

WELCOME TO THULE

"THE TOP OF THE WORLD"

Congratulations on your assignment to Thule Air Base, Greenland! You'll soon find out why so many people say this is the best isolated/remote tour for an Air Force member. While that may take some time for you to believe, it is a fact. Quality of life and the pride and professionalism of the base will soon show you why your new assignment will be a truly outstanding one. By thoroughly reading the following guide we hope you will find the information extremely valuable in assisting you in your transition process to Thule.

OVERVIEW

As you travel through Baltimore/Washington International Airport on your permanent change of station, carry this information package with you. **Please don't travel in uniform unless directed to.**

When you arrive at Thule, you will be greeted on the flight line by the base commander, superintendent, first sergeant, chaplain and unit commanders. Once inside the terminal you will need a copy of your PCS orders and your common access card. You will receive a number of briefings while your bags are unloaded. After you receive your bags you will be greeted by your sponsor.

Upon arrival, you will be scheduled for the Commander's Arctic Start newcomer orientation, which is normally held the next day (Friday) of each week. At that time you'll receive more information from various base agencies.

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WHERE IS THULE?

Thule is the United States Department of Defense's northernmost installation - (76 32' north latitude, 68 50' west longitude) located 750 miles north of the Arctic Circle, and 947 miles south of the North Pole on the northwest side of the island of Greenland. It is approximately 550 miles east of the North Magnetic Pole.

Located between the Arctic and Atlantic Oceans, Greenland is the world's largest island. The term Greenland is "Kalaallit Nanaat" in the Inuit language. It is a country within the Kingdom of Denmark and is inhabited by approximately 56,000 people. The arctic, referred to as a "cold desert," gets very little precipitation annually. The name "Arctic," derived from the Greek word "arktos," meaning "bear," refers to the constellation Ursa Major, or Great Bear, which appears prominently in the northern sky.

"Thule" comes from the Latin word with the same spelling and meaning "northernmost part of the habitable world." Greenland covers nearly 840,000 square miles; more than 80 percent is covered either by the ice cap or smaller glaciers. According to scientific measurements, the greatest thickness of the ice cap is about 6,500 feet. To a depth of about 60 feet, the cap is comprised of compressed snow; the top layers are dry and crusty, creating fine, powdered snow. Permafrost below and around the ice cap dictate that buildings be constructed off the ground or have air corridors separating the buildings from the ground. Otherwise the heat from inside the buildings melts the cap, and the buildings sink—a lesson learned the hard way during the life of Thule AB.

Thule is a land of contrasts. The perimeter of Greenland consists mainly of mountains. Glaciers flow down these mountains through deep valleys to the sea. The highest peaks, the Gunnbjom Mountains, on the eastern coast of the island rise over 12,000 feet. The Thule Defense Area, created by an agreement signed April 27, 1951, covers approximately 254 square miles. Thule is located in a coastal valley approximately four miles from the entrance of North Star Bay on Greenland's west coast. The bay is part of Baffin Bay which extends to the southern part of Ellesmere Island 140 miles west of Thule. The base is built on a broad and rather flat glacial valley floor between two bedrock ridges, North and South Mountains. The valley slopes gently to the east-southeast until it meets an ice cap, the Great Land Glacier, about 10 miles inland.

Thule is locked in by ice nine months out of the year. Each summer a Canadian Icebreaker ship pushes through the ice in North Star Bay to clear a path for American, Canadian and Danish cargo ships. This marks the opening of a very short "port season," during which these ships bring in the installation's annual bulk resupply of fuel, food, cargo and construction material. The bay will be frozen again by mid-October, isolating the installation to air or dogsled access only.

There is not a local town. The closest Inuit, native Eskimo, village, Qaanaaq, is located 65 miles away. There is also not an off-base area except for the bay, the ice cap and what appears to be thousands of miles of rocks and/or ice.

The Thule area is barren most of the year although from June to September the snow melts and arctic tundra plant life such as poppies, cotton, mosses, and a variety of colorful flowers bloom. The extremely cold climate means a limited variety of wild animals. Around the base you are likely to see arctic fox and arctic hares on a regular basis. Polar bears, seals and musk ox are also potential visitors to the area.

During the summer, several varieties of birds, to include peregrine falcons, will call Thule home. Unfortunately, the summer will also bring out swarms of mosquitos. Locals refer to them as the "Greenlandic Air Force," so bring mosquito repellent. In southern Greenland, vegetation and wildlife are more varied and abundant. If interested, the community center has a collection of books that will tell you more about this region, the arctic and its people.

WHY DOES THULE EXIST TODAY?

Thule exists today as a result of agreements between the United States and the Kingdom of Denmark specifically to address mutual defense. Strategically, Thule's "Top of the World" vantage point enables the Air Force core function of space superiority. Thule supports missile warning, missile defense and space surveillance missions from the solid-state phased-array radar operated by the 12th Space Warning Squadron and satellite command and control through the Thule tracking station, one of seven remote tracking stations in the Air Force Satellite Control Network operated by the 23rd Space Operations Squadron, Detachment 1.

Although the base population expands in the summer, with exercises, expeditions, contractors, and visitors, normal population is approximately 650 consisting of Danish, Greenlandic, Canadians, and American military and civilians.

WHAT'S AT THULE: CURRENT ORGANIZATIONS

821st AIR BASE GROUP

The mission of the 821st Air Base Group is to enable force projection, space superiority and scientific research in the arctic region for our nation and allies through integrated base support and defense operations.

821st ABG operates not only the Department of Defense's northernmost installation but is also the world's northernmost deep-water seaport. It also provides a unique platform for arctic training, international scientific research, and environmental programs. The 821st ABG commanding officer is the senior U.S. government representative on the island of Greenland and is responsible for interfacing with the Kingdom of Denmark and the U.S. Embassy in Copenhagen on a wide variety of international agreements and mutual issues of defense and foreign affairs. The commander is also the magistrate for all U.S. military on Thule.

821st SUPPORT SQUADRON

The mission of the 821st Support Squadron is to provide engineering, medical, communication, logistics, services and airfield operations support to the 821st ABG and tenant organizations. Most personnel within the squadron serve as Contract Officer's Representatives for the contracts held by Vectrus Services AE and BAE.

821st SECURITY FORCES SQUADRON

The mission of the 821st Security Forces Squadron is to provide installation defense, operational security and antiterrorism programs in coordination with local Danish police forces.

12th SPACE WARNING SQUADRON

The 12th Space Warning Squadron mission is to conduct continuous, real-time missile warning and missile defense vital to the security of North America; detect and track earth-orbiting objects in support of space situational awareness; and care for and develop disciplined and innovative Airmen. 12th SWS crews operate the Upgraded Early Warning Radar, a phased-array radar which continuously reports attack assessments of sea-launched and intercontinental ballistic missile threats to North America and the President, Secretary of Defense, Joint Chief of Staff, U.S. Strategic Command Missile Warning Center and North American Aerospace Defense Command/ U.S. Northern Command. The radar simultaneously and automatically detects, characterizes and relays track data needed to support the engagement of Ground-based Mid-course Interceptors directed by Joint Functional Component Command for Integrated Missile Defense of ballistic missiles targeting North America. Additionally, the radar is used to detect, track, and identify earth-orbiting objects in support of Air Force Space Command's space surveillance mission.

