

A Short History of

UNITED STATES NORTHERN COMMAND



**U.S. Northern Command
Office of History**



Admiral William "Bill" Gortney
Commander, U.S. Northern Command
Dec. 5, 2014 - present

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NARRATIVE

The Beginning

Prompted by the September 11, 2001 (9/11) terrorist attacks on American soil, U.S. Northern Command's mission is to deter, prevent and defeat threats and aggression aimed at the United States, its territories, and interests. To this end personnel from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard are assigned to coordinate the protection of North America from external threats, drawing on the full capabilities of all U.S. military services, including the National Guard and Coast Guard, as necessary. Additionally, the command is charged with providing defense support for civil authorities when approved by the President or Secretary of Defense. U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) also provides military resources and support to federal, state and local authorities.



The horrific attacks of September 11, 2001 led to the creation of U.S. Northern Command

The activation of USNORTHCOM on October 1, 2002, marked the first time a single military commander has been charged with protecting the U.S. homeland since the days of George Washington. Its area of responsibility (AOR) includes all air, land and sea approaches to North America, encompassing the continental U.S., Alaska, Canada, Mexico and the surrounding water areas out to approximately 500 nautical miles.

Through its first year USNORTHCOM faced the usual hurdles of building a command—acquiring needed manpower, defining the correct organization and relationships, writing the necessary plans related to its mission, and conducting training and exercises. USNORTHCOM, however, also was challenged with “real world” issues as it built its way to full operational capability. These challenges included, developing communication with other Department of Defense organizations and external federal agencies, responding to a space shuttle accident, providing assistance to natural disasters, and providing support to an expanding list of special national security events and presidential mission support. By the end of its first year, USNORTHCOM demonstrated it could not only meet its developing capability goals, but also its operational challenges. Therefore the first commander, Air Force General Ralph E. “Ed” Eberhart, was able to declare the command had reached full operational capability on the second anniversary of the terrorist attack on September 11, 2003. He stated, “This is not an end state. This is, in fact, part of a journey. We’ll never truly reach full operational capability. We are always going to be striving to be better.”

Defense Support for Civil Authorities

Through 2010 the command has not had to respond to a large scale threat calling for military intervention and its efforts in this area remain focused on preparation and prevention. The command was, however, frequently called upon to respond to requests from civil authorities to provide assistance during and in the wake of national disasters. The Department of Defense (DOD) already had a doctrine for handling disasters before the creation of USNORTHCOM. The command refined that doctrine to serve as a mechanism for interaction between DOD and civil authorities with each disaster it faced. Usually National Guard forces operating under their state’s government were the primary provider of military assistance. However if those forces were overwhelmed or a particular need best met by the military was required, USNORTHCOM employed forces, equipment, and/or expertise upon request. This was a key distinction. The command had no intention of superseding civil authorities. Rather, the philosophy behind USNORTHCOM’s participation in defense support for civil authorities was to be prepared at all times but only to act when requested and to depart just as soon as their support was no longer required.

The majority of disasters in which the command provided assistance were natural, such as hurricanes, floods, and wildfires. There were exceptions, most notably the Space Shuttle Columbia re-entry disaster which scattered debris across parts of Texas and Louisiana in February 2003; the collapse of an Interstate 35 bridge in Minneapolis occurring in August 2007; and a massive oil spill created by the failure of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Platform in the Gulf of Mexico from the spring through the summer of 2010.

It did not take long until the defense support capabilities of the new command were tested. In fact, the first event came on October 2, 2002, just one day after USNORTHCOM

stood up, when Hurricane Lilli struck the gulf coast with 100 mile an hour winds causing extensive damage. In 2003 USNORTHCOM contributed to the Space Shuttle Columbia disaster response in February, provided airborne fire fighting capability during the intense wildfire season in the western United States occurring through the summer and fall, and provided disaster relief in the aftermath of Hurricane Isabel, which struck the eastern seaboard in September.



A Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System (MAFFS) equipped C-130 drops retardant on a wildland fire

The summer of 2004 saw another significant wildfire season and again USNORTHCOM provided air assets to combat them. Just as the wildfire season was winding down, USNORTHCOM responded to a string of three hurricanes in rapid succession beginning with Charley in August which hammered Charlotte County, Florida and also hit the Carolinas. Charley was followed two weeks later by Hurricane Frances in early September which made landfall in Central Florida and continued up the east coast as a tropical depression, affecting the weather as far north as southeastern Canada. Before the remnants of Hurricane Frances had completely dissipated, Ivan, the third hurricane in the string, struck near Gulf Shores, Alabama. In addition to the damage caused along the coastline, the storm spawned 117 tornadoes from Florida to Pennsylvania.

In 2005 the command faced its most significant disaster to date: Hurricane Katrina. Hurricane Katrina started as a tropical depression on August 23, 2005. Already geared up for a predicted busy hurricane season, USNORTHCOM began tracking Katrina. As it became evident that this hurricane would strike the United States specific actions were decided upon and executed. Meanwhile, Katrina gained strength as it headed for Florida. Making landfall there on 25 August as a Class 1 hurricane, it caused approximately \$2 billion of damage, killing 14.

