with its counterparts in Australia, the U.K., and the U.S. on advanced capabilities through multiple existing Five Eyes fora and is aligned with these partners on threats emanating from the Indo-Pacific and the importance of promoting security and stability in the region. Canada's closest international intelligence-sharing relationships are with the other Five Eyes countries: the U.S., the U.K., Australia, and New Zealand. CSE works hand in hand with these allies to protect Canada's shared national interests and to keep Canadians safe. CSE delivers relevant and timely intelligence to this community and leverages the shared expertise of the Five Eyes to satisfy Canada's foreign intelligence requirements. At the same time, DND/CAF is also ensuring that it is moving forward at pace with close allies and partners in the development and use of advanced capabilities through announced investments such as \$4.2 billion over 20 years in research and development across advanced capability areas that are relevant to objectives being pursued under the advanced capability pillar of AUKUS, as part of NORAD modernization efforts. CSE also collaborates extensively with Australia, the U.K., and the U.S. under various aspects of its mandate. This includes several areas that complement the elements of AUKUS Pillar 2, such as ongoing activities in foreign cyber operations, cyber security, and cyber defence.

Moreover, Canada's 2024 defence policy update also bolstered Canada's status as a serious defence partner with additional investments in new capabilities of relevance to AUKUS Pillar 2. In particular, the policy recognizes new and disruptive technologies as one of the three main trends redefining conflict; reiterates the commitment to collaborate with the Five Eyes on advanced capabilities; announces a review of defence procurement and the intent to establish a more strategic partnership with the Canadian defence industry for increased innovation power, speed and agility; and invests \$107M over 20 years in the NATO Innovation Fund to provide additional funding streams for innovative Canadian entrepreneurs.

Recommendation 21: That the Government of Canada develop a plan for improving broadband Internet connectivity in the Arctic to meet both military and civilian needs. The options considered in developing the plan should include the use of satellites and fibre optic cables. By 30 June 2024, the Government should publish information about the amount of funds required to implement the plan, and the plan's associated timelines.

The Government of Canada takes note of this recommendation.

The Government is investing in several initiatives aimed at improving connectivity in the Arctic to meet military and civilian needs. On the latter, the Government remains committed to working with all its northern partners, including territorial governments and Indigenous communities, to ensure that telecommunications infrastructure is optimized for economic growth, security, and public safety. Under the June 2019 *High-Speed Access for All: Canada's Connectivity Strategy*, the Government developed a plan to make affordable, high-speed internet infrastructure, defined as access to speeds of at least 50 megabits per second (Mbps) download and 10 Mbps upload, available to all Canadian households by 2030. This strategy acknowledges that Canada's large size and diverse geography requires the use of various technologies, including both fibre and satellite, to improve broadband and mobile cellular connectivity in rural and remote areas throughout Canada, including the far North. Accordingly, the Universal Broadband Fund (UBF) is a key initiative under the strategy and has been provided with \$3.225 billion in federal funding to support connectivity across the country, including in underserved rural and remote communities, while leveraging collaboration with and additional investments from provinces and territories and other partners. Across federal programs, the Government has made a total of \$7.6 billion available for improving connectivity since 2015. Collectively, these investments support Canada's connectivity goals, which aim to connect 98% of Canadians to high-speed internet by 2026, and all Canadians by 2030.

Specifically in the North, the Government has invested over \$376 million for connectivity projects since 2015. So far under the UBF, \$14 million has been provided for projects in

Nunavut and the Northwest Territories, which are bringing improved connectivity for more than 10,000 households. These projects include the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission's (CRTC) Broadband Fund projects in Yukon and the Northwest Territories, totalling \$56 million and \$27.8 million, respectively. Lastly, under the Connect to Innovate (CTI) program and Infrastructure Canada's Investing in Canada Infrastructure program, the Government invested nearly \$59 million for the Dempster Fibre Project to build an 800 km long fibre optic line from Dawson City, Yukon to Inuvik, Northwest Territories to ensure more reliable internet and mobile services in both jurisdictions.

