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### **NORAD: Where from Here?**

This is an important topic for us to analyze and I'm going to try to introduce this. In a less than perfect world, NORAD comes as close to a perfect institution as can be imagined. For decades NORAD has provided security for two separate and sovereign nation with a degree of trust and cooperation that has not been seen elsewhere. We are dealing with the highest stakes at the highest levels and have seen significant changes in technology and politics. NORAD, like other institutions, must rethink its role and purpose, for NORAD, where from here?

For better or worse the geophysical world is changing at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Canada and the U.S. are the two countries most affected, as the high arctic is on the verge of becoming an industrial highway and as global warming proceeds the ice melts laying oil and natural gas deposits bare and new transit routes link Europe with Asia.

What is important about slide one is the striking indication of the receding line of polar ice. There has been a remarkably well documented shift and it's complicated by the currents and flows taking place. When I looked at this I thought of it as ice in a bowl and you slosh the bowl around, but stretched over a year, so the ice tends to press down on our side of the world and wave to the Russian side. The U.S. geological survey have put these things up in various colours: dark red indicates with almost 100% probability that oil or natural gas would be found. Footnote is that the actual field size is around 50 million barrels and that is at the low end. The question of small fields and whether or not they are commercial is another matter. An additional set of factors lies within native land tracks.

Exploration activity is proposed in the arctic near western Siberia and western Alaska, Pedro basin area. There is a lot of mining activity taking place in these areas and the bottom line is that the arctic, despite its enormous size, is becoming a busy place and so the question is what does this mean for NORAD? This creates an opportunity that the two governments ought to think about as they turn to the future.

The third slide indicates likely routes for surface travel of ships. There are three arctic bridges into the Hudson Bay that have already been used to exchange fertilizer for Canadian wheat and are going to be more and more commonly used. Additionally, the northern route along the Russian coast will be open within the next

decade and will be used as a route between Asia and Europe. Finally, there is the North West Passage with all of its complicated possibilities and once again that is something that will be open in presumably, if the trends continue, the next decade or so.

The question is what does this mean for NORAD? There is the task of monitoring and patrolling the high arctic. This is going to be complex, difficult and expensive. Canada and the U.S. should not undertake this alone, and the experience that NORAD has should not be put to waste. Air breathing and satellite technology will be needed and not just out 200,000 nautical miles. Matters of environment will extend far beyond this, making this a non traditional operation. NORAD's expertise might be just the thing to overcome the political impasse that has been made very clear at the end of the Bush administration regarding the NWP. If both countries were involved in monitoring and patrolling would there be any need for formal announcements of movements between Canada and the U.S. as they would both know what was going on. This would still be open with regards to third parties but it may resolve what is becoming a bigger issue.

What is clear is that NORAD will guarantee its utility far into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

**Presentation Slides**