COMPTROLLER

The comptroller function at Thule offers a full range of services. Temporary duty assignment and PCS travel vouchers are computed and paid; allotments can be started, stopped, or changed; basic allowance for quarters recertifications can be accomplished; and advance military and travel pay can be received. **THERE ARE NO BANKING FACILITIES or ATM MACHINES** at Thule, so you must take care of your banking needs before arriving. Personal checks are not cashed at finance; however, checks can be cashed at the Base Exchange and Consolidated Club. Additionally, each military member is required to have a military government travel charge card for travel. It is highly recommended that you set up an internet banking account prior to departing for Thule. USAA can set up a pin with your credit card. USAA debit cards do not work with the meal card machines. You can pull cash from Vectrus Headquarters, below is their operating hours.

Vectrus Operating Hours:

Monday - Closed
Tuesday - 0800-1600

Wednesday - Closed
Thursday - 0600-1700
Friday - 0800-1500

AIR FORCE POST OFFICE

The Air Force Post Office provides a number of services to suit your needs while here at Thule. These include the purchase of postal money orders, postage stamps, and parcel mailing. Express mail is not an option due to our location and availability of flights. Mail has an average time frame of two to three weeks before reaching its final destination from here. For mail coming to Thule, a trend of seven to ten days is expected.

Air Force Post Office Operating Hours:

Monday - 0800-1600
Tuesday - 0800-1415
Wednesday - 0800-1600
Thursday - 1230-1630
Friday - 0900-1630
Weekends - Closed

CHAPEL

The Thule Chapel provides a wide range of religious programs for the base community through a resident Air Force chaplain and chaplain's assistant. Worship services, a variety of Bible studies and adult education forums are offered weekly. Laity-led advisory councils help design, develop, and carry out the many activities provided.

The chapel sponsors the Airman's Ministry Center's "Ice Cave," an alcohol free environment where all Airmen can come together and enjoy free interlinked gaming systems (X-box 360, PlayStation 4, Playstation VR and Wii), free pizza and fellowship. The Ice Cave hosts periodic gaming tournaments and provides a great volunteer opportunity for gaming enthusiasts.

Other special activities include volunteer opportunities, confidential counseling, baptism, pre-marital, marital, and family counseling, marriage and family enrichment programs, and various referral resources. The chapel also co-sponsors two significant base-wide functions: Armed Forces Day and Operation JULEMAND.

Armed Forces Week is held during the Easter timeframe on the frozen surface of North Star Bay. Danes and Americans participate with Greenlandic natives who travel up to 200 miles by dog sled to celebrate the day long activities that include mukluk hockey, craft sales, and the ever-popular dog sled races. Services supervise the sports activities and provide a special meal at the Top of the World Club.

Operation JULEMAND (which means "Christmas Man" in Danish) is over a 50 year humanitarian program organized and supported by the Thule personnel to give back to the Greenlandic community. Money raised goes to support programs for youth activities

as well as to purchase children's Christmas gifts for the Thule district villages. Functions are held throughout the year to support the purchase of these gifts, sports equipment, etc.

MEDICAL

The Thule hospital consists of a contract and military staff that provide medical care for the base populace as well as the surrounding communities. The scope of care includes primary care, 24-hour emergency services, general surgery, immunizations, laboratory, radiology, pharmacy, physical exams and limited dental care. If you have special medication requirements, bring a six-month supply with you to Thule and request refills at the hospital one month in advance, due to the extensive supply chain lead times.

OPERATING HOURS:

Monday – Friday 0700-1330

ASSOCIATE UNITS

DETACHMENT 1, 23rd SPACE OPERATIONS SQUADRON, 50th SPACE WING

23rd Space Operations Squadron Detachment 1 is one of seven a Remote Tracking Stations in the Air Force Satellite Control Network. Located approximately 3.5 miles NE of Thule main base, the AFSCN node provides a shared use system to command and control over 170 satellites for the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Government and our allies. Det-1 reports to the 23rd SOPS Squadron at New Boston Air Force Station, New Hampshire, which in-turn reports to the 50th Network Operations Group and the 50th Space Wing, both located at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado.

CONTRACTOR ORGANIZATIONS:

Vectrus Services AS

Vectrus Services AS employs approximately 400 Danish, Greenlandic, and American personnel. It is the largest single organization represented at Thule. They perform a variety of tasks, including the operation and maintenance of all utility plants, pavements and grounds, engineering and planning, dining halls, recreational services, custodial services, operation and maintenance of vehicles, non-sensitive communications, fire protection, housing, supply, and medical services.

SES Government Solutions

They provide most communications in and out of Thule. Their four employees manage, maintain, and operate two satellite terminals.

INDYNE

Employing approximately 46 American contractors, BAE Systems manages, operates, maintains, and logistically supports the installation's sensitive communications, Precision Measurement Equipment Laboratory, and 12th Space Warning Squadron Upgraded Early Warning radar.

HARRIS

The Harris Corporation has approximately 24 employees at Thule, who manage, operate, and maintain mission equipment at Det-1.

GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES:

GREENLAND HOME RULE/AIRPORT AUTHORITY

The Greenland Home Rule/Airport Authority representative is responsible for all Greenlandic passengers traveling to and from the Thule district. They also manage the Danish Post Office, Danish Bank, and Greenland Souvenir Shop, the Danish Mall where you can buy reindeer soap stone carvings, postcards, Danish stamps, currency, and more. During port season, they handle Greenland and Danish shipping activities for the base. One Greenland Air helicopter is the only aircraft permanently assigned to the base.

DANISH LIAISON OFFICER

Greenland is one of three countries in the Kingdom of Denmark. Due to the population and limited gross domestic product of Greenland, most federated services are provided by Denmark, to include national defense. There is a Danish Liaison Officer and a Danish Police Inspector on base. They work directly with the base commanders to ensure coordinated operations with the host country.

The DLO, a Lieutenant Colonel in the Danish Army, is Denmark's military representative at Thule. He is the link between 821st ABG commanding officer and the Commander of Danish Joint Arctic Command stationed at Nuuk in the capital of Greenland. He assists the base commander in all matters pertaining to Greenland and Greenlandic and Danish authorities. He is the liaison between the base population, the base authorities and the Inuit population in the district, which consists of four villages and a population of about 900 people. He assists the Danish base population in all matters related to a normal society, i.e. taxes, customs, social welfare, health care, and justice-of-the-peace functions, marriages, etc... He checks entry permits and makes security checks on arriving/ departing passengers on flights between Thule and Copenhagen.

The DLO also provides the radio link for Station Nord, a small meteorological station situated on a runway on the northeast coast of Greenland. He supplies them with various provisions as well as coordinating the annual refueling mission of Station Nord, Operation NORTHERN FALCON. It is kept open year round by a five personnel crew from the Danish Armed Forces. The station is used as an emergency runway for both civilian and military aircraft and as a gateway to northern Greenland.

