

ARCTIC PROGRAM FIREARM PROTOCOL

This document outlines the protocols for researchers with support from Battelle ARO in different scenarios. It also summarizes the appropriate training and safety measures that need to be established before a participant brings a weapon into a program-supported location and provides guidance on training, authorization, permitting, transport, authorization, storage, operation, and reporting of firearm use for wildlife protection.

With the threat of bears in remote camps and the requirement of firearms from the Government of Greenland at certain locations, firearms are often a necessary mitigation tool for program participants. Other non-lethal mitigation options are encouraged when working/traveling where bears are present. In all cases, bear awareness and a self-evaluation of the team's level of experience must factor into which mitigations are chosen.

The Principal Investigator (PI) is responsible for ensuring that institutional policies around firearms are followed for situations that warrant possession or access to a weapon in the field. If a remote location or activity requires active possession of a firearm and/or patrols, a qualified bear guard should be considered in lieu of field team members taking on the responsibility. This document provides information and guidance for the research community, but ultimate risk mitigation, responsibility, and liability fall to the grantee's institution. Research groups are responsible for the provision, training, and safety protocols if a firearm is deployed to the field. See [NSF Grant General Conditions](#).

REQUIREMENTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Firearms are required by the Government of Greenland for deploying parties located within the Greenland National Park that require Expedition Permits (this includes the staffed camp of Summit Station). Battelle ARO maintains two firearms at Summit Station to meet this requirement for the Summit area allotment. Science teams that travel outside of the area allotment boundary may be required to obtain a separate expedition permit and meet firearm-related permit requirements.

Per [Government of Greenland](#), expeditions in the National Park are required to bring a rifle with a minimum caliber of 30-06. Other weapons may hinder the permit or transport process, and certain weapons are not approved for standard transport or possession.

Research groups should consult with their own risk management office to determine if a firearm is a recommended safety tool. Battelle ARO HSE can advise on wildlife risk in the areas in which researchers will be deployed, but the ultimate decision to bring a firearm into the field is that of the PI/Institution.

PERMITTING & REGISTRATION

Researcher groups are responsible for securing their own permits.

Information on permitting & registration requirements at frequently supported locations is available:

- Greenland: [Additional Permits | Expeditions.gi](#)
Note: Greenland permits are tied to an individual, not a site.
- Alaska: [Firearms in Alaska, Alaska Department of Fish and Game](#)
- Canada: <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/firearms>
Note: Canada restricts import of handguns into the country.

TRANSPORTING FIREARMS

All program participants must transport firearms per TSA guidelines and other applicable guidelines.

[Transporting Firearms and Ammunition | \(tsa.gov\)](#)

Additional regional information:

- [Alaska](#)
- [Canada](#)
- Guidance for U.S. Persons Traveling Outside the U.S. with Firearms and/or Ammunition | ICE
- **Air National Guard:** See this annually updated document *Appendix B: GL Transport of Rifles and Ammunition* (provided upon request)
- **Pituffik Space Base:** Air National Guard or commercial charter flights are the primary way to get firearms in/out of Pituffik. Firearms are not allowed on the weekly Air Mobility Command (AMC) flights to Pituffik or on Embassy charters contracted through Air Greenland. Advance coordination with Battelle ARO is required for participants wishing to bring a firearm into Pituffik to meet their transportation and storage requirements.

STORING FIREARMS

Firearms must remain unloaded in locked storage when not in use.

Research groups are responsible for ensuring that firearms remain locked in travel cases per TSA guidelines when transiting through any Battelle ARO (Arctic Research Operations) hub. Battelle ARO does not provide locked firearm storage at any location. Battelle ARO does not provide a firearm armory for check-in/out of firearms. Pituffik Space Base requires that firearms be checked in/out of their armory. Additional information can be provided by Battelle ARO Project Managers.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

The NSF has mandated that all ARSLS participants, including direct bill and interagency project personnel, who take firearms into the field as part of the Arctic Program must complete a firearms safety training class provided by a qualified training organization or through a local law enforcement agency. Researchers must pay for and arrange this training. This is an allowable grant cost. Instruction should include the below topics at a minimum.

- Safe firearm handling.
- Live-fire range practice.
- Firearm cleaning, storage, and cold-weather care.
- Personal protective equipment and use during firearm handling.
- Firearm protection from wildlife (optional but preferred).

Personnel should receive additional training related to bear awareness to include assessing bear behavior, best practices, and familiarity with non-lethal deterrent methods by which to protect personnel from bear interactions. Battelle ARO provides general bear awareness resources in site specific orientations, in Arctic Field Training courses (researchers), General Safety Awareness training (staff only), and individual project risk assessments. More information on risk management and field safety training resources can be found at <https://battellearcticgateway.org/hse>.