Katrina then crossed the Gulf of Mexico, intensifying to a Category 5 hurricane and headed for the gulf coast locales of Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. As Katrina approached the coast it weakened and on August 29 Katrina made landfall again, this time as a Category 3 hurricane, inundating New Orleans as levees protecting the city failed, and inflicting wide spread damage across the region. In total the effects of the storm were staggering, causing roughly \$80 billion damage and killing more than 1,800.



Tech. Sgt. Keith Berry, a pararescueman with the 304th Rescue Squadron from Portland, Oregon, looks down on flooded streets searching for survivors over New Orleans. He is part of an Air Force Reserve team credited with saving more than 1,040 people in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. .

As the storm subsided, USNORTHCOM forces deployed to the region, under the direction of Joint Task Force Katrina commander Lieutenant General Russel Honoré and conducted recovery operations at the request of civil authorities. More than 22,000 personnel from every branch of the U.S. military participated in the effort which included search and rescue; security assessment, advice, and technical assistance; evacuation; recovery of deceased persons; health and medical support; debris removal; restoration of infrastructure; logistics, including distribution of food, water, and ice; temporary shelter; long-range communications; housing of FEMA officials and relief workers; and provision of geospatial products and evaluations. Hurricane Rita, following closely on the heels of Katrina, battered the still reeling gulf coast region in late September. In between those two storms USNORTHCOM provided air and water craft in response to a request from civil authorities when Hurricane Ophelia slammed into the Carolinas in the middle of that month.

The command enjoyed a respite in 2006 as there were no major disasters to contend with. The break was short lived as wildfires returned with a vengeance to the western United States in 2007, prompting a USNORTHCOM response. Particularly hard-hit was California in the fall. In 2008 USNORTHCOM responded to spring flooding in the central United States and another round of California wildfires in the summer. As the command's role in fighting the wildfires was

drawing to a close, a string of three hurricanes—Gustav, Hanna, and Ike—struck the United States during a thirteen-day span in August and September. Gustav and Ike made landfall along the shores of the Gulf of Mexico, in Louisiana and Texas, respectively. Sandwiched between the two gulf storms, Hanna struck the North Carolina coast. These three near simultaneous events in two different regions provided quite a challenge for USNORTHCOM but the men and women of the command proved up to the task.



U. S. Marines clearing rubble in the aftermath of the January 2010 Haiti Earthquake

The next large scale response USNORTHCOM participated in was Operation UNIFIED RESPONSE, the DOD’s contribution to the international relief effort following the devastating January 2010 earthquake in Haiti, led by U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM). Because Haiti was located in USSOUTHCOM’s Area of Responsibility that command was designated as the supported command. However, USSOUTHCOM relied heavily on USNORTHCOM’s expertise in disaster response. True to form, USNORTHCOM delivered, providing key experts in logistics, operational planning and interagency coordination, including communications planners and satellite communications specialists, and chaplains.

Consolidating Command and Control

A significant milestone in the maturation of the command and the cementing of ties between North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and USNORTHCOM was the consolidation of the NORAD and USNORTHCOM command centers. Between 2002 and 2008 the USNORTHCOM and the NORAD command centers had operated as two separate entities at two different locations, Peterson Air Force Base and Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station, respectively. As the missions of the two commands became more interwoven over time it made less and less sense to operate apart. This situation led to the consolidation of the two command centers. In addition, the separate locations made it difficult for the dual-hatted NORAD and USNORTHCOM to lead during contingencies. An example of the potential

repercussions of this came in the pre-USNORTHCOM era. During the 9/11 attacks Air Force General Ralph Eberhart, at the time the NORAD and U.S. Space Command commander, was caught between his headquarters at Peterson and the NORAD command center at Cheyenne Mountain and was unable to receive telephone calls at a time when critical decisions needed to be made and communicated.



The NORAD and USNORTHCOM Command Center, May 2008.

In 2006 Admiral Timothy Keating took the situation in hand, initiating the consolidation. He selected Peterson as the primary location with Cheyenne Mountain serving as the alternate. Affirming his decision, Admiral Keating said, “I have found, over the course of several pretty extensive, rigorous exercises, that I’m able to get as good or better situational awareness in the command center ... at Peterson,” Over the next two years facilities and equipment were readied for the consolidated command center and the effort culminated with a ribbon cutting attended by senior officials from the U.S. and Canada held on May 8, 2008, the day after NORAD’s 50th anniversary celebration.