DANISH POLICE INSPECTOR

The Danish Police Inspector is the law enforcement for the approximately 1,800 people, Avanersuaq Kommunia and all non-US military members of Thule, and 220,000 square miles of northern Greenland. He serves as a magistrate for the Ministry of Justice for the Kingdom of Denmark, the Chief Constable is located in Nuuk, and is part of the police in Greenland, but without the powers of a Justice of the Peace. He handles investigations and processes indictments for crimes, and is responsible for Search and Rescue in all settlements in the northern quarter of Greenland. He serves separation and divorce decrees, processes passports and drivers licenses for Danish nationals, serves as prosecutor in Greenland's criminal courts, and acts as a park ranger in the wildlife preserves.

BASE SERVICES:

BASE EXCHANGE/BARBER SHOP

Though small in comparison to a stateside exchange, you will find the Army and Air Force Exchange Exchange offers a wide selection of items. They have a variety of American and Danish food items as well as beverages, vitamins, personal care items, cleaning and laundry supplies, paper products, small electronics, DVDs, and limited clothing items. Some military clothing items that are available include tan t-shirts, boot blousing items, as well as women's hair products such as hairbands, clips, etc... Other options are available, if you do not find them at the store, via customer convenience orders, catalog orders and on-line ordering. Check cashing is available for authorized military identification cardholders and limited to current AAFES policies. Debit card cash advances are offered as well, for a limited amount. All major credit cards are accepted as well as the Military Star card.

The AAFES Barbershop, located in The Exchange, is able to handle most of your hair care needs from haircuts to styling and perms.

AAFES HOURS:

Monday	-	0700-2000
Tuesday	-	0700-2000
Wednesday	-	0700-2000
Thursday	-	0700-2000
Friday	-	0700-2000
Saturday	-	1000-1900
Sunday	-	1200-1600

*Note: For high ticket items, i.e. flat screen TVs, boomboxes etc..., that are not stocked at your local BX, speak to the managers and they will accommodate your request. You can also order from AAFES online and have the product sent to Thule.

To subsidize AAFES, there is also the Danish Deli, located in the Dundas Restaurant

DANISH DELI HOURS:	LUNCH	DINNER
Monday -	Closed	Closed
Tuesday -	1100-1330	1530-1800
Wednesday -	1100-1330	1530-1800
Thursday -	1100-1330	1530-1800
Friday -	1100-1330	1530-1800
Saturday -	0900-1400	Closed
Sunday -	Closed	Closed

COMMISSARY

There is no commissary at Thule. The Exchange does offer a limited selection of fruits, vegetables and frozen food items. There is also a food warehouse in Building 200 but its main function is to serve as support for the dining hall, Top of the World Club, and The Exchange. Individuals may order bulk food items but realize this is a warehouse not a regular commissary store.

FOOD SERVICES

Thule has three dining facilities. The largest is the Dundas Buffett Restaurant located on main base, but there are satellite facilities at 12th SWS and Det-1. Located within Dundas Restaurant there is a small Danish Deli with fresh cuts of meats, and other assorted grocery items. Meals are served three times daily, seven days a week. Special meals are prepared on major holidays. NOTE: Dining Facilities & Dundas Restaurant do not offer a Gluten Free menu.

LAUNDRY/DRY CLEANING/TAILORING

Thule Services offers complete laundry, without starch, dry cleaning and tailoring services with a centralized drop-off and pick-up point. Most items are ready within two to five days. Additionally, there are washer and dryer units located on each floor of the living quarters. There is an ironing board on each floor of the living quarters if you choose to iron your clothing.

LAUNDRY HOURS:

Monday – Friday	1000-1200	1400-1500
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LODGING

The North Star Inn, Building 100, provides living quarters to transient personnel. Sundry items, beverages and snacks are available. There are private phones and computer hook-ups available in each room. The Inn is located two blocks from Dundas Buffet Restaurant. Each floor has microwave ovens and washers and dryers. Cash, checks, and Visa/Master Card are authorized for payment. Wi-Fi is also available.

WHAT'S THE WEATHER AND ENVIRONMENT REALLY LIKE AT THULE?

WHAT WEATHER WILL YOU FIND AND WHAT WILL YOU SEE ONCE YOU ARRIVE AT THULE?

One of the first things new arrivals notice at Thule is the clean, crisp air. Yes, it is cold up here, but because of the dry climate it may not appear as cold as it actually is. Remember that Thule is in the Arctic, so sudden, drastic weather changes will occur.

Here at Thule you should dress properly for the cold but also realize that you will go from a warm building to a warm vehicle to a warm building. The majority of newcomers use the base taxi. When the weather is too harsh, for example, harsh winter storms, impassable roads, etc., you are required to stay in your quarters. The worst winter storm conditions can last up to three full days. There are periods during the summer months that you will actually see people walking outside in shorts and short sleeve shirts. There are other days when only a windbreaker may be needed.

Temperatures at Thule range from minus 30 to 50 degrees Fahrenheit. It has reached a high of 68 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer and has dropped to minus 47 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter. Winds of 30 knots are common during arctic winters, sometimes peaking out at 100 knots or more. The dry, Arctic air is extreme: static electricity and dried out skin occur quickly and often during winter due to very low absolute humidity, despite what the relative humidity percentages may be for the day. So you may want to pack a humidifier. Thule receives an average of 28.2 inches of snow and 4.4 inches of rain annually. The coldest temperatures hit at the same time the sun comes up over South Mountain, late February to early March.

For three months, beginning in late November, the sun is below the horizon, gradually changing from twilight to 24 hours of darkness. When the sun returns in late February you gain 20-40 minutes of daylight per day until late April when it remains above the horizon for 24 hours a day for nearly four months. The summer sun is very bright and dark, polarized sunglasses are highly recommended. In mid-August, you will witness the first sunset since April, and from that point on you receive 20 to 40 more minutes of darkness per day until November when again you have 24 hours of darkness with the darkest and shortest day of the year being Dec. 21. In the late spring, most of the snow from the shore of North Star Bay to the edge of the ice cap usually disappears. Tundra, base rock, and a thin layer of powdery dust remain. This marks the beginning of Thule's mud season. A good pair of waterproof hiking boots are recommended.

During the summer months, May 15 – Sept. 14, off-base travel is authorized, though always with a buddy, for "Thule Tripping." You will quickly learn that distances are deceiving. Mountain peaks and islands that are 15 to 30 miles distant look as though they are just a short walk away. Information is available at the Community Center about many off-base sites to visit and photograph.

During the winter season, Sept. 15 – May 14, persistent high winds from winter storms moving through north Greenland blow snow from the ice cap and cause a local weather phenomenon known as "storm conditions." These storms are a deadly combination of wind, snow, and sub-zero temperatures. The wind is channeled into the valley where Thule is located. The valley amplifies the wind, and it increases in velocity. The loose snow is picked up by the high winds and can severely restrict visibility.

