

Arctic War Games: Canada, Denmark Team up for Military Exercise

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Despite differences over the ownership of a small Arctic island, military personnel from Canada and Denmark will collaborate for the first time in a joint northern military operation next month.

Brig-Gen. David Millar of Canada's Joint Task Force North said land forces from the two nations will team up in a training exercise dubbed Operation Nunalivut.

Canada and Denmark have an ongoing territorial dispute over tiny Hans Island — located between Greenland and Canada's Ellesmere Island. But that dispute is being overlooked for the time being as the Danes contribute their Sirius dogsled teams, normally used for three-month patrols of the Greenlandic Arctic, for the joint military exercise.

And for the first time boats and helicopters will be used by the Canadian Forces in the high Arctic during sovereignty operations near Alert and Ward Hunt Island, off the northern tip of Ellesmere.

Millar said the challenge will be practicing search and rescue operations in a melting ice environment. "There's less ice and more water, and as a result we have to adapt our operations," he said. "This will be the first time that we're actually taking Zodiacs out on to the ice with us because of the presence of so much water these days, whereas ten years ago you wouldn't have to worry about that."

Operation Nunalivut is one of three sovereignty operations conducted each year by Canadian Forces in the North. About 150 military personnel, including Arctic Rangers and the Danish military dog team will take part in the exercise which runs from April 6th to the 26th.

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