

23 June 2020



[Alaska Civilian-Armed Services Team \(ACAST\) Meeting Summary 1 April 2020](#)

The below is a written summary of the ACAST meeting held on 1 April 2020, via Zoom Teleconference due. Note, details are included in the Zoom meeting recording sent via email.

Attendees included:

VADM (Ret) Barrett, Maj Gen Saxe, Tim Jones, Carl Uchytel, and John Whiddon,

Joining late:

Co-Chair, Bill Popp

Unable to join:

Joshua Church (administrative oversight of Co-Chair), Douglas Goodwin

Additional participants included:

DMVA Deputy Commissioner, Craig Christenson
DMVA Stanley Wright

Discussions.

Meeting was called to order by ACAST Co-Chair, Church Kee.

- Brief review of the associated read ahead and noted that both the agenda and read ahead are informal working papers and intended only to facilitate discussions of ACAST. Unless so reflected the contents of working papers do not reflect any particular member of ACAST or any particular organization or entity associated of ACAST participants. Also noted was that ACAST is a volunteer pro-bono advisory activity, and participants serve as appointed by the Governor of the State of Alaska.

Opening forum/virtual roundtable by ACAST members.

- Review of ACAST report from November 2018.
 - Much of the report is relevant in 2020.
- There is on-going need for investment for infrastructure that supports security and defense measures in Alaska to add to preparedness and readiness.
 - This includes ports, rails, roads and airfield improvements
- There is a need for more economic analysis that supports security and defense missions in Alaska.
- Corona Virus 2019 (COVID19) discussions. Not enough is known to understand the impacts of COVID19 on remote regions in Alaska, not enough testing is yet being conducted and while hunker down programs reduce rates of infections, real concerns about immunity deficiencies as well as insufficient care options across rural Alaska cause concerns,



ACAST...Actionable recommendations to improve the Defense and Security Landscape in Alaska.

particularly where rural areas are co-located with mobile/transient personnel at locations such as Kodiak.

- Long term economic impact of COVID19 needs to be more carefully understood.
- What is going to be the impact of continued shutdown in 6-9 months? Will rural areas such as Kodiak survive?
- Alaska is entering a “new normal” of crisis and instability, and the need for increased ability and preparedness to respond is warranted. This includes Alaska National Guard, U.S. Coast Guard and active duty forces (under Defense Support to Civil Authorities...DSCA).
 - Earthquakes
 - Fires
 - Pandemic health issues
 - Volcanos
- Missions include disaster support and humanitarian assistance to areas affected by crisis and the specifics of response varies due to the nature of emergency requests
 - Logistics, health care, transportation from affected areas.
- Are current authorities to mobilize support useful to address needed preparedness and readiness in crisis response?
 - Review of National Guard oriented authorities: State active duty, 502(F) and T-32 U.S. Code.
- What roles can ACAST provide that is relevant to support crisis response? Does the current Administrative Order provide the needed measures?
- Pending F-35 arrivals at Eielson AFB.
 - Assessing delays due to COVID19
 - Arrivals of 54 X F-35s highlight the shortfall of available KC-135 aircraft to provide refueling support.
 - KC-46 needed more than ever to support adequate air refueling of the considerable number of 5th generation USAF fighters in Alaska.
 - Arctic, North Pacific, Western Pacific regions all warrant increased air refueling to enable mission duration of fighter aircraft.
 - F-35s and F-22s will likely be limited in mission effectiveness in day to day and crisis without a rise in air refueling assets. KC-46 aircraft will be a game changer in addressing this growing and increasingly critical shortfall.
- Need for infrastructure investments to support force protection capability, readiness and preparedness in interior Alaska installations: This includes Ft Wainwright, Eielson AFB, Ft Greely.
- Rotary aircraft platforms remain under invested to address Search and Rescue (SAR), humanitarian assistance and disaster response in/across Alaska. Current HH-60 aircraft are aged, with limited range, endurance and low operational rate (mission capability rates).
 - A platform by platform replacement with CV-22s would alleviate this concern and growing shortfall in capability.
- Increasing ability for Air National Guard aircrews to fly into rural Alaska “hubs” to gain airfield familiarization and rural regional flying conditions orientation remains a priority.
- The need for increased ice breaking by U.S. Coast Guard in U.S. Arctic region for sovereign presence and securing approaches to Alaska coastlines remains a needed and in-work capability.



- Home porting new U.S. Coast Guard “Polar Security Cutters” in Alaska not warranted, but these platforms are needed to focus in projecting U.S. sovereign power across U.S Arctic waters.
- Arctic Strategic Deepwater Port is needed as much as ever. Has enough research and reconnaissance been conducted to determine the most suitable location?
- What are the locations that are the most “shovel ready?”
 - The Port of Nome seems to have made significant investment in this aspect.
- There is increased need for Hangars to support pre and post deployment mobility operations at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.
- Marine Highway continues to be a significant concern. Both infrastructure and the platforms themselves need new resourcing, perhaps via increased federal support due to linkages/support to National Defense missions.
 - M/V Tustamena is of particular concern.
- In addition to defense missions needed to support SAR, HA, DR in the current perpetual crisis impacts across Alaska, continued needs to advance Law Enforcement (U.S. Coast Guard focus) across the maritime approaches is needed and ACAST advocacy for these aspects would be helpful.
- Looking forward, ACAST (in accordance with existing Administrative Order) can provide advocacy to Alaska Congressional Delegation in support of the concerns and shortfalls described in the open session.
 - Co-Chair Church Kee will draft a memo for review
 - Memo needs to be “by, with and through” Governor Dunleavy IAW Administrative Order.
 - Memo would be in addition to Annual Report required of existing Administrative Order.

Conclusion.

ACAST Co-chair Church Kee will provide draft memo and summary of meeting to ACAST in advance of next quarterly meeting.

Next ACAST meeting will be chaired by Co-Chair Bill Popp.

Meeting was adjourned and subsequent recording of Zoom conference call provided via email by Co-Chair Church Kee.