****During a storm in March 1972, the anemometer on a Storm Shelter #7, recorded the 2nd highest wind velocity ever on earth: 207 mph.****

All year long, Thule weather is like weather in many northern states: unpredictable. It can rain, sleet, snow, and be very sunny and relatively warm all in one 24-hour period. **Always be prepared, and expect the unexpected.**

For your protection, storm shelters and phase shacks are located at short intervals along the roads leading to off-base worksite locations. Each shelter is heated and stocked with emergency food, water, bedding, and a telephone. They are for use by anyone caught in a sudden storm condition. However, these shelters are for emergency use only.

ARCTIC SURVIVAL GEAR

You will be issued storm gear when you arrive, including a parka, muckluks, gloves, thermal underwear, wool socks, facemasks and iron pants, or very warm ski pants. It is intended to extend your outdoor survivability long enough for you to seek proper shelter. During dark season, wear of the parka with its integrated reflective material is advisable to remain visible to vehicle drivers. It is important to practice "donning" and "doffing" your arctic gear just as you would chemical warfare gear. The wrong time to learn how to wear your gear is when you really need to wear it.

FROSTBITE

Wind chill greatly increases the potential for frostbite. In the winter, exposed skin can be frostbitten in less than one minute. If the symptoms are ignored and untreated, it can result in permanent nerve and muscle damage, up to and including the need for amputation.

THERE IS NOTHING TO DO HERE: WRONG!

Thule offers a wide variety of services and has plenty to keep you busy for more than the length of your tour.

BOWLING CENTER

The Bowling Center and Fitness Center are collocated in Building 608. The Bowling

Center has eight lanes and a small snack bar, cash only. Programs include leagues, tournaments, and open bowling. You can bring your own bowling ball, however, services is not responsible for any damages that may occur to your equipment. Lockers are available for rent.

BOWLING CENTER HOURS:

Monday – Tuesday	-	Closed
Wednesday	-	1700-2100
Thursday	-	1700-2100
Friday	-	1600-2300
Saturday	-	1200-2300
Sunday	-	1200-2100

CONSOLIDATED CLUB

Thule offers membership at our all ranks club to all who live at Thule, called the "Top of the World" Club, it offers a full service restaurant, lounge, game/slot machine room, delivery service, check cashing, and ballroom with a light, sound, and video system. The restaurant is open various hours throughout the week for lunch and dinner.

For special events, the club sponsors many different types of functions: special dinner meals, live entertainment, DJs, and Armed Forces Entertainment. Throughout the year special events, dinners and parties take place. Your annual membership brings discount certificates and access to membership events

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES CENTER

The Community Activities Center in Building 362 offers a wide range of activities for Thule residents. It features a video movie library with several thousand titles, a free 40-person theater, a free game room, with pool, foosball, pinball machines, video games, air hockey, 6-in-1 Sports simulator, free hot coffee and hot chocolate bar, reading area, board games, an internet-café with Wi-Fi and four computers for customer use. You can purchase beverages and snacks from Thule’s own Café Cool. During the winter season, you’ll be able to experience a variety of monthly tournaments. In the summer many special programs and tours are provided.

If you like to read a good book, the Community Center is also home to a small library. It offers English books, both fiction and non-fiction, with a collection of Danish and Greenlandic titles.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES CENTER HOURS:

Monday - Friday	-	1000-1100	1200-2100
Saturday	-	1000-1100	1200-2100
Sunday	-	1000-1100	1200-2100

CREATIVITY ROOM

The Creativity Room located in Building 362 currently offers engraving, digital photo shop with digital photo auditors, digital photo printing, scanning, digital camera support, and a CD burner for use. Supplies are available for purchase. There is an engraver to make plaques for gifts, going away, quarterly awards, etc. We also have a lapidary for you to cut and polish a variety of rocks you find around the area.

CREATIVITY ROOM HOURS:

Monday – Friday - 1600-2000
Saturday – Sunday - 1230-2000

CAFÉ COOL HOURS:

Monday – Friday - 0730-1000
Saturday – Sunday - 1230-2000

FITNESS AND SPORTS CENTER

The base Fitness Center is one of the best equipped facilities in the Air Force and is the hub for year-round programs in physical conditioning for both organized group activities and self-directed programs. This facility is open 24-hours a day. The main floor offers basketball, badminton, volleyball, tennis, aerobics, ping pong, soccer, and many other sports. It has a racquetball/handball/squash court, a spinning court, a rock climbing wall/cross fit room, and an aerobic room. Bring a swimsuit and goggles for our endless pool!

The second floor area includes many types of electronic cardiovascular equipment: treadmills, bikes, stair masters, and rowing machines. You will also find a fully equipped Nautilus room and a superb Cybex free weight room. Both the men's and women's locker rooms have saunas and showers. Lockers are available for those who utilize the gym regularly. Outdoors we have a softball field, so bring a mitt for the 4th of July softball tournament. Sports tournaments are held throughout the year.

NOTE 1: There is no outdoor or indoor track available at Thule. You are exempt from the aerobic portion of the Air Force Physical Fitness Test while assigned to Thule.

NOTE 2: Outdoor shoes are not allowed in the gym. Bring two pairs of athletic shoes, one for outdoor use and one for indoor use.

FITNESS CENTER HOURS:

Monday - Friday - 1000-1100 1200-2100
Saturday - 1000-1100 1200-2100
Sunday - 1000-1100 1200-2100

OUTDOOR RECREATION

In addition to the scheduled outdoor activities, rental equipment is available for free. Checkout mountain bikes, skis, snowboards, hiking, camping supplies, sports equipment, and grills. Tell a friend where you are going, and take a buddy or two to enjoy the splendor of the Thule wilderness. Depending on the season, you may wish to go cross country skiing to the bay, hiking up Mt. Dundas or even mountain bike the 13 miles to 12th SWS. There are plenty of scenic sites to visit, take photos, or simply relax away from the main base. Remember to bring a good camera or Go-Pro.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Throughout the year there are a variety of special programs to make your tour more memorable. There is the annual polar bear swim in North Star Bay, complete with certificate of participation, fun runs, picnics, tournaments, racquetball, pool, Mukluk hockey, basketball, volleyball, softball, numerous tours, and hikes to various sites around Thule. Participate in the annual Greenlandic Day, Operation JULEMAND events, Armed Forces Day, and much, much more.

As you can see there is a lot of outdoor activities. We recommend bringing a good waterproof pair of hiking boots, some outdoor athletic pants (not jeans), a light jacket and a backpack.

IN ADDITION

During your tour, you will undoubtedly go "Thule-Tripping," that is, to join others and see what else is on the base, as well as travel off base. Services will provide you with numerous tour opportunities and a map of sites. A separate services guide will detail those various historical and picturesque points to visit, learn about, and capture on film or video.

Points to visit include base facilities, DeLong Pier, Signpost, Crescent Lake, Nike Hercules Batteries – A, B, C and D (launch and control), 12th SWS, Det-1, North Mountain, South Mountain, P, Pingarssuit, Mountain, and Camp Tuto. In addition there are numerous memorials and scenic sites: the polar icecap, the waterfall, Dundas Mountain, Dundas Village, Dundas Beach, Fox Valley, Glacier Point, Sparum Lake and Camp Century's Ice Bridge, just to name a few. During Armed Forces day, you may even get an opportunity to take a dog sled team ride out on the frozen bay.