Spreading the Word

General Victor Renuart’s March 2007 through May 2010 tenure as Commander, USNORTHCOM, saw the maturation of strategic communication. General Renuart was continually plagued by the question, “what does USNORTHCOM do?” Desiring a consistent command message both internally and externally, General Renuart oversaw the establishment of architecture dedicated to ensuring the command’s story was being effectively and factually told. It was during this period six recurring themes emerged:

- USNORTHCOM remains vigilant to anticipate, deter, detect, and defeat threats to the homeland
- USNORTHCOM supports primary agencies and state and local authorities as directed
- USNORTHCOM anticipates requests, actions, and requirements to support developing situations

- Active, Guard, Reserve, and civilian Department of Defense efforts are unified in their disaster support
- The U.S. and Canada are partners in managing continental events
- Our defense relationship with Mexico is as good as it has ever been

Into the Future

In May 2010 Admiral James “Sandy” Winnefeld, U.S. Navy, assumed command of USNORTHCOM. Admiral Winnefeld’s vision for the command was to identify major mission focus areas and assign teams drawn from the command’s various directorates to work together collaboratively across disciplines. These areas included:

- Counter Terrorism and Force Protection
- Support to the Government of Mexico in its conflict with Transnational Criminal Organizations
- Defense Support for Civil Authorities
- Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and High-Yield Explosives (CBRN) Consequence Management
- Maritime Warning and Control
- Aerospace Warning and Control
- Missile Defense
- The Arctic

This effort synergistically addressed matters faced by the command while leaving the directorates in place to resolve issues brought back to them by their respective focus team members. It was in this posture that USNORTHCOM faced the future.

“We Have the Watch”

In Aug 2011 Admiral Winnefeld was appointed the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and General Charles H. Jacoby, Jr., U.S. Army, assumed command of U.S. Northern Command. The first Army general officer to command USNORTHCOM, General Jacoby modified the USNORTHCOM mission statement slightly by adding the word "partners" to better reflect the importance of mission partners in all that the command did. The new USNORTHCOM mission reads

The United States Northern Command partners to conduct homeland defense, civil support, and security cooperation to defend and secure the United States and its interests.

General Jacoby laid out his priorities for the command:

- Expand and strengthen our trusted partnerships
- Advance and sustain the binational military command

- Gain and maintain all-domain situational awareness
- Advocate and develop capabilities in our core mission areas to outpace all threats
- Take care of our people; they are our foundation

He also established a vision for the Command:

With our trusted partners, we will defend North America by outpacing all threats,
maintaining faith with our people and supporting them in their times of greatest need.
“WE HAVE THE WATCH”

2012 normalized USNORTHCOM’s roles and missions and demonstrated that years of practice indeed bore fruit for the United States. Exercise ARDENT SENTRY 12 prepared planners to deal with command and control during a complex catastrophe. The exercise was premised upon an earthquake along the New Madrid fault and involved numerous states. The “New Madrid” scenario became the baseline for what a true complex catastrophe might look like. Exercise VIGILANT SHIELD conducted in October 2012 prepared USNORTHCOM and NORAD staff members for an attack on the homeland through the use of ballistic and cruise missiles.

Real world events also occurred in 2012 including the Waldo Canyon Fire a wildfire in the Colorado Springs area. At its peak the fire was less than 12 miles from the USNORTHCOM headquarters and forced General Jacoby to close his blinds to keep from watching the fires. USNORTHCOM deployed C-130 Modular Airborne Firefighting System aircraft to support the federal wild land firefighting effort. Without hesitation, the courageous Airmen operating these aircraft continually put their lives at great risk to save and protect American lives and property during these wildfires.

Hurricane Sandy brought tragedy to the homes of many Americans. In response, USNORTHCOM moved capabilities to aid FEMA and other government agencies. The lessons learned on improving interagency coordination from previous DSCA operations paid tremendous dividends during the hurricane season. The motto throughout Hurricane Sandy was from General Jacoby was: "Lean forward, anticipate our partners' requirements, and don't be late to need." Maintaining this posture during the early stages of the hurricane, USNORTHCOM supported multiple Governor requests for DSCs in close coordination with the Secretary of Defense, the National Guard Bureau, and the Services. As the hurricane made landfall, two of the affected States, New Jersey and New York, established DSCs for response and recovery. Working with FEMA, the National Guard Bureau, and the individual States, USNORTHCOM estimated required support and prepositioned Title 10 resources in the region in order to respond as soon as requested. The DSCs provided critical leadership to achieve greater unity of effort between federal and state military forces in preparing for and responding to the devastating effects of this hurricane. As a result, USNORTHCOM was able to support federal, state, and local partners by facilitating power restoration, dewatering support, fuel distribution, transportation, and public health and safety support.



Air Force crews offload Southern California Edison power repair equipment from a C-5 Galaxy on Stewart Air National Guard Base in Newburgh, N.Y., Nov. 1, 2012

USNORTHCOM also leveraged relationships with United States Transportation Command and interagency partners to execute the strategic and ground movements of DOD assets and private/commercial power utility company trucks and personnel. In total, USNORTHCOM directed the movement of 253 sorties, hauling 4,204 short tons and 1,128 passengers. These numbers included the movement of 260 power restoration vehicles and 429 personnel from western states to New York and New Jersey.

