

# BATTELLE ARCTIC RESEARCH OPERATIONS

## ARCTIC PROGRAM FIREARM PROTOCOLS


March 2024

Arctic Research Support & Logistics Services  
NSF Contract Number 49100420C0001



**BATTELLE**  
Arctic Research Operations



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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

To define roles and responsibilities around firearm use for National Science Foundation-supported personnel. This document summarizes the appropriate training and safety measures that need to be established before a participant brings a weapon into a program supported location and provides guidance on training, authorization, permitting, transport, authorization, storage, operation, and reporting of firearm use for wildlife protection.

This document seeks solely to outline the protocols for Battelle ARO employees and provide recommendations for program researchers around firearm access. *Emergency Action Plans (EAPs)* exist for field sites and EAP templates are available to deep field groups to define emergency contacts and site-specific response actions.

# 2. Background

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


# 3. Roles & Responsibilities

**Battelle ARO employees:** The site supervisor (at staffed camps) or the employee’s supervisor in other settings is responsible for ensuring that this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is followed completely when a situation warrants possession or access to a firearm at a work site. Firearm access shall be kept to a minimum. Only personnel deemed essential by HSE (Health, Safety, and Environment) and trained/authorized per details in this SOP may have access to program owned firearms. Firearms are never provided to research groups. Employees are not permitted to bring their own firearms to field locations without pre-approval from NSF (National Science Foundation) & Battelle ARO management.

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

# 4. Requirements & Recommendations

Firearms are required for deploying parties located within the Greenland National Park that require Expedition Permits (this includes the staffed camp of Summit Station). Battelle ARO

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maintains two firearms at Summit Station to meet this requirement for the Summit area allotment. Science teams that travel outside of the area allotment boundary may be required to obtain a separate expedition permit and meet firearm-related permit requirements.

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

Other staffed field locations will be assessed by Battelle ARO HSE to determine if a firearm is a recommended safety tool. Research groups should consult with their own risk management office to determine if a firearm is a recommended safety tool. Battelle ARO HSE can advise on wildlife risk in the areas in which researchers will be deployed, but the ultimate decision to bring a firearm into the field is that of the PI/Institution. Most research groups deploy without Battelle ARO provided staff; however, Appendix A contains decision trees on firearm responsibility for a few use-case scenarios. Please contact Battelle ARO HSE for further guidance.

## 5. Permitting & Registration

Battelle ARO is responsible for securing required permits for firearms provided to staff.

Researcher groups are responsible for securing their own permits.

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



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

## 6. Transporting Firearms

All program participants must transport firearms per TSA guidelines. [Transporting Firearms and Ammunition | \(tsa.gov\)](#)

Additional regional information:

- [Alaska](#)
- [Canada](#)
- [Guidance for U.S. Persons Traveling Outside the U.S. with Firearms and/or Ammunition | ICE](#)
- **Air National Guard:** See this annually-updated document *Appendix B: GL Transport of Rifles and Ammunition* (provided upon request)

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- Pituffik Space Base:** Air National Guard are the primary way to get firearms in/out of Pituffik. Firearms are not allowed on the weekly Air Mobility Command (AMC) flights to Pituffik or Embassy charters contracted through Air Greenland. Advance coordination with Battelle ARO is required for participants wishing to bring a firearm into Pituffik.

## 7. Storing Firearms

Firearms must remain locked when not in use.

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

**Employees:** Authorized employees are responsible for ensuring that firearms remain locked per TSA guidelines when transiting through any Battelle ARO hub. NSF owned gun safes exist at regional hubs such Fairbanks, Kangerlussuaq, and at PFS (Polar Field Services) headquarters where NSF-owned firearms are in inventory. At all locations, firearms shall be stored unloaded with the action open and safety mechanism on. Firearms and ammunition will not be stored together but separately in a locked manner with only those authorized having access. Please refer to location specific Emergency Action Plan (EAP), Pre Plans, and Guidelines on firearm and ammunition storage and access.

Greenland: Battelle-ARO maintains locked storage for program-owned firearms and ammunition at staffed field sites. Access information is limited to site and regional managers and HSE. A record is maintained locally of weapons and ammunition stored at any staffed site.

Alaska: Battelle-ARO maintains locked storage for program-owned firearms and ammunition at the Fairbanks warehouse. Access information is limited to the Alaska Operations Manager and HSE. A record is maintained locally of weapons and ammunition stored at any staffed site.