Battelle ARO Recommended CONUS Trainer Information

- [MODTAC Homepage - Modern Tactical Creations, LLC](#). (720) 608-8609; 9275 Christopher Court, Elizabeth CO 80107; dave@modtac.us.
- Training details: A standard class has room for 6 students with 2-3 training rifles. Training consists of a 2-hour classroom portion followed by 2+ hour live fire.
- A background check is run by MODTAC on any personnel attending the training.

Battelle ARO RECOMMENDED ALASKA TRAINER

For Alaska Operations, an approved firearms trainer is based in Fairbanks: Chuck Inderrieden, C4 Training Group LLC, c4tgllc@gmail.com (907) 347-2459

Researchers should consult their institution's risk management office to confirm that it allows employees to carry weapons into the field while working as an employee of the institution. PIs should ensure that field team members who are employed by another institution do the same. If the field team includes volunteers, researchers should discuss liability issues around weapons concerning non-employees with their institution's risk management office. Battelle ARO is not responsible for confirming that researchers (outside of a staffed camp) have the appropriate firearms training required by NSF.

DISCHARGING A FIREARM

- Firearms shall remain unloaded in locked storage until non-lethal deterrents have proved unsuccessful and personnel are granted approval by the appropriate authority to use unless there is imminent danger. Approval from the appropriate authority is intended to provide a record of the decision and verify lethal force is required. Research teams with firearms in the field should have robust policies for access to the firearm. In the event of an active bear attack on a person, do not delay intervention for the sake of administrative consent.
- When a firearm is discharged on wildlife, intent must be to kill and not to wound. Polar bears are protected under the [Marine Mammal Protection Act](#) and can only be fired upon during extreme situations. Wounded animals are often more dangerous than healthy animals. If an animal must be killed for the safety of personnel, the participant must follow the required disposal procedures and participate in reporting/investigation requirements as determined by NSF and state/federal/international entities.
- At locations with NSF-supplied firearms, there will be no firearm practice unless an official firearm trainer is present and Battelle ARO management has approved the activity. Researchers should not engage in target practice in the field to reduce the risk of injury or damage from firearm use.
- If a firearm is discharged a researcher is required to notify their institution's risk management office and their Battelle ARO Project Manager who will elevate to Battelle ARO and NSF management
- Firearms transported to program-supported locations will be maintained in accordance with manufacturer recommended specifications.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTATION

- Greenland Transport of Rifles and Ammunition (see below)

HYPERLINKS IN DOCUMENT

Text	Link
NSF Grant Conditions	https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/gc1/oct21.pdf
Government of Greenland	https://exp.gl/About
Greenland: Additional Permits Expeditions.gl	https://exp.gl/Permit-Application/Additional-Permits
Firearms in Alaska, Alaska Department of Fish and Game	https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=hunting.transportguns
Transporting Firearms and Ammunition (tsa.gov)	https://www.tsa.gov/travel/transporting-firearms-and-ammunition
Alaska (add'l regional Info)	https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=hunting.transportguns
Canada (add'l regional Info)	https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/firearms/storing-transporting-and-displaying-firearms
Guidance for U.S. Persons Traveling Outside the U.S. with Firearms and/or Ammunition ICE	https://www.ice.gov/investigations/astp/faq
MODTAC Homepage - Modern Tactical Creations, LLC.	https://www.modtac.us/
Marine Mammal Protection Act	https://www.mmc.gov/about-the-commission/our-mission/marine-mammal-protection-act/

GREENLAND TRANSPORT OF RIFLES AND AMMUNITION

All federal and individual state laws must be obeyed when transporting firearms/ammunition to a base across state lines. All Greenlandic regulations must be obeyed when transporting firearms/ammunition. Researchers are responsible for their firearms and whenever possible accompany them on military airlift. Certain logistical circumstances warrant shipping weapons unaccompanied, but convenience is not a justification.

AIR NATIONAL GUARD TRANSPORT OVERVIEW

The Science Project Manager (PM) and NY Cargo staff will be involved in planning transport via ANG.

North:

Due to the required lead time for processing cargo and obtaining clearances, the following applies:

Rifles: Transport north to Greenland via ANG as accompanied or unaccompanied cargo is possible.

Ammunition: Transport north to Greenland via ANG as accompanied or unaccompanied cargo is possible.

South:

Due to levels of base security and coordination required, the following applies:

Rifles: Transport south to USA via ANG as accompanied cargo is possible. Transport of rifles south to USA via ANG as unaccompanied cargo may be possible if other transit paths are not available.