In addition, the Government is working closely with the private sector to encourage it to make commitments to help connect the North. For example, Northwestel, through their Every Community Project, has committed to use their own investments, combined with the funding received from the CRTC noted above, to bring high-speed internet to every community in the Yukon and Northwest Territories. The Government is also leveraging low-earth orbit (LEO) satellite technology to meet civilian needs in Canada's most geographically challenging areas, including the Arctic. In November 2020, the Prime Minister announced an agreement of \$600 million with Canadian satellite company Telesat to secure internet capacity for rural and northern communities on their LEO satellite constellation, Telesat Lightspeed. Once operational, Telesat Lightspeed will help to connect up to 40,000 remote households, including in the far North. Telesat's Lightspeed LEO Network is expected to begin launches in mid-2026 with service scheduled to begin in late-2027. To ensure that LEO new entrants like Space X and OneWeb in the Canadian market maximize benefits for Canadians, the Government has also taken action to streamline licencing processes for LEOs, and under this new licencing framework, satellite operators are required to offer coverage to 100% of Canada's geography, including the far North.

The Government is also investing in military connectivity as it recognizes that Canada must continue to prioritize protected communication links that are land or sea, or air- and space-borne to defend Canada, including our Arctic and northern approaches, and support the defence of North America in cooperation with the U.S. To this end, as part of NORAD modernization, DND/CAF has invested \$1.9 million since 2021 in research and development activities on space LEO options that exploit recent expansion in LEO satellite technologies to offer mobile broadband communications technologies over satellite, including in the challenging Arctic region. Additionally, DND/CAF has launched the Enhanced Satellite Communications Project – Polar, which will provide sovereign, dedicated, reliable and secure Narrowband and Wideband Beyond Line-of-Sight communications to enable core C4ISR capabilities in the support of CAF operations in the Arctic above 65° N. Wideband communications will include internet connectivity for CAF users. This project is expected to reach Initial Operating Capability in 2036 and Full Operating Capability in 2040.

Recommendation 22: That the Government of Canada consider, for all infrastructure projects relating to the security and defence of the Canadian Arctic, the extent to which multi-purpose infrastructure would be appropriate.

The Government of Canada agrees with the recommendation.

DND/CAF continues to engage with northern provincial, territorial, and Indigenous governments and organizations, including through such mechanisms as the ANPF Leadership Committee meetings, the ICPC, and bilateral treaty discussions, to build relationships, learn about their priorities, and identify opportunities to leverage defence investments to create economic opportunities and multi-purpose infrastructure within the limits of its mandate.

Notably, DND/CAF has co-developed a set of common priorities with Inuit leaders through the ICPC's Sovereignty, Defence and Security priority area. Under this priority area, DND/CAF is co-developing a work plan focused on multi-purpose infrastructure to maximize joint benefits in Inuit, where feasible.

In addition, the Government's 2022 NORAD modernization plan and Canada's 2024 defence policy update incorporate the objective of multi-purpose infrastructure, as operational requirements allow. For example, the NORAD Northern Basing Infrastructure project will upgrade and include new infrastructure at the Forward Operating Locations in Inuvik,

Yellowknife, and Iqaluit, and the Deployed Operating Base at Goose Bay. The focus will be on multi-purpose facilities that would respond to a wide range of operational requirements, with potential opportunities for community access and use of facilities, where feasible. In addition, a network of northern operational support hubs aims to establish scalable capabilities that can be quickly activated to provide cost-effective, multi-modal “pan-domain” support for northern operations as needed, while enabling ongoing activities of federal and local partners where possible.

In this context, DND/CAF is working to ensure that it delivers defence capabilities that are relevant to, and inclusive of, all Canadians, and underpinned by meaningful dialogue with Arctic and northern partners, such as Indigenous communities and territorial/provincial governments. Engagements with Arctic and northern partners will continue over the long term and become more project-specific as NORAD modernization implementation progresses. In addition to these efforts, a whole-of-government approach to deliver community-centric solutions, including multi-purpose infrastructure, is becoming increasingly important to help address infrastructure gaps in the North, including Inuit Nunangat, particularly for those solutions that extend beyond the security and defence domain.