## 8. NSF Firearm Inventory

Battelle ARO cannot provide NSF-owned firearms to research groups. However, the NSF has procured firearms for staffed field locations as permits require and/or risk assessment mitigations per Battelle ARO and NSF HSE recommendation. Additional stateside firearms are in inventory of the same model as in field locations to assist with training requirements.

Firearms are considered 'Sensitive Inventory' and thus are tracked by Battelle ARO's CMMS (Computerized Maintenance Management System). Whenever an NSF-owned firearm is moved between locations, advance notification to the Battelle ARO CMMS Administrator is required.


Asset Name	Manufacturer Name	Model	Serial	Condition	Repair Center Name
Firearm Remington 700	Remington	Remington 700 SPS Stainless	RR99013 J	Excellent	Raven
Firearm Remington 700	Remington	Remington 700 SPS Stainless	RR99071 J	Excellent	ARSLS Headquarters
Firearm Remington 700	Remington	Remington 700 SPS Stainless	RR99218 J	Excellent	ARSLS Headquarters
Firearm Remington 700	Remington	Remington 700 SPS Stainless	RR99001 J	Excellent	Summit Station
Firearm Remington 700	Remington	Remington 700 SPS Stainless	RR24256 K	Excellent	ARSLS Headquarters
Firearm Remington 700	Remington	Remington 700 SPS Stainless	RR24261 K	Excellent	Summit Station
Firearm Remington 870	Remington	Remington 870	ARC6663	Excellent	Fairbanks Office
Firearm Remington 870	Remington	Remington 870	ARC6664	Excellent	Fairbanks Office
Firearm Remington 870	Remington	Remington 870	ARC6665	Excellent	ARSLS Headquarters

### 8.1 Greenland NSF owned firearm specifications:

- Brand (make): Remington
- Model: 700 SPS Stainless (special purpose synthetic)
- Caliber: 30-06 Springfield
- Firearms were modified to optimize effectiveness in extreme cold weather or austere conditions. All original safety mechanisms were checked and remained intact during the modification. For any questions regarding firearm design or assembly, contact the CONUS trainer at [dave@modtac.us](mailto:dave@modtac.us) or (303) 828-7584. The following modifications were made to ensure firearms were effective and safe yet easy to operate:
  - Kinetic Research Group stock, for a stronger and more reliable platform in extreme cold weather environments, adjustable to multiple shooters.
  - Detachable reinforced polymer magazines to allow for ease of reloading.
  - VAIS muzzle break to limit felt recoil and increased control of the firearm.
  - Vortex scope rings and scope for clear and reliable sighting.

### 8.2 Alaska NSF owned firearm specifications:

- Brand (make): Remington
- Model: 870 (synthetic)
- Caliber: 12 gauge

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## 9. Training Requirements

The NSF has mandated that all ARSLS participants, including direct bill and interagency project personnel, who take firearms into the field as part of the Arctic Program must complete a firearms safety training class provided by a recognized organization such as the National Rifle Association or affiliated organization, or through a local law enforcement agency such as local police or Sheriff department. Researchers must pay and arrange for this training from their grant. Instruction should include the below topics at a minimum.

- Safe firearm handling
- Live-fire range practice
- Firearm cleaning, storage, and cold-weather care
- Personal protective equipment and use during firearm handling

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

### 9.1 Battelle ARO Recommended Trainer Information

[MODTAC Homepage - Modern Tactical Creations, LLC](#). (720) 608-8609; 9275 Christopher Court, Elizabeth CO 80107; [dave@modtac.us](mailto:dave@modtac.us).

Training details: A standard class has room for 6 students with 2-3 training rifles. Training consists of a 2-hour classroom portion followed by 2+ hour live fire.



A background check is run by MODTAC on any personnel attending the training.

### 9.2 Battelle ARO Recommended Alaska Trainer

For Alaska Operations, an approved firearms trainer is based in Fairbanks:

Chuck Inderrieden  
C4 Training Group LLC  
[c4tgllc@gmail.com](mailto:c4tgllc@gmail.com)  
(907) 347-2459

**Researchers:** Researchers should consult their institution’s risk management office to confirm that it allows employees to carry weapons into the field while working as an employee of the institution. Pls should ensure that field team members who are employed by another institution do the same. If the field team includes volunteers, researchers should discuss liability issues around weapons concerning non-employees with their institution’s

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risk management office. Battelle ARO is not responsible for confirming that researchers (outside of a staffed camp) have the appropriate firearms training required by NSF.