Local events dominated USNORTHCOM's responses in 2013. Forrest Fires in Colorado Springs followed by heavy flooding in the same area as well as Boulder brought the DSCA mission to the homes of NORTHCOM personnel. The Black Forest Fire in Colorado Springs began on the June 11th and lasted for more than a week. It engulfed nearly 15,000 acres, 485 structures, and led to mass evacuations in a densely populated area. Less than two months later, the city of Colorado Springs was hit again with massive flooding that destroyed local tourist attractions and numerous roads. This flooding encompassed other cities including the city of Boulder. Statewide there were 12,000 evacuations, 1,502 homes destroyed and 200 commercial properties as well as seven confirmed fatalities.

In 2013, USNORTHCOM also rounded out its subordinate commands. In February, the Secretary of Defense designated the commander of U.S. Fleet Forces command as the commander, Naval Forces North (NAVNORTH) to serve as the Navy service element to

USNORTHCOM. This was followed in November, when General Jacoby activated Special Operations Command, North (SOCNORTH). US NORTHCOM also expanded security cooperation with Mexico by training 5,000 Mexican soldier and Marines. Since 2010, there was a 500% increase in requests for assistance between Mexico and the U.S. This demonstrated a growing and blossoming relationship between the two nations as both countries worked on boarder security and counter narcotics operations as part of the Security Cooperation mission set.

U.S. Northern Command Chronology

2002-2012

2002

1 Oct U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) stood up at Peterson AFB with General Ralph E. Eberhart, USAF, assuming command. In conjunction with the activation, Joint Forces Headquarters Homeland Security, Joint Task Force Civil Support, Joint Task Force 6, and the Joint Regional Medical Planning Program were transferred from U.S. Joint Forces Command to USNORTHCOM. General Eberhart also retained command of the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), a separate, bi-national (United States and Canada) command.

2003

1 Feb The space shuttle *Columbia* disintegrated as it re-entered Earth's atmosphere, killing all seven astronauts and scattering debris from Dallas, Texas to Lake Charles, Louisiana. USNORTHCOM participated in the response to the event, along with the National Military Command Center, U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM), NASA, and other civilian federal agencies.

25 Mar USNORTHCOM requested approval from the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and the Secretary of Defense (SecDef) to establish a Joint Task Force (JTF) for the National Capital Region (NCR) that reported to USNORTHCOM. The JTF would provide a focal point for planning and command and control for homeland defense (HD) and military assistance to civil authorities within the NCR.

27 Apr USNORTHCOM published its strategic concept for ballistic missile defense, defining the command's responsibility for the employment of ballistic missile defense forces to defend the United States.

18-26 Aug USNORTHCOM completed Exercise DETERMINED PROMISE 2003. As a result of the successful completion of the exercise, General Eberhart declared that USNORTHCOM had reached Full Operational Capability on 11 September 2003.

2004

1 Oct USNORTHCOM published its Theater Security Cooperation strategy. The strategy outlined several goals for establishing cooperative ties with Mexico, Canada, and nations in the Caribbean.

5 Nov Admiral Timothy J. Keating assumed command of NORAD and USNORTHCOM from General Ralph E. Eberhart.

2005

- 8 Jul* Admiral Keating, Commander USNORTHCOM, and LTG H. Steven Blum, Chief, National Guard Bureau, signed a Memorandum of Agreement to delineate the relationship between the two organizations.
- Aug–Sep* USNORTHCOM supported Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita recovery efforts in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. President George W. Bush spent 23-24 September at USNORTHCOM monitoring Hurricane Rita as it moved toward the Louisiana and Texas Gulf Coast.
- 22 Nov* Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld approved the USNORTHCOM Concept Plan for Homeland Defense, which detailed operations to deter, prevent, and defeat threats and aggressions aimed at the United States and its interests within its area of responsibility (AOR).
- 2006**
- 11 Mar* The Commander, USNORTHCOM, approved the concept plan outlining Defense Support for Civil Authorities (DSCA).
- 28 Jul* Upon review of several studies and reports, Admiral Keating announced the decision to relocate and combine the NORAD Command Center with the USNORTHCOM Command Center at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado Springs, Colorado.
- 15 Aug* The Secretary of Defense selected USNORTHCOM as the “global synchronizer” in the Global Response to Pandemic Influenza.
- 2007**
- Jan* The Secretary of Defense approved USNORTHCOM’s Concept Plan for Emergency Preparedness in the National Capitol Region (NCR), which integrated operations in the NCR under a single combatant commander, and synchronized DOD activities and existing federal, state, tribal and local emergency preparedness efforts.
- 29 Jan* USNORTHCOM received confirmation from the Missile Defense Agency that the ballistic missile defense system would expand in 2007 by stationing more interceptors at Fort Greely, Alaska; providing more U.S. Navy Aegis equipped ships with missile-defense engagement capability; and bringing an early-warning radar online in the United Kingdom.
- 1 Feb* The Secretary of Defense approved the USNORTHCOM Concept Plan for Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, or high-yield Explosives (CBRNE) Consequence Management. The concept plan outlined consequence management in the 48 contiguous states, the District of Columbia, Alaska, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, to support civil authorities in response to CBRNE situations.
- 23 Mar* General Victor E. Renuart, Jr. assumed command of NORAD and USNORTHCOM from Admiral Timothy J. Keating.
- 1 Aug* A four-lane bridge on I-35 crossing the Mississippi River between Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, collapsed into the river during rush hour. USNORTHCOM activated the FEMA Region Defense Coordinating Officer

(DCO) and deployed a U.S. Navy mobile dive and salvage unit to assist with the response and recovery operations.