Recommendation 23: That the Government of Canada identify, for each ongoing and proposed security and defence project in the Arctic, the likely social and economic benefits for Arctic communities that would result. If such projects are unlikely to have such benefits, the Government should indicate other federal funding sources to meet the most urgent social and economic needs in the Arctic.

The Government of Canada agrees with the recommendation.

The Government is taking a holistic approach to addressing urgent social and economic needs of Arctic and northern communities through the adoption of whole-of-government initiatives such as the ICPC, the ANPF, the *Inuit Nunangat Policy*, and the UNDA Action Plan 2023-2028, as well as through investments in several programs. For example, the ICPC was established in 2017 and is a permanent bilateral forum for the federal government and Inuit to advance shared priorities, many of which overlap with issues that the Committee identified as key to Arctic security during its consultations in 2022 and 2023. ICPC priorities include land claims implementation, reconciliation, infrastructure and housing, Inuktitut revitalization, health care, food security, and sovereignty. Government investments related to ICPC and Inuit-specific priorities since 2017 include \$125 million for the Inuit-led Post-secondary Education Strategy, \$50 million for the National Inuit Suicide Prevention Strategy, \$220 million for the Inuit Child First Initiative, \$333 million for the implementation of the *Indigenous Languages Act*, \$22.5 million for Inuit-led pandemic relief activities, \$517.8 million for Inuit-led infrastructure initiatives, \$845 million for Inuit-led housing initiatives, and \$1.4 billion to maintain and transform essential health care services for Inuit and First Nations.

In this context, DND/CAF recognizes the role it plays as part of a comprehensive vision of Arctic security and defence and is committed to contributing to the whole-of-government approach to the social and economic development in the region where these opportunities align with its core mandate.

DND/CAF is taking steps to leverage defence investments in the North and Inuit Nunangat through its infrastructure planning and procurement to meet local social and economic needs where possible, including in view of aligning defence work with the UN Declaration objectives and supporting policy commitments such as in the ICPC, the ANPF or in the *Inuit Nunangat Policy*. For example, the joint efforts between DND/CAF and Inuit partners in the Sovereignty, Defence and Security priority area of the ICPC, or in the context of the UNDA Action Plan 2023-2028, have been critical to identifying opportunities and challenges to advancing shared priorities in Inuit Nunangat, with an eye to benefiting local communities.

Additionally, as part of NORAD modernization, DND/CAF officials have been conducting early engagements with municipal, territorial, and Indigenous governments, organizations, and community partners in Inuvik, Yellowknife, Iqaluit, and Goose Bay from the onset of the NORAD Northern Basing infrastructure planning process. The aim of these engagements has been to introduce the initiative and its operational requirements, better understand community

infrastructure needs, and collectively identify potential opportunities for community access and use of defence infrastructure, where feasible. These type of engagements with Indigenous partners and northern communities will also take place as DND/CAF implements the recently announced defence policy update.

DND/CAF also recognizes the importance of procurement and building business capacity in the social and economic development of the Arctic and North, including Inuit Nunangat. DND/CAF is committed to ensuring that local communities benefit from defence investments in the region, in keeping with the federal government's commitment to ensure a minimum 5% of the total value of federal contracts are held by Indigenous businesses. In this context, the seven-year contract to operate and maintain the North Warning System awarded to the Nasittuq Corporation, and the contribution agreement with the Government of the Northwest Territories, who have contracted out to the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation/Gwich'in Tribal Council joint venture, to extend the Inuvik, Northwest Territories runway to facilitate fighter operations, represent concrete examples of DND/CAF's commitment to renewing and strengthening its relationship with Indigenous peoples, including by providing increased economic opportunities to Indigenous businesses through the federal procurement process.