**Battelle ARO employees:** Authorized personnel (not everyone on site) must have successfully passed a background check and completed a firearms training course to include both a classroom and live-fire instruction within 1 year of deployment to a station or field camp with firearms onsite. Training may not be required if local authorities are present (negating staff use of firearms). Only authorized personnel will have access to company-provided firearms as determined in the site-specific *Emergency Action Plan (EAP)*.

## 10. Discharging a Firearm

Firearms shall remain in locked storage until non-lethal deterrents have proved unsuccessful and personnel are granted approval by the appropriate authority to use. In addition:

- At locations with NSF-supplied firearms, no firearm may be accessed without approval from Battelle ARO management following rules of engagement as dictated by local authorities. See the site-specific *Emergency Action Plan (EAP)*.
- In the event of an active bear attack on a person, do not delay intervention for the sake of administrative consent. Lethal action is authorized by Battelle ARO management without prior approval in cases where human life is at risk.
- When a firearm is discharged on wildlife, intent must be to kill and not to wound. Polar bears are protected under the [Marine Mammal Protection Act](#) and can only be fired upon during extreme situations. Wounded animals are often more dangerous than healthy animals. If an animal must be killed for the safety of personnel, the participant must follow the required disposal procedures and participate in reporting/investigation requirements as determined by NSF and state/federal/international entities.
- At locations with NSF-supplied firearms, there will be no firearm practice unless an official firearm trainer is present and Battelle ARO management has approved the activity.
- If a firearm is discharged –
  - An employee is required to notify their supervisor immediately, who will then elevate to Battelle ARO HSE & NSF management.
  - A researcher is required to notify their institution’s risk management office and their Battelle ARO Project Manager who will elevate to Battelle ARO and NSF management.
- At locations with NSF-supplied firearms, the firearm must be cleaned after any discharge as instructed by trained personnel. If an employee is not familiar with proper cleaning techniques, they must notify their supervisor so proper maintenance can be scheduled.
- At locations with NSF-supplied firearms, improper or unauthorized discharge of a firearm may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

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## 11. Maintenance

Battelle ARO owned firearms are inspected and maintained as documented in the program CMMS. There are work orders in CMMS to address regular maintenance of firearms. Firearms will be rotated on a regular basis to ensure general maintenance and calibration is done about once a year.

## 12. Reference Documentation



GLTransport of Rifles and Ammunition (provided upon request)