12-13 Sep General Renuart, unveiled the NORAD and USNORTHCOM *Vision 2020*, and his strategy for the development of a theater campaign plan that synchronized National Defense Strategy, guidance for employment of forces, global campaigns and contingency plans, and Theater Security Cooperation planning.

23-31 Oct USNORTHCOM provided unique military capabilities, forces, and assets to southern California wildfire disaster response operations in support of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)/Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Department of the Interior/National Interagency Fire Center, and state and local officials.

2008

25 Feb General Renuart issued Operations Order 01-08, Reorganization of USNORTHCOM and Operations, which improved command and control, and coordination with USNORTHCOM's service and functional components.

13 May NORAD and USNORTHCOM unveiled its new integrated command center in a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by the Secretary of Defense. The command center enhanced NORAD and USNORTHCOM's ability to integrate situational awareness and respond to major events and disasters, man-made or natural, in North America.

29-31 May As part of USNORTHCOM's efforts to enhance relations with Mexican military organizations, Mexico's Bicameral Defense Commission of the Mexican Congress visited HQ USNORTHCOM for the first time and received briefings on the command, its mission, responsibilities, and role in defense of the U.S. Homeland.

10-20 Jun In response to request for assistance, USNORTHCOM directed forces to help local and state personnel to mitigate damage caused by extensive flooding in several Midwestern states.

*21 Jun-
20 Jul* Wildfires in California overwhelmed the state's fire-fighting capabilities. Upon request, USNORTHCOM provided two fire-fighting C-130 aircraft, aircrews, support personnel and equipment, and a Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO)/Defense Coordinating Element (DCE) to conduct wildland fire-fighting operations in support of the effort.

Aug- Sep USNORTHCOM monitored and responded to three tropical storms and three hurricanes in the Southeastern and Gulf states. Prior to landfall, USNORTHCOM pre-positioned personnel and equipment ready to respond to Hurricanes Gustav and Ike. Coordinated planning and execution accounted for prompt action by disaster response forces and facilitated rapid recovery operations.

25 Sep The USNORTHCOM Theater Campaign Plan was approved and signed by the commander. This milestone signaled a major step forward in command and control, bringing all operational and concept plans and associated capabilities

under one over-arching strategic document, providing a means for continuing assessment and improvement in the command's lines of operation.

17 Dec The 2008 Unified Command Plan (UCP) expanded USNORTHCOM's responsibilities by adding the Bahamas, Turk and Caicos Islands, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the British Virgin Islands to the USNORTHCOM AOR.

2009

7-9 Jan The commanders of USNORTHCOM and U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) met to conduct a comprehensive overview of the threats and challenges that the U.S. Southwest border presented. Crucial topics presented were the Border threat, the Merida Initiatives, Theater Security Cooperation with Mexico, and Interagency Coordination.

Feb/Mar USNORTHCOM issued a pre-decisional White Paper titled *Strategic Implications of Arctic Change*. Recognizing the climatic changes in the Arctic regions and the multi-nation maneuvering to establish territorial rights and claims, the command prepared its statement on the need to formulate and develop international policy directed toward influencing the formative Arctic regime.

13 Nov The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff awarded Headquarters, NORAD and USNORTHCOM the Joint Meritorious Unit Award for exceptionally meritorious service achievement for the period 1 Jan 2007 to 31 December 2008.

2010

Jan-Mar A catastrophic magnitude 7.0 earthquake struck Haiti the morning of 12 Jan. With the epicenter near Léogâne, approximately 16 miles west of the capital, Port-au-Prince, the quake caused major damage to Haiti's infrastructure, killed thousands, and left hundreds of thousands of people homeless. USNORTHCOM supported USSOUTHCOM's response to the disaster by providing key experts in logistics, operational planning and interagency coordination, including communications planners and satellite communications specialists, and chaplains. The humanitarian relief effort was referred to as Operation UNIFIED RESPONSE.

12-28 Feb USNORTHCOM supported the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in British Columbia, Canada, by providing military-to-military support to Canada Command in the USNORTHCOM AOR to enhance Canadian forces' capabilities in the event of a disaster. In support of the Winter Games, USNORTHCOM deployed 960 personnel to Washington state, and Vancouver, British Columbia.

21 Apr The DEEPWATER HORIZON, a Mobile Offshore Drilling Unit in the Gulf of Mexico, reported a huge explosion and fire on its platform. Due to structural and drilling equipment damage to the facility, a massive oil spill resulted that went on for months. The oil spill moved toward the coastline threatening an extensive ecological and economic disaster in the region. USNORTHCOM support in response to the disaster began on 28 April and continued through 15 September 2010.

19 May In a formal Change of Command ceremony, Admiral James S. Winnefeld, Jr. assumed command of NORAD and USNORTHCOM from General Victor E.