And of course you can take the time to talk with members of the various expeditions and survey teams that use Thule as their main base, i.e. NASA, Polar Associates, Area/Iceshelf (underwater exploration team), geological survey teams, Peregrine Foundation, and more.

You can also volunteer to assist with capturing even more of Thule's history and records or help with chapel activities. If necessary, you could pass the time as a referee, umpire, coach, scorekeeper, aerobics instructor, carpenter, computer graphics artist, line

dancing instructor, amusement machine repair person or even a DJ.

With a wide and unending variety of activities, both programmed and unprogrammed, you will find that there is more than enough to keep you busy on your tour.

WHICH ACTIVITIES WILL YOU DO?

As you think about your tour, begin to determine what you want to do at Thule.

Examples:

Read a book a month; go to the fitness center and really get into shape; improve your bowling average; learn to play Danish pool; run the Thule Marathon; hike to the glaciers; help in the Dundas community activities; go mountain bike riding; win at TOW club bingo; go backpacking or camping; take a college course; find unique rocks and use them for a gift; ride a dog sled during the Armed Forces Day events; join intramurals; take Danish language lessons; improve your pool game, ping pong, pinball, foosball, or air hockey talents; take recreation center guided tours; help with chapel activities; do several self-tours: North Mountain/South Mountain/Dundas/Glacier Point/Nike Launch sites/P- Mountain/Camp Tuto; build a model; engrave a plaque; improve your golf game; dine at the TOW club; read about the Inuit culture; attend aerobic classes; work at the TOW, AAFES, or Services; and more. More ideas are being created weekly... **there is a lot to do at Thule!**

GETTING READY FOR YOUR PCS

So now that you have all this great information about your upcoming Thule adventure, what do you need to do? To make a positive transition, we suggest you read the following, then make a list of things to bring, people to contact, and things to ask your sponsor.

UNIFORM

The Uniform of the Day is ABUs or OCPs. You will be issued Arctic ABU combat boots for the winter season but we recommend bringing an additional pair you don't mind getting dirty during the muddy conditions in the summer. Although on a remote, be advised that Thule is a very popular installation for Distinguished Visitors. There are numerous formal event opportunities such as DV dinners and banquets that include Dining-In, Dining-Out, Annual Award's, Senior Non-commissioned Officer Induction, and more. For that reason, you will need not only your service dress uniform but also your mess dress or semi-formal uniform.

You should also bring at least one civilian semi-formal outfit for the holiday party and other dinners. **NOTE:** There is not a military clothing sales store at Thule. Please make sure that all uniform items fit and are updated prior to your arrival or bring projected rank/ribbons with you. Don't forget to bring your white shirt for the semi-formal uniform.

ARCTIC CLOTHING

During your first week you will be issued arctic gear consisting of a parka, mukluks, long underwear, outdoor winter pants, gloves/mittens, mask, wool socks, arctic bomber hat, and so forth. Civilians may receive limited arctic gear. Also bring a civilian winter coat, gloves, a light jacket for summer, a good pair of waterproof hiking boots, sunglasses, and civilian attire for special functions. All personnel are required to wear highly visible reflective material during all hours of darkness or poor visibility, to include fog, rain or snow, so it is recommended to bring a reflective belt, or two.

DENTAL

There is no dentist residing on Thule. However, a Danish dentist comes up quarterly for one week and can be seen on an emergency basis. It is recommended to get your dental needs taken care of before you leave your current base!)

EDUCATION OFFICE

Please ensure your education records are up-to-date prior to departing your current duty station. When you arrive at Thule, make sure you transfer your education center to Peterson Air Force Base. Currently, Thule doesn't have an education center, but does have a Learning Center and does have the capability to provide CLEP/DANTES exams.

EMERGENCIES

If a family member has a need to contact you at Thule, the commercial telephone number to the Thule Base Operator is (719) 474-3840 or DSN 629-3840. The calling party will have to ask the operator for your extension and the purpose of the call, as all calls go through a central switchboard. Keep in mind that if you need to depart Thule for any emergency situation, it may take up to a week due to the once a week rotator flight and seating availability.

LEGAL SERVICES

Legal services are not available at Thule , although notary service and powers of attorney are performed by a designated individual. You should complete all necessary powers of attorney, wills, etc..., prior to arriving at Thule. You can receive limited telephonic legal assistance through the legal office at Peterson Air Force Base. If you participate in the dependent care program, please bring copies of all powers of attorney with you.

NOTE: Remember, you will have to file your taxes as well. We have a tax team from Peterson Air Force Base that travels to Thule to assist.

MAILING ADDRESS

Once you have your orders, email a copy of them to your sponsor, and he/she will get you an APO box number so you can let everyone know your new address. Once on station you will complete the official paperwork. Your mailing address will be:

(Rank/Name)
PSC 1501 Box XXXX
APO AE 09704

PHONE CALLS

Due to the remote location of Thule everyone has DSN access in his or her dorm rooms and the ability to dial any toll free number. There is a stateside number that family and friends can call that will reach the base and each dorm room has an assigned extension. Limited free phone cards are available through the Chaplain and/or First Sergeant.

PAY

While stationed at Thule you will receive \$150.00 Arctic Duty pay, \$250.00 family separation pay, if you have dependents, and keep BAH for your family. All enlisted personnel will receive BAS. Cost Of Living Allowance is another benefit that you will receive during your tour here. The amount is based upon your rank and time in service.

PETS

Pets of any type are not authorized at Thule.

RADIO

We currently receive one FM station, 97.1.

INTERNET

As with many things here at Thule, the Arctic environment presents unique challenges to getting the internet. What can an incoming member of Team Thule expect for personal internet service? There are two options. First, each dorm has wireless access and currently each US military member is allotted 15 gigabytes of data per month on DormNet. While this is free, it is slow. DormNet is typically able to fulfill most web-surfing needs; however, streaming video and on-line gaming is usually not supported and will eat up your 15 gigabytes allowance very rapidly. Secondly, you can buy a private line from the local telecommunications company, Tele-Greenland. Typically you will pay around \$100 for an additional nine gigabytes each month or \$200 for an additional 20 gigabytes a month. No matter which path you choose, keep in mind that internet service here at Thule is slower and many of the internet-dependent services we use in the US and Europe are not available.

In your office, you will find the internet is not as fast as you are used to at other bases. You should do as much of your annual training computer based trainings in ADLS as

close to your departure date as possible. If you are filling a COR position here at Thule you should also plan on completing your COR training prior to your arrival.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

We highly recommend bringing any electronic devices that will help you pass the time at Thule. However, if you decide to bring any wireless electronic devices from the state (i.e., cordless phones, cell phones, walkie-talkies, wireless keyboards/mice, etc...), please ensure it has the European Conformity (CE) label. All outlets in the dorms are 120V, same as in the States. **NOTE:** Due to the limited internet service at Thule, it is recommended that you install any updates for your electronic devices prior to your arrival. If you plan on traveling to Europe or if your plane is diverted enroute to Thule, you will want to have an adaptor for European power.