PFS Guideline - Firearms training with Modtac

### Hyperlinks in document

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



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**APPENDICES**

**Appendix A: USE-CASE DECISION TREE EXAMPLES**

**Appendix B: 2024 GLTRANSPORT OF RIFLES AND AMMUNITION (provided by request)**

**Appendix A: USE-CASE DECISION TREE EXAMPLES**

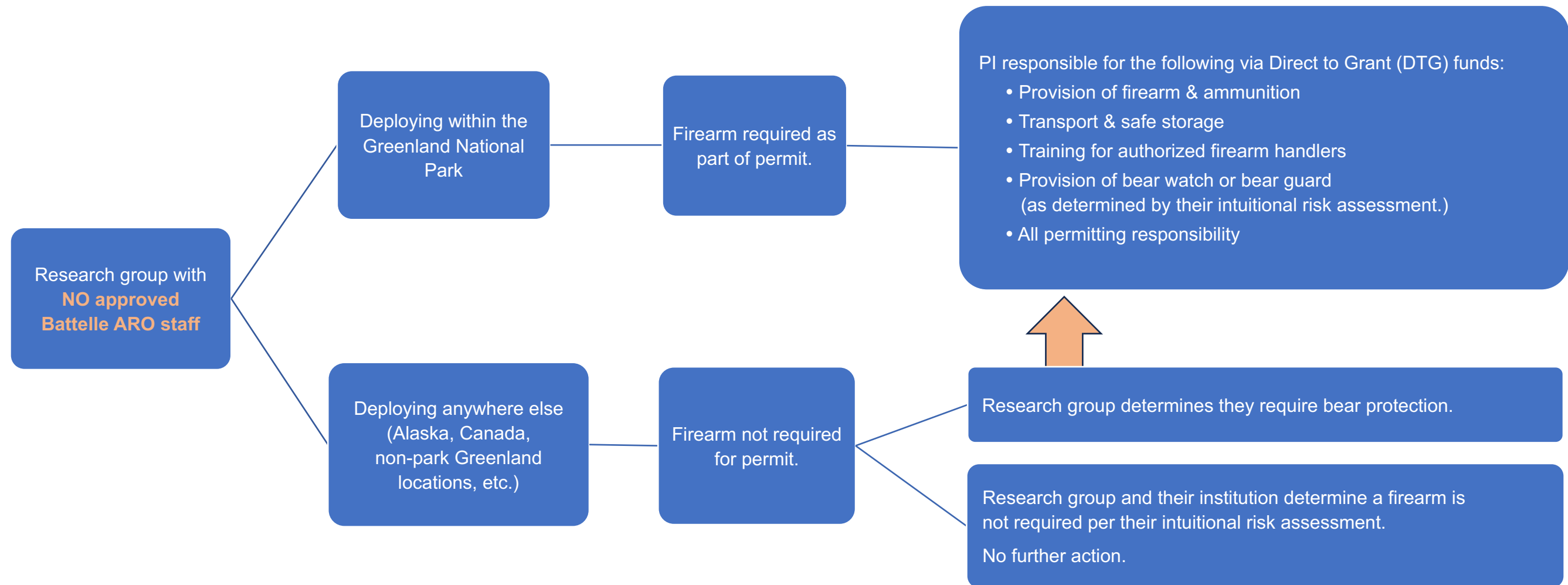
Please contact Battelle ARO HSE if you have any questions and/or a scenario not covered by one of the below decision trees.

Scenario 1: Research Group with **NO approved Battelle ARO Staff** and/or with Travel beyond Summit Station area allocation boundary

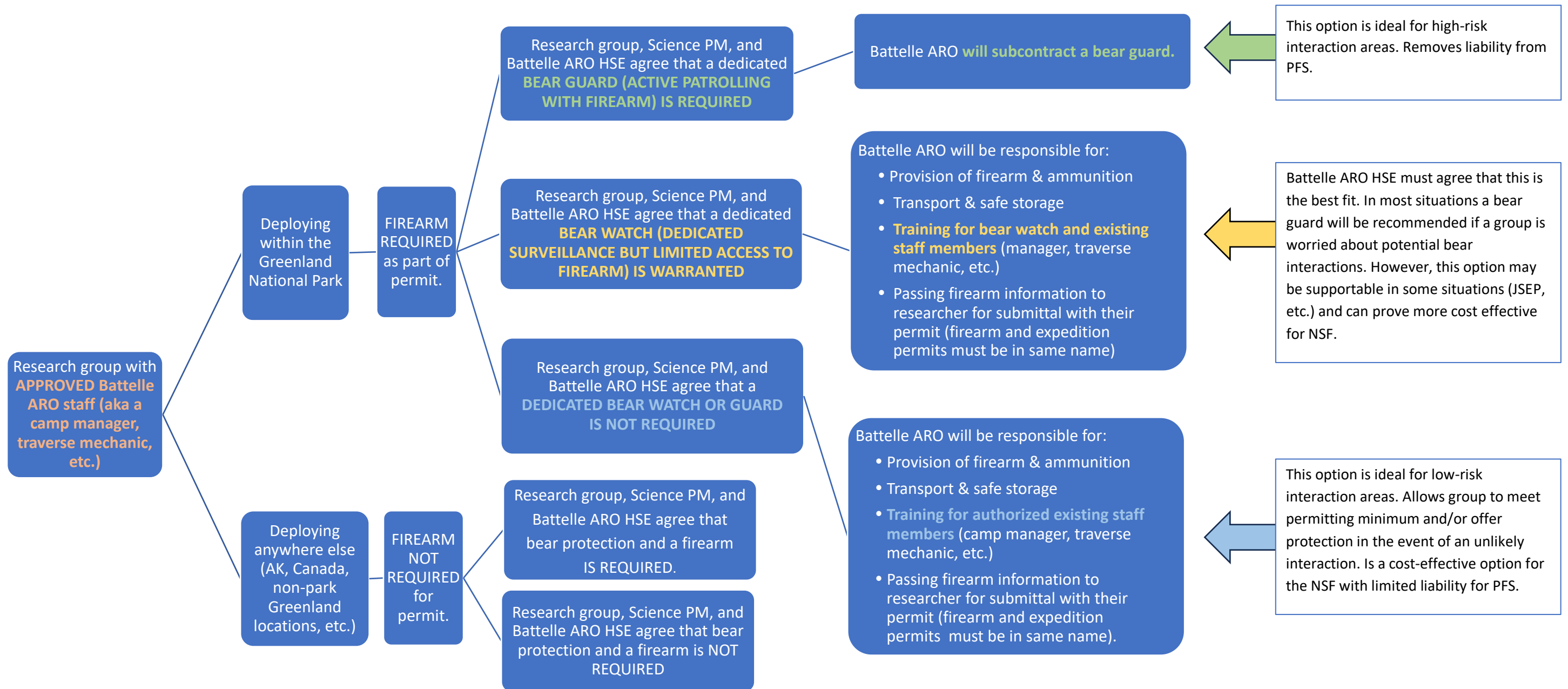
Scenario 2: Research group with **APPROVED Battelle ARO staff (aka a camp manager, traverse mechanic, etc.)**

