



NATO and Northern Flank: ARCTIC SHIELD 2026 exercise begins in Greenland

Published on 07/09/2026

NARSARSUAQ / KANGERLUSSUAQ – From September 7 to 18, 2026, the southern region of Greenland and the strategic area of Kangerlussuaq will host the multinational exercise **ARCTIC SHIELD 2026**. Organized by the *Defence Command Denmark* and managed on the ground by the *Joint Arctic Command*, the maneuver will involve approximately **400 military personnel** (from the Army, Navy, and Air Force) from **10 NATO allied nations**.

The activity is part of **ARCTIC SENTRY**, the broader operational plan of the Atlantic Alliance aimed at strengthening deterrence posture, tactical coordination, and operational readiness on the Northern Flank and the High Arctic.

Multi-domain insertion and special forces in polar environment

The exercise will test assets and personnel under extreme environmental conditions, testing rapid response capabilities and the resilience of the logistics chain in an isolated theater of operations.

The disposition on the ground includes the integration of diversified components:

- **Infantry and Special Forces:** French Army infantry units will operate in synergy with units from the National Guards of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, while special operations forces (SOF) operators from Finland and Denmark will conduct high-intensity missions.
- **Drone and ISR Units:** Belgium will participate in the maneuvers by deploying remotely piloted aircraft (UAV) assets dedicated to reconnaissance and target acquisition.
- **Fjord operations:** The amphibious-maritime component will see marines from the Dutch *Korps Mariniers* engaged in training activities in the complex fjord system north of the Arctic Circle (Kangerlussuaq area).
- **Specialist support and observers:** Specialists from Canadian Armed Forces will share tactical procedures and lessons learned on survival and equipment in harsh climate. Germany, Poland, and Slovenia will participate with liaison teams, logistics, and observers.

Air component and joint logistics support

The entire architecture of the exercise will be supported by the Danish Joint Arctic Command through the use of helicopters, naval units, field medical facilities, and dedicated supply chains.

Concurrently with maneuvers on land and sea, NATO's area of responsibility will see the conduct of **joint air operations in the skies of Iceland, Greenland, and Canada**, involving Canadian, US, and Danish tactical fighters for the defense of airspace in the northern hemisphere.