TV CHANNELS

We currently receive ABC, CBS, NBC and FOX channels from either Boston or Detroit. In addition, we have American Forces Network channels, 24-hour Commander's and information channels (latest weather and announcements), a Canadian channel and a variety of stations from Denmark.

HELPFUL INFORMATION: WHAT TO BRING, WHAT THULE DOESN'T HAVE

MILITARY CLOTHING

Thule does not have a military clothing sales store. Be sure to bring a sufficient supply of ABUs/OCPs and accessories for your duration. If you anticipate getting promoted during your tour, be sure to pick up some extra rank insignias. The Exchange can order items for you, but it can take up to six or eight weeks for items to arrive. We wear all uniform combinations at Thule, including mess dress or semi-formal wear, with white shirt, at various events. Ensure you bring ALL combinations, you will use them. Remember to bring any combination of uniform in case of a combat dining in.

CIVILIAN CLOTHING

You will find several opportunities for social events where you may need to wear a coat and tie or suitable ladies attire. Use common sense to bring your attire. During the summer, it does get extremely muddy; bring an old pair of boots. Even though you may not think so, there will be several opportunities for you to wear short-sleeve and shorts, if nowhere else, in your quarters. Don't forget to bring a swimsuit and water shoes for the Polar Bear Plunge. You may also want to bring holiday attire: Halloween costume, ugly Christmas sweater, New Years Eve attire, a Hawaiian shirt and flip-flops, and a poncho and sombrero.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS TO CONSIDER BRINGING

Some dorm rooms have TVs and DVD players, and some do not. You may want to ship a TV. The authorized size for shipment of a TV is not to exceed 32 inches.

Other items to bring: alarm clock; Stereo (with coaxial or antenna adapter); camera; CD player; binoculars; personal hygiene articles; if there are any special vitamins that you need/want; hobby items; musical instruments; second set of eyeglasses or reading glasses; posters; room ornaments; comforters; sheets and pillow cases (rooms are furnished, but it is nice to have your own); makeup; books; mountain bike, (if you aren't particular, there are plenty available to rent from Outdoor Recreation); padlock; PDG and SKT materials; special spices; small backpack; video game consoles (online play is practically non-existent); board games; pictures of family and friends.

FAMILY VISITS

While you are staying here at Thule, your family can visit you here as long as they possess a valid Department of Defence CAC; however, they will travel as Space-Available. Please contact your sponsor for further information on this subject.

OTHER ITEMS

Bring your travel passport if you have one, you may want to go to Europe while you are stationed at Thule. Additionally, bring your military ID, stateside driver's license, current eye wear and a supply of contact lenses (if applicable), and (limited pharmacy) a 6-month supply of special medications (including birth control, if applicable). Two pairs of sneakers as, due to the mud and snow, outside shoes are not allowed to be worn in the fitness center.

For those that will be here during the holidays, don't forget room decorations. Your dorm room will be your home for the next year, so we encourage you to bring whatever you think will make your stay here more comfortable.

If you are not sure whether to bring something, it's always a good idea to call and ask. When planning what to ship, keep in mind that all shipments to Thule go by air via McGuire Air Force Base. Military personnel are entitled to 10 percent of their full Joint Travel Regulation weight allowance. Civilians are authorized shipments in accordance with JTR, Volume II. If your TMO shipment is picked up about 30 days prior to your departure, there's a good chance it will be waiting for you.

HELPFUL NOTE

When talking with your TMO office, ENSURE they are aware that your household goods are to be air-shipped from McGuire Air Force Base, New Jersey to Thule Air Force Base (DO NOT ADDRESS SHIPMENT TO GREENLAND!) Most shipments will arrive within a short time of your arrival. Once here, the Thule TMO folks rush to ensure you get settled in as quickly as possible. Also, follow all PPC requirements on your orders and

contact your gaining unit commander if your losing base doesn't/can't comply prior to your departure.

WHAT THULE DOES NOT HAVE

Currently, Thule doesn't have or offer the following:

- ATM machine/bank
- A CATM range (follow your PPC requirements)
- Fast internet
- Any major fast food outlets
- A military clothing sales store (we now have a few items like stripes, t-shirts, etc.)
- Paved roads or sidewalks
- An 18-hole golf course
- A view of the Northern Lights as we are about 500 miles too far north to see them, and if/when we do see them, they are the Southern Lights
- Bees or snakes!

FLIGHT TO THULE

Your flight to Thule will originate at Baltimore Washington International Airport. This is a once a week contracted flight through ATI. **All passengers must check-in Wednesday night NLT 2300L** for the 0200L flight. While waiting for the flight, make sure to check in with the USO who will be happy to provide a wide variety of support during your wait. As far as the flight, you are only authorized two pieces of luggage and a carry-on. Anything else you will pay for it out of pocket.

ARRIVAL AT THULE

Once you arrive at the Thule terminal, you will be greeted by the 821st ABG commander, 821st superintendent, first sergeant, commanders, assorted Thule personnel, and your sponsor. You will be instantly aware of the positive attitude and support that is waiting to assist you in your transition to Thule. When the folks say they are there for you, they really mean it! Once your bags arrive, your sponsor will take you to Greenland Contractor Headquarters to receive your meal and room access card. Then relax and enjoy your first evening at Thule. In your room, to see what is currently happening at Thule, turn on the TV to channels 106-119. Until your household goods arrive, The Exchange has a variety of items, towels, toiletries, etc., for purchase rather than carrying these items in your valuable baggage space.

HOUSING

Military personnel live in three-story dormitories. Senior NCOs and officers have two rooms and a private bath as well as a stove in the common area of each pod. Airman and Junior NCO living in Buildings 101 and 103 are situated in either a two person pod,

two rooms/private bathroom per person, or in a quad pod, one private room/bathroom per person. The transit/permanent dormitory, Building 99, you have a private room but there is a shared bathroom between the rooms. There is a community kitchen and day room on each floor. You may want to bring your own bedding, sheets, towels, bedspreads. Most rooms have full XL beds, some have double beds. It is recommended you bring your favorite pictures and decorations to make your room more personal during your stay.

QUADS/PODS (Airman and NCO Housing Building 101 and 103)



Senior NCO and Officers HOUSING (Building 102)



IN-PROCESSING

The 821st ABG is a geographically separated unit under the 21st Space Wing, Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado. Your sponsor will bring you to Military Personnel Section/unit Command Support Squadron and Financial Management for in-processing. You will need to bring all records and documents you hand carried from your losing base. Other items to have ready when in-processing include copies of orders, Government Travel Card receipts, and Phase I & II paperwork (CORs). Ensure that your security manager from your losing organization releases you from JPAS.

AND THEN

- Get your post office box number, or key if you already know your box number
- Get your arctic gear
- Join the TOW club, pay your annual membership and start getting discounts
- Find The Exchange and the laundry drop off/pickup point

- See your first "Archie," Arctic Fox

OTHER RESOURCES:

Visit Military One Source for additional benefits for you and your family. See below for details.