Ammunition: Transport south to USA via ANG as accompanied or unaccompanied cargo is not supported.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR NORTHBOUND ANG FLIGHTS (NY to Kangerlussuaq)

Cargo is due to Stratton Air Base three weeks prior to the flight. Firearms cannot be shipped directly to Stratton Air Base – they must be shipped to a New York licensed dealer. Ammunition must pre-ship to a licensed NY State dealer. The dealer will charge a transfer fee and advance payment must be paid by the researcher prior to pick-up by Battelle ARO NY staff. [Transporting Firearms and Ammunition | \(tsa.gov\)](#)

For all transport:

- Rifle must be unloaded in a lockable rifle carrying case with clip removed.
- Locks are required in all applicable areas (no open loops).
- Ammunition is not allowed in the case or with the weapon.

Licensed Dealer used by Battelle ARO: Frank's Gun Shop, 3831 NY-30 Amsterdam NY 12010
Franksgunshop@frontiernet.net / 518.883.5053

* Contact the PM and NY staff directly to coordinate direct delivery of firearms or ammunition. *

RIFLES AND AMMUNITION

Researcher informs PM of firearm description at least one month prior to northbound flight date.

Firearm Description includes:

- Manufacturer / Model / Caliber / Serial Number

Ammunition Description includes:

- Amount of ammunition, including weight of explosive material in each individual cartridge
- SDS (safety data sheet) for specific ammunition

PM informs NY Site Supervisor of the request and descriptions. The NY Site Supervisor will notify Base Security Forces and Small Aerial Terminal (SAT) staff at Stratton ANGB.

ANG flight day:

- The locked firearm, ammunition and carrying case keys/combination will be turned over to SAT personnel.
- SAT personnel will confirm rifle case cargo.
- SAT personnel with open ammunition, check ammunition against paperwork (hazmat and amount accuracy.)
 - If not boxed, a proper shipping package will be prepared according to AFMAN 24-604 regulations, including all hazardous labeling and shipping documents.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SOUTHBOUND ANG FLIGHTS (Kangerlussuaq to NY)

Return shipping requirements: The science project manager and Kangerlussuaq staff will assist with the return of rifles from Greenland. NY cargo staff must be notified, and plans coordinated in advance.

Since returning to the US with ammunition on SAAM missions is not permitted, researchers should contact local Greenland authorities to donate unused stock prior to departing Greenland. Battelle ARO Kangerlussuaq will not store ammunition for science teams, including between deployments within same field season.

Unaccompanied rifles are not permitted for southbound ANG flights if there is a way the researcher can travel with the rifle (i.e. commercial travel.)

- If it is not possible to travel with the rifle, the researcher will contact the Science PM for assistance.

For all transport:

- Rifle must be unloaded in a lockable rifle carrying case with clip removed.
- Locks are required in all applicable areas (no open loops).

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PITUFFIK SPACE BASE (PSB)

- **AMC flights:** Rifles are not permitted on AMC to PSB. Rifles MAY be permitted for transport from Greenland with pilot approval – this requires real-time groundwork by the firearm owner to meet with pilots upon Thursday arrival prior to Friday departure and is NOT guaranteed. Ammunition is not permitted on AMC to or from Greenland.
- **Embassy Charters:** Rifles and ammunition are not permitted on Embassy charters to or from PSB, as these are diplomatic charters.
- **ANG:** Rifles and ammunition may travel to and from PSB on NSF-supported 109th ANG missions, observing the same parameters outlined for north and south travel.
- **Other charters:** Rifles and/or ammunition may arrive via charter – advance coordination is required to alert the PSB Police Inspector to meet the plan and have paperwork to check into Armory.

Storage of rifles and/or ammunition is required at the base Armory. Protocols may vary pending if the team is traveling with firearm/ammunition or sending as advance cargo. Contact your science PM for current details.

COMMERCIAL TRANSPORT

Transport of rifles via commercial air is possible as checked baggage, and this method is preferred for researchers arriving or departing Greenland via commercial flights.

Ensuring adherence to requirements is the responsibility of the researcher.

<https://www.tsa.gov/travel/transporting-firearms-and-ammunition>

<https://www.cph.dk/en/practical/luggage/checked-in-luggage/how-to-travel-with-weapons>

<https://www.mit.gl/en/passengers/what-are-the-rules/checked-in-baggage/>

[Tourist | Seek permission | Greenland Police \(politi.gl\)](#)

Battelle ARO Contacts

<u>NY Site Supervisor:</u>	Dino Guthrie	dino@polarfield.com	518.344.2095
<u>Kangerlussuaq Cargo:</u>	Dave Haney	dave@polarfield.com	+299.524281
<u>Greenland Operations:</u>	Tracy Sheeley	sheeley@polarfield.com	720.347.5313