Renuart, Jr.

2011

- 19 -29 Mar* USNORTHCOM supported USPACOM in the airlift operations of repatriation of DOD dependents from Japan to the United States. During this operation, referred to as PACIFIC PASSAGE, USNORTHCOM's ARNORTH established joint repatriation coordination centers (JRCC) at Seattle-Tacoma IAP, Denver IAP, and at Travis AFB, CA. During this operation involving contracted commercial airlines, the JRCCs processed a total of 5,304 people arriving in the United States.
- 6 Apr* President Obama signed the 2011 Unified Command Plan (UCP). The UCP gave USNORTHCOM responsibility to advocate for Arctic capabilities.
- 15-22 Apr* The Government of Mexico (GOM) requested help from the United States to provide aerial firefighting capability to assist in wild land firefighting (WFF) operations in the remote mountains of northern Mexico's Coahuila area. The Department of State requested DOD to provide heavy aircraft outfitted with modular airborne fire fighting system (MAFFS) and support equipment, to facilitate the GOM response to contain the fires. On 15 Apr CDRUSNORTHCOM received a CJCS EXORD, directing DOD support to the GOM for WFF. In response, USNORTHCOM directed MAFFS aircraft from the 302 AW to deploy. The event was the first time Mexico requested this type of assistance from the United States military.
- 16-19 May* USNORTHCOM conducted Exercise ARDENT SENTRY 2011(AS11) to exercise Defense Support of Civil Authorities. The exercise scenario involved two major earthquakes in the New Madrid Seismic Zone and Wabash Valley Seismic Zone.
- 3 Aug* In a brief ceremony in USNORTHCOM's Washington Office, Lieutenant General Charles H. Jacoby, Jr., assumed command of NORAD and USNORTHCOM from Admiral James S. Winnefeld, Jr.
- 5 Aug* Lieutenant General Jacoby was promoted to General, to accept complete authority and full responsibilities for NORAD and USNORTHCOM.
- 25-29 Aug* USNORTHCOM provides support for Hurricane Irene relief efforts along the East coast. The Hurricane skirted the majority of the East coast dropping torrential rain but little in the way of large-scale damage. In the relief efforts DSCA from the Sea emerges as concept of operations for future operations.
- 1 -10 Nov* NORAD and USNORTHCOM conducted Exercise Vigilant Shield 12 (VS12) to exercise Homeland Defense plans.

2012

- 2-9 May* NORAD and USNORTHCOM conducted Exercise ARDENT SENTRY, a USJFCOM-supported, exercise series designed to train NORAD and

USNORTHCOM in homeland security processes with an emphasis on Defense Support of Civil Authorities.

- 26 Jun-9 Jul* USNORTHCOM responded to the Waldo Canyon Fire in Colorado Springs. Several USNORTHCOM team members lost their homes to the blaze and many more were forced to evacuate. However, the command continued to execute its missions.
- 1 Oct* General Jacoby celebrated the command's tenth anniversary by naming the HQ NORAD and USNORTHCOM Building the "Eberhart-Findley Building" for the first commander, General Ralph E. Eberhart, USAF, and his NORAD Deputy Commander, Lieutenant-General Eric A. Findley, CF.
- 22-29 Oct* USNORTHCOM conducted Exercise VIGILANT SHIELD, a homeland defense exercise that saw the doors of Cheyenne Mountain AFS close for the first time for over 24 hours.
- 26 Oct-31 Dec* USNORTHCOM responded to Hurricane Sandy. Relief efforts include a U.S. Navy Amphibious Readiness Group and more than 4,000 Title 10 Forces and 4,000 National Guard Forces under the command of Dual Status Commanders in New York and New Jersey.

2013

- Feb* Secretary of Defense established the commander of Fleet Forces Command as commander, U.S. Naval Forces North (NAVNORTH).
- 11-19 June* USNORTHCOM responded to the Colorado Springs Black Forest Fire. It was the second major fire for the city in two years. The fire destroyed 15,000 acres and more than 485 structures, most of them homes.
- June-Aug* NORAD and USNORTHCOM civilian personnel were placed on administrative furlough one day a week, two days a pay period for six weeks. Initially scheduled to last through the end of the fiscal year, DOD shortened the period in August.
- 11-16 Sept* USNORTHCOM responded to dangerous flooding in Colorado in the Colorado Springs and Boulder areas. Thousands of homes and other structures were destroyed leading to more than 10,000 evacuated persons.
- 5 Nov* General Jacoby activated U.S. Special Operations Command North (SOCNORTH) to work with interagency and regional partners.
- Dec 5* In a formal change of command ceremony, Adm. William "Bill" Gortney assumed command of NORAD and USNORTHCOM from Gen. Charles Jacoby.

U. S. Northern Command Lineage and Honors

As of 31 December 2012

Unit Designation: United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM)

Previous Designation: None

Authority: Established 1 October 2002, per Unified Command Plan 2002, April 2002.

Higher Headquarters: Secretary of Defense. The 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act, Section 164, established that the chain of command for combatant commanders (such as Commander, USNORTHCOM) flowed from the President to the Secretary of Defense, and that combatant commanders performed their duties under the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense.