HISTORY OF THULE

Around 325 B.C. the seafarer Pytheas of Massalia discovered an island six days sailing north of England which he called Thule. It is generally thought that the island is present day Iceland. At that time, Thule meant the northernmost known island. But with increased geographical knowledge, the name eventually moved further north. The farther northern island "Ultima Thule," became synonymous with cold wilderness. It is generally believed that the first settlers came to Greenland about 4,000 years ago.

Around 985 A.D. the first northerners came to Greenland and settled down on the west coast between Julianehab and Godthab. Greenlanders have lived in the settlement now known as Dundas for the past 900 years. Actual proof of this has been found in the so-called "Commers Midden" just north of Mt. Dundas, named after an English nobleman, Lord Dundas. Commers Midden was excavated in 1913-1914, 1937, and again in 1946. More than 10,000 artifacts that date back to the 10th century were

taken to the Danish National Museum. Even Norse relics were found.

The first European to arrive in the area was William Baffin, for whom Baffin Bay was named in 1616. While in the area, Baffin named several places, such as Wolstenholme Fjord, Smith Sound, and Wolstenholme Island. Thule had few other visitors until the late 1800s. The first group of Europeans to spend the winter in the area was the crew of the ship North Star. The bay, and our lodging facility, is named after this ship. Between 1849 and 1850, several other expeditions took place. Between 1892-1909, Robert E. Peary started using the area as a base for his North Pole expeditions. He established a close relationship with the Greenlanders by taking care not to violate the existing culture.

Knud Rasmussen, a famous Danish explorer, began the Danish Literary Expedition in this area in 1903-1904. Rasmussen returned to the area in 1906 and again in 1908 to begin a mission station in the Thule area. In 1909 the ship Godthaab anchored in North Star Bay and the first two buildings, a missionary and a storehouse, were built. The Danish flag has flown in the area ever since.

In 1910, Rasmussen and his associate, Peter Freuchen, came to the area of Cape York (Kap York Trading Post) Station. On the suggestion of Freuchen, Rasmussen named the village which grew up around the post "Thule". At that time, the area north of Mt. Dundas, called Uumanaq by the Greenlanders, was still inhabited. Freuchen became the first trading post manager and held the position until 1920. The post served many purposes, such as providing a base for scientific expeditions and providing equipment and food for the native Greenlanders. The first Thule expedition set out in 1912 across the ice cap to north Greenland and back. During the second Thule expedition, in 1916-1918, Rasmussen mapped out the northernmost coast of Greenland geographically, geologically, botanically, and ethnologically. From 1919-1924, three more expeditions took place. The fifth expedition took Rasmussen on his famous great sled journey, traveling by dog sled across Canada and Alaska to Siberia. Rasmussen returned to Thule each summer from 1926-1929.

The station was now growing. A hospital was built in 1928-1929 and a pre-fabricated house, the Knud Rasmussen House, was built in 1929 and was later used as a school. In 1929-1930 a Church was erected. In 1928 the Thule Law was born; it was signed by Knud Rasmussen on June 7, 1929, and ratified by the Danish Government in 1931. The Danish government took over the Thule district in 1931 and named Rasmussen to represent the Danish state. In 1933, two settlements were founded in the Thule district, Siorapaluk in the north and Savigsivik in the south. Rasmussen died that same year, and the Danish government took over his responsibilities.

On the anniversary of Germany's occupation of Denmark, April 9, 1941, "The Agreement relating to the Defense of Greenland" was signed in Washington by Danish Ambassador Henrick Kauffman and Secretary of State Cordell Hull. It was approved by President Roosevelt on June 7, 1941. In the agreement, the US agreed to take over the security of Greenland. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, the allies established weather stations at Narssarssuaq Airport, Sondstrom (Bluie West-8), Ikateq (Bluie East-2), and

Gronnedal (Bluie West-9). In 1943 the Army Air Corps set up weather stations, Scoresbysund (Bluie East-3) on the east coast around the southern tip of Greenland, and Thule (Bluie West-6) to be operated by Danish personnel.

The weather stations gave the allies a strategic edge over the Germans in battle planning and provided a decisive factor in D-Day. Based on the Greenland weather reports, General Eisenhower scheduled the landing in Normandy despite the strong winds in the English Channel. He knew the winds would die the following day, so the Invasion was on!

In 1946, a combined Danish-American radio and weather station was established in the Royal Greenland Trade Department Building at Pituffik, present day Thule Air Base. Pituffuk is translated as "place where they tie their boats." By all rights, Thule should have been named Pituffik Air Base after the original site. The Navy built a new and much larger weather station. The Army Corps of Engineers built a 4,000-foot airstrip on the south side of the valley. In the following year the Thule airstrip was used as a jump-off point for exploration and a supply point for construction of airstrips and weather stations on the Canadian side of the straits, Eureka, Resolute, and Isachsen.

The first Transport Command aircraft landed on September 9, 1946. The East Reconnaissance Group, Project Nanook, flew B-17 mapping and photography missions from Thule's primitive facilities. From 1946-1950, several houses, a power plant, a radio station, and a dirt runway were built at what is now called "Dundas Village." Dundas Village and the Inuit Village of Qaanaaq are protected by Denmark and specifically excluded from those areas under Air Force control.

In the spring of 1953, the Greenlandic Village of Thule, located at the base of Mt. Dundas, was moved 65 miles north to Qaanaaq on Red Cliff Peninsula. Although the Inuits were not thrilled with leaving their home, it is said that the noise and smells from the planes and ships had frightened away many of the polar bears, musk ox, seals, narwhals and fish that had previously called the area home and were essential to the Inuits cultural survival. Upon departing, the people of Thule demanded they take the name with them, so depending on the map you may see two Thule's listed in northern Greenland. When traveling to Mt. Dundas, you will still see long forgotten houses and two cemeteries in what is now called Dundas Village.

In 1963 the area was given official status as the 17th municipality of Greenland, the Thule municipality. **The northernmost community in the world.**

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS

Construction of a worldwide system of modern air bases was one of the Air Force's most important tasks following World War II. The U.S. studied the possibility of establishing a major operating base in Greenland when it became clear that round trip flights of planes carrying atomic bombs between U.S. or Canadian bases and European objectives were impractical. The shortest route from the U.S. to the Soviet Union's most important industrial areas was over the North Pole, and Thule is at the precise midpoint between

Moscow and New York.

Thule became a key point in the American military strategy. Strategic Air Command bombers flying over the Arctic presented less risk of early warning than using bases in England. Defensively, Thule could serve as a base for intercepting bomber attacks along the northeastern approaches to Canada and the U.S.

A board of Air Force officers made a recommendation to pursue a base at Thule in November 1950, it was subsequently supported by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and approved by President Truman. To replace the agreement entered into during World War II between the U.S. and Denmark, a new agreement with respect to Greenland was ratified on April 27, 1951, effective on June 8, 1951. At the request of North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the agreement became a part of the NATO defense program. The pact specified that the two nations would arrange for the use of facilities in Greenland by NATO forces in defense of the NATO area known as the Greenland Defense Area.

