

NATO ARCTIC SHIELD 2026 Exercise: Operational Readiness in Greenland

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The military exercise **Arctic Shield 2026** — an integral part of NATO's surveillance and presence activities called **Arctic Sentry** — involves the participation of **over 400 military personnel from 11 allied nations**, engaged in intensive training via **land, sea and air** in Greenland.

Joint Operations and Operational Domains

The maneuvers, coordinated by the **Danish Defence Command** and the **Joint Arctic Command**, exploit the ruggedness of the terrain to test interoperability between forces in extreme climate scenarios.

- **Operational sites:** While the focus of land-based activities concentrates in the vicinity of **Narsarsuaq** (in southern Greenland), the **Dutch maritime forces** operate in the fjord system around **Kangerlussuaq**, north of the Arctic Circle.

- **Training specialties:** Soldiers are training in **land operations, parachute drops, advanced reconnaissance with drones, glacier climbing and advanced logistical support**.
- **Air and naval support:** The **Danish Defence Command** provides helicopters, ships, medical and logistical support. **Germany** contributes with transport support and observers, while **Poland and Slovenia** participate as observers. In parallel, **fighter jets from Denmark, Canada and the United States** conduct joint air training over Greenland's skies.



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The Contribution of Allied Nations

The exercise brings together regular forces, reserves, National Guard units and local specialists, highlighting strong multinational synergy:

> *“The operation is targeted and effective. There is excellent cooperation among everyone. Active duty soldiers, National Guard personnel, reservists, civilians and the local population are working together. It's fantastic.” —* ***General Michael W. Hyldgaard****, Chief of Defence of Denmark.*

- **Special forces and infantry:French infantry, Belgian drone units and Finnish special operations forces** operate directly in the field and on the ice cap.

- **Nordic National Guards:** Units of the **National Guard of Denmark, Norway and Sweden** train side by side, integrating their tactics.
- **Arctic experts: Canada** participates by providing its own **specialized expertise in the extreme conditions** of the North and offering transport capacity.

This important deployment of forces confirms NATO's determination to **defend its northern flank** and consolidate strategic readiness in a geopolitically crucial area like the Arctic