Scenario 3: **Battelle ARO staffed established camps** (Summit, Raven, etc.)

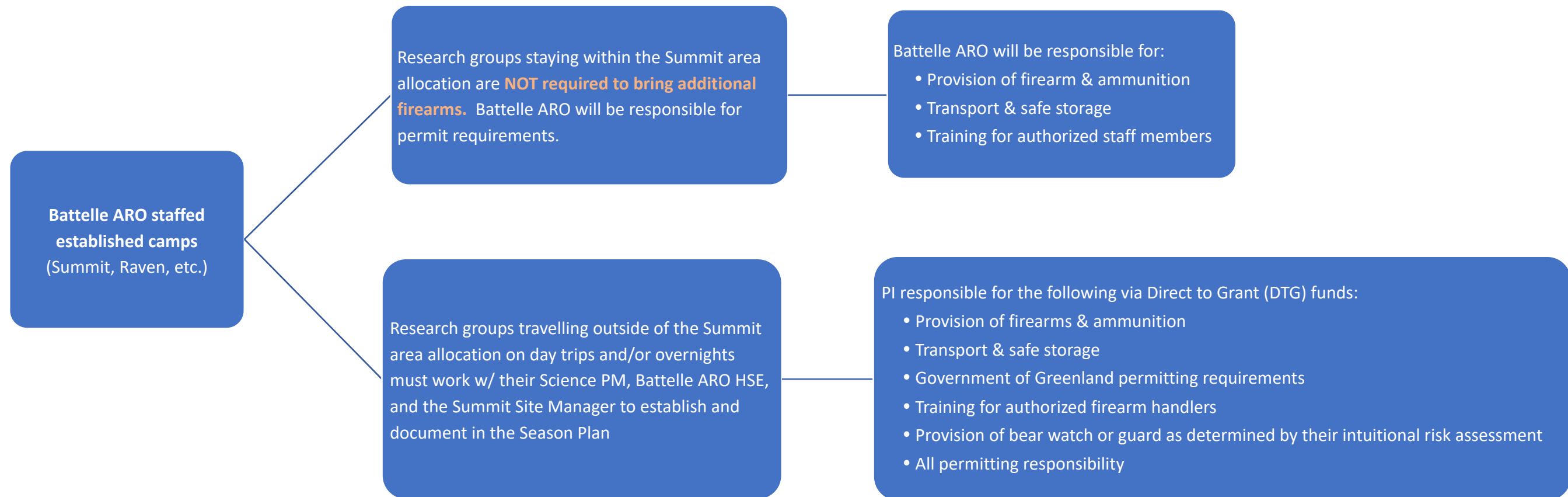
**Scenario 1: Research Group with no approved Battelle ARO staff OR travel beyond Summit Station area allocation boundary**



**Scenario 2: Research group with APPROVED Battelle ARO staff** (aka a camp manager, traverse mechanic, etc.)



### Scenario 3: Battelle ARO staffed established camps (Summit, Raven, etc.)



**Appendix B**

**SEE SEPARATE DOCUMENT: SOP207 Arctic Program Firearm Protocols Appendix B**