Thule was constructed in secret under the code name Operation Blue Jay. Construction for Thule began in 1951 and was completed in 1953. The construction of Thule is said to have been comparable in scale to the enormous effort required to build the Panama Canal. The Navy transported the bulk of men, supplies, and equipment from the naval shipyards in Norfolk, Virginia. **The library, North Star Inn and Thule Museum offer two videos, "Operation Blue Jay" and "Camp Century," that better explain how the base was built and the events that have taken place in this region.**

On June 6, 1951 an armada of 120 ships sailed from Norfolk, Virginia. On board were 12,000 men and 300,000 tons of cargo. They arrived at Thule on July 9, 1951. Construction took place around the clock. The workers lived on board the ship until quarters were built. Once they moved into the quarters, the ships returned home.

The base was initially designed as a forward base for staging Strategic Air Command bombers and tankers. It was designed and built to house 12,000 personnel. During the peak period it housed approximately 10,000 with personnel living at Camp Tuto, 12 Space Warning Squadron/J-Site, Camp Century, P-Mountain, Nike Sites, and Cape Atholl. It was built with a 10,000 foot by 200 foot runway and a fuel storage capacity of about 100 million gallons, the largest built in the Department of Defense to support mid-air refueling of the B-47 bombers.

The agreement set aside 339,000 acres, and when Thule was first built this is how it looked: main base 2,600 acres, 82 miles of road, 38 fuel tanks, 10 hangars (six are 28,000 square feet), 122 barracks, six mess halls, a gym, service club, Officers club, hobby shop, library, base exchange, post office, theater, chapel, and hospital. There were also 63 warehouses, a laundry, a bakery, two primary power plants, and four auxiliary power/heating plants. Buildings were built using Arctic (Clements) panels. Most buildings were built in 60 days in 1951. The 1,000-foot pier, DeLong Pier, was constructed from eight barges towed from the Gulf of Mexico placed on caissons and stabilized alongside a rock-filled causeway.

On August 18, 1951, the new airstrip was inaugurated with a visit from the Air Force Chief of Staff General Hoyt S. Vandenberg. Operation Blue Jay was completed in a short 104 days. On October 23, the last construction crews left Thule but 400 men were left behind as a caretaker force through the winter of 1951 and 1952. The next spring a major part of the workforce returned to expand the base. In November 1952, when the Air Force took control, Thule was considered operational. By fall 1953 the bulk of the construction was complete.

On July 1, 1951, the 6622nd Air Base Squadron of the Northeast Air Command arrived and air operations commenced on September 11, 1951. The first fighter interceptors assigned to Thule were four F-9ABs and began operations on September 11, 1952. From 1953 to 1959, the base's other main mission was to function as an operations base for SAC strategic bombers, supporting SAC B-36s, B-47s, and KC-97s. In 1957, SAC activated the 4083rd Strategic Wing at Thule, consisting of B-36 bombers. During 1963, the U.S. Army installed two 75mm and four 90mm anti-aircraft guns in a ring around Thule, for air defense.

In 1957, Air Defense Command took control of the base and initiated the 74th Fighter Interceptor Squadron. The FIS was deactivated in March 1960 leaving Thule without interceptor protection for the first time since September 1952. This deactivation was rescinded by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in June 1960, and the 332nd FIS was assigned to Thule in August 1960. They flew supersonic, all-weather F-102 Delta Daggers.

In 1957 and 1958 four Army Nike Defense System Batteries were constructed, two on North Mountain and two on South Mountain, under the code name "Rising Star." These Surface to Air missiles were linked together with the air interceptors and a control and warning system. Each location had two areas: launch and control. They were closed down in July 1960. Battery A was demolished in 1990, but two buildings still stand at A launch located at Dundas Village. Battery B was demolished on an undetermined date, and the debris at the launch site was pushed into the underground silos. Battery C is still largely intact. It probably represents the best remaining example at Thule. The barracks and mess hall still stand, but the storeroom is gone. The three launch structures are still intact. On one stairwell, a soldier's art work still survives. It is the depiction of a goose and refers to the Goose Air Defense Sector to which the battery belonged. C Control has been demolished. All that remains is the concrete bases of the radar. Battery D, D Launch is located on South Mountain, overlooking North Star Bay, the launch structures are still intact as is the watch tower.

In 1958 and 1959 additional construction consisted of five new barracks, a dining facility, the Airmen's club, two Bachelors Officer Quarters, a technical library, and two warehouses. In 1959 and 1960 the base common water and sewage distribution mains were constructed. Up to that point all water delivery and sewage pickup was accomplished by truck! In 1960 the over-the-road, heated, and insulated pipe line system was completed. Replacement value of buildings was valued at over \$2 billion.

The base activated as a part of the Northeast Air Command in January 1952 and transferred to SAC in 1957. On July 1, 1960 the Air Defense Command officially

assumed command at Thule. By 1960, the addition of long-range aircraft to the SAC inventory eliminated the need for Thule to operate as a forward support base, and the mission turned from a SAC forward operations base to air defense.

In 1961, a Ballistic Missile Early Warning Systems, 12th SWS, radar was constructed at J- Site, 13 miles northeast of the base. 12th SWS was developed by the Raytheon Corporation in order to provide North America warning of a transpolar missile attack from the Russian mainland and submarine-launched missiles from the Arctic and North Atlantic Oceans. The fixed antenna, 400 feet long and 1,654 feet high, was larger than a football field turned upright. It was during this period that Thule reached its maximum manning, about 10,000 personnel.

Starting in July 1965, there was a general downsizing of activities at Thule. The host unit, the 4683rd Air Wing, along with the 332nd Fighter Interceptor Squadron, was deactivated. In January 1968, the population of Thule was 3,370. In 1976, the first female was assigned permanent party to Thule, and in 1982, Thule became a Space Command base.

The old mechanical 12th SWS radar was upgraded to a solid-state, phased-array system in June 1987 to make the operation more effective and efficient. Information from this site is transmitted to the North American Aerospace Defense Command Post at Cheyenne Mountain, Colorado. Information is then passed to National Command Authorities.

Another Thule mission dates back to 1961 when the Air Force established a satellite command and control facility, OL-5, to track and communicate with U.S. satellites in polar orbit. Now known as Det-1, it is part of the Air Force Systems Command worldwide satellite command and control network. Det-1 is one of nine worldwide satellite tracking stations and constitutes the common user portion of the Air Force Satellite Control Network. This network directly supports space operations by providing telemetry tracking and commanding to satellites developed and deployed by Department of Defense, other U.S. government agencies, and allied governments. It also provides data distribution and routing systems to support external users programs and other ground elements.

Today Thule's mission is to support the Air Force Core Function of Space Superiority. Falling under Air Force Space Command, 14th Air Force and the 21st Space Wing, Thule is the Department of Defense's northernmost installation, the world's northernmost deep-water seaport and the Air Force's guardian of the "Top of the World" vantage point which enables constant polar vigilance. As you can see, there is a long and esteemed history involved in Thule and we are excited about you joining this exclusive north of the Arctic Circle team.