Station: Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado Springs, Colorado

Awards & Decorations: Joint Meritorious Unit Award, 1 Oct 02-30 Sep 04
Joint Meritorious Unit Award, 1 Jan 07-31 Dec 08
Joint Meritorious Unit Award, 1 Jan 10 – 31 Dec 11
Joint Meritorious Unit Award, 1 Jan12 – 31 Dec 12



Joint Meritorious Unit Award, awarded to Joint Activities of the Armed Forces of the US which have distinguished themselves by exceptionally meritorious achievement or service in pursuit of joint military missions of great significance.

U.S. Northern Command Emblem



In the forefront is the Eagle, symbolizing our great Nation and our alertness; ready to defend our homeland. Its right claw holds an olive branch and its left clutches a group of 13 arrows, the symbols for peace and war representing the first 13 states. The Eagle's head is turned toward the olive branch, indicating our desire for peace.

On the Eagle's chest is a shield, a warrior's primary piece of defensive equipment. The 13 alternating red (courage and fortitude) and white (peace and sincerity) bars on the shield represent the 13 original colonies. The chief, in blue, represents their strength, vigilance and perseverance. The chief holds thirteen six-pointed stars, a reference to the six-pointed design from General George Washington's personal flag. This flag was flown during his winter encampment at Valley Forge. General Washington had a personal protection guard, which consisted of a few handpicked men from each of the colonies. This special guard carried these colors. The symbols from the Washington Flag are a reminder of the efforts of the Continental Army, which served as our Nation's first military organization to free and protect the homeland, and relate their great undertaking to the task set before us in the defense of North America.

A depiction of the United States Northern Command's Area of Responsibility (AOR) is in the background, shielded by the Eagle. On the AOR are three stars, a remembrance of each of the sites of the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001. These attacks gave impetus to the formation of U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM). The stars are gold, a symbol of those who lost their lives. During the early years of World War I, a service banner was hung in the window of homes where there was a family member in the war. A Blue Star on the banner represented each family member. As the war progressed and men were killed or wounded in combat, and/or died of their wounds or disease, there came to be accepted usage of the Gold Star. This Gold Star was substituted and superimposed upon the Blue Star in such a manner as to entirely cover it. The Gold Star accorded the rightful honor and glory to the person for giving the supreme sacrifice to his country.

The five stars at the top of the crest represent the five services: United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. The stars are eight-pointed, representing the eight points on a compass and symbolizing our mission to counter the global threat of terrorism. The stars are lined up over the AOR, depicting the umbrella of protection that USNORTHCOM provides to North America.

U.S. Northern Command Leaders

COMMANDERS*

General Ralph E. Eberhart, USAF	1 October 2002 – 5 November 2004
Admiral Thomas J. Keating, USN	5 November 2004 – 23 March 2007
General Victor E. Renuart, USAF	23 March 2007 – 19 May 2010
Admiral James A. Winnefeld, Jr., USN	19 May 2010 – 3 August 2011
General Charles H. Jacoby, Jr., USA	3 August 2011 – November 2014
Admiral William "Bill" Gortney, USN	5 December 2014 - present

* Commander (CDR), USNORTHCOM was dual hatted as CDR, North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), however, the Deputy Commander of USNORTHCOM was not dual hatted.