For its part, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) is addressing the pressing need to close the digital divide in the Arctic and North, including in Inuit Nunangat. ISED committed in Canada's Connectivity Strategy, released in 2019, that all Canadians would have access to high-speed Internet by 2030. Significant progress is being made, including through the UBF. Access to high-speed Internet is now available to more than half of all households in the North, helping create a host of social and economic development benefits for northerners and Arctic communities. As noted above, the Government has invested over \$376 million for connectivity projects in the North specifically since 2015. Through federal investments, projects are underway to improve connectivity across the entirety of Nunavut. ISED projects that approximately three of four households in the Arctic and North regions will have high-speed Internet available to them by the end of 2026.

At the same time, CIRNAC and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) have a robust portfolio of programs that are addressing several social and economic needs of communities in the Arctic and North, and Inuit Nunangat. For example, on climate change, CIRNAC has delivered over \$290 million for more than 1000 projects across northern and Indigenous communities since 2016 through four climate change programs (Northern REACHE, Climate Change Preparedness in the North, Indigenous Community-Based Climate Monitoring, and Engaging Indigenous Peoples in Climate Policy). These programs have been recognized as best practices by Indigenous partners for their approach to working with Indigenous peoples. Likewise, Budget 2022 invested \$29.6 million over three years in the co-development of an Indigenous Climate Leadership Agenda on a distinctions-basis with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis.

On health care, federal investments made through CIRNAC and ISC since 2017 include \$178.5 million for the Inuit Child First Initiative; approximately \$0.8 million for Inuit-led initiatives for the Wellbeing of Families and Survivors of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People program; and \$43 million for the Tuberculosis Elimination Action Framework. These investments are in addition to those made as part of the ICPC for the National Inuit Suicide Prevention Strategy and the Inuit Child First Initiative mentioned above.

Also underpinning the North's urgent social and economic needs is housing security. This is why, the Government has been partnering with Indigenous peoples and service providers to deliver better access to housing. For example, in 2021, the Government invested \$517.8 million for Inuit and \$52 million for First Nations and Métis in the Northwest Territories through initiatives like the Indigenous Community Infrastructure Fund. Additionally, Budget 2022 and Budget 2023 invested \$4.3 billion in the Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy. Budget 2024 proposed an investment of \$918 million over five years, starting in 2024-2025, to CIRNAC and ISC to accelerate work in reducing First Nations, Inuit, and Métis housing and infrastructure gaps across Canada, including in the North. Among other things, these investments have supported Inuvialuit construction of 48 new housing units, completion of 250 renovations to existing owner-occupied units, 18 demolitions (to create space for new units), and the anticipated completion of a 17-unit affordable rent apartment building and 57 new units by 2028.

Other examples of how CIRNAC and its portfolio are collaborating with Arctic and northern Indigenous partners to meet their urgent social and economic needs are through initiatives in the areas of economic, and education and skills development. Notably, ISC has invested \$209.1 million in the First Nations and Inuit Employment Strategy since 2020, which operates the First Nations and Inuit Summer Work Experience Program and the First Nations and Inuit Skills Link Program. Likewise, the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) hosts Pilimmaksaivik, the Federal Centre of Excellence for Inuit Employment in Nunavut, which supports building a representative federal public service in Nunavut in accordance with Article 23 of the 2024 Nunavut Agreement. In addition, CanNor's Inclusive Diversification and Economic Advancement in the North program fosters economic growth, sector development, business scale-up and innovation, and small-scale and foundational economic infrastructure development. CanNor also leads the Northern Indigenous Economic Opportunities Program, which provided \$13.4 million in core and project-based funding to Indigenous rights-holders and recipients in 2022-2023.

Ongoing Government key initiatives and distinctions-based investments in response to Indigenous-identified priorities, along with those renewed in Budget 2024, are contributing to meaningful improvements in the lives of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis families and communities across Canada, including in the Arctic and North.