DEPUTY COMMANDERS

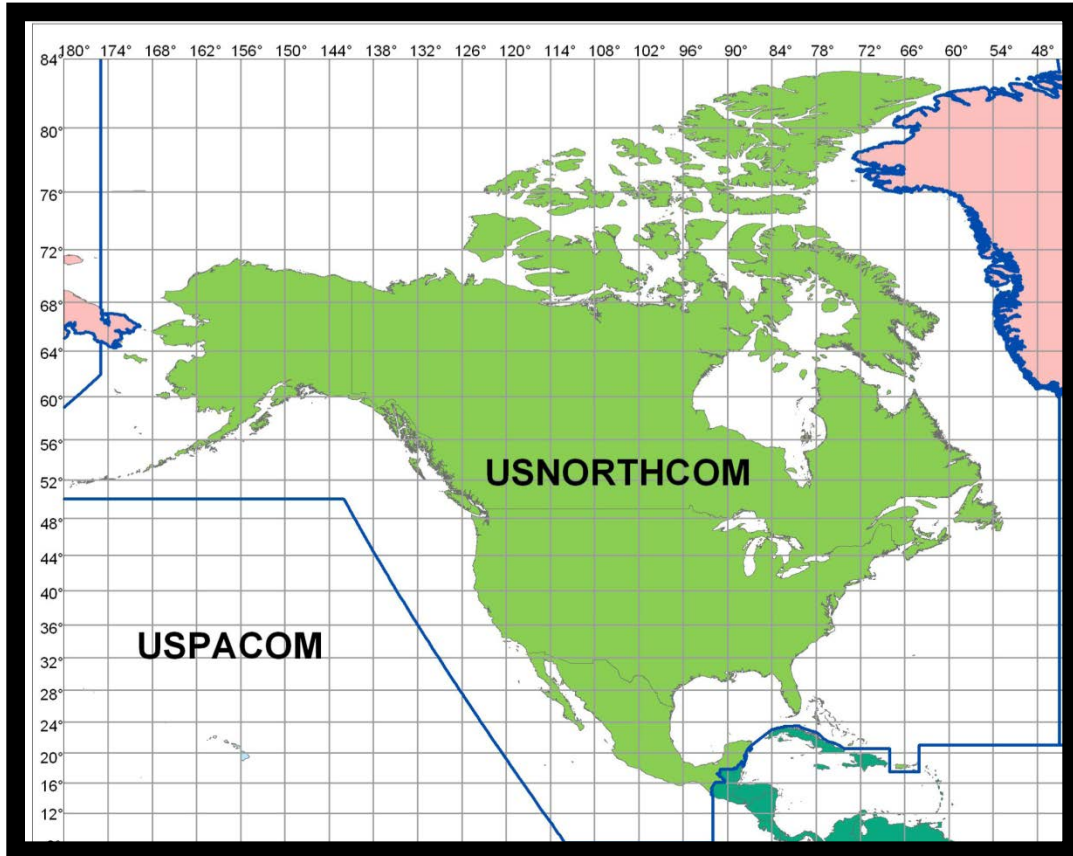
LTG Edward G. Anderson, III, USA	1 October 2002 – 25 June 2004
MG Raymond F. Rees, USA	25 June 2004 – 22 July 2004
LTG Joseph R. Inge, USA	22 July 2004 – 29 May 2007
LTG William C. Webster, USA	29 May 2007 – 16 January 2009
LTG H. Steven Blum, USA	16 January 2009 – 27 May 2010
Vacant	27 May 2010 – 3 October 2010
LTG Frank J. Grass, USA	3 October 2010 – 27 August 2012
Lt Gen Michael D. Dubie, USAF	27 August 2012 – 31 July 2015
LTG Daniel R. Hokanson, USA	15 August 2015 - present

COMMAND SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER

CMSgt Kevin D. Estrem, USAF	1 October 2002 – 12 January 2004
SgtMaj Dennis S. Fry, USMC	12 January 2004 – 26 March 2007
CSM Daniel Wood, USA	26 March 2007 – 21 May 2009
CMSgt William A. Ursy, USAF	21 May 2009 – 15 September 2011
CSM Robert A. Winzenried, USA	15 September 2011 – 19 September 2014
FLTCM Terrence L. Molidor, USN	4 November 2014 - present

U.S. Northern Command Area of Responsibility

As of 31 December 2012



U.S. Northern Command Organization

As of 31 December 2012

Headquarters, United States Northern Command

- Personnel and Manpower Directorate (J1)
- Intelligence Directorate (J2)
- Operations Directorate (J3)
- Logistics and Operations Directorate (J4)
- Strategy, Policy, and Plans Directorate (J5)
- Command Control Systems Directorate (J6)
- Training and Exercise Directorate (J7)
- Programs, Resources, and Analysis Directorate (J8)
- Interagency Coordination Directorate (J9)
- Science and Technology Directorate (S&T)
- Special Staff

Subordinate Headquarters

- Joint Task Force Alaska (JTF-AK), Elmendorf AFB, AK
- Joint Task Force Civil Support (JTF-CS), Fort Monroe, VA
- Joint Task Force North (JTF-N) Fort Bliss, TX
- Joint Force Headquarters National Capitol Region (JFHQ-NCR), Washington, D.C.

Service Components

- Army North (ARNORTH), Headquarters, Fifth Army, Fort Sam Houston, TX
- Marine Forces North (MARFORNORTH), Headquarters, Marine Forces Reserve, New Orleans, LA
- Air Forces North (AFNORTH), Headquarters, First Air Force, Tyndall AFB, FL
- Naval Forces North (NAVNORTH), Headquarters, Fleet Forces Command (FFC), Norfolk, VA.

- Special Operations Command North (SOCNORTH), Headquarters, Peterson AFB, CO

U.S. Northern Command Notable Responses

Hurricane Lili – October 2002
Space Shuttle Colombia Disaster – February 2003
Hurricane Isabel – September 2003
Wildfire Season – 2003
Hurricane Charley – August 2004
Hurricane Frances – September 2004
Hurricane Ivan – September 2004
Western Wildfires – 2004
Hurricane Katrina – August 2005
Hurricane Rita – September 2005
H1N5 Pandemic Influenza – 2007
Minneapolis Interstate 35 Bridge Collapse – August 2007
Western Wildfires – July 2007
California Wildfires – October-November 2007
Central States Flooding – March 2008
California Wildfires – June-August 2008
Hurricanes Gustav and Hanna – August 2008
Hurricane Ike – September 2008
H1N1 Pandemic Influenza – 2009
Haiti Earthquake – Operation Unified Response – January 2010
Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill – April-August 2010
Hurricane Sandy Response – October-December 2012

USNORTHCOM/HO