

U.S. National Ice Center

PRESS RELEASE

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U.S National Ice Center Welcomes New Director

28APR2023, SUITLAND, MD — The U.S. National Ice Center (USNIC) comprises elements of the U.S. Navy (USN), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the United States Coast Guard. The Naval Ice Center (NAVICECEN), a military unit under Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command, is the largest component of the USNIC and the Center’s only independent command. The Commanding Officer of NAVICECEN serves simultaneously as the Director of USNIC.

Commander R. D. Travis Wendt, USN relieved Commander Casey J. Gon, USN as Commanding Officer of NAVICECEN during a change of command ceremony held at the NOAA Satellite Operations Facility in Suitland, MD on April 28, 2023 at 1000.

During the ceremony, Commander Gon praised the USNIC workforce, stating: “Their work is revered globally and leveraged by every other ice service in the world.” Commander Gon continued, “My small but mighty team has been able to create partnerships with industry to test new technologies, new ways of gathering information and exporting data to obtain a competitive advantage....It is my opinion that the team rose to my challenges and exceeded expectations.” Commander Gon emphasized to Commander Wendt, “...you inherit a team with a heightened sense of readiness, a team that is ready, capable, and willing to continue to push the limits of supporting operations in, on, or near the ice.”

Commander Gon has served as the Director of USNIC since July 2021, overseeing its team of approximately 50 civilian and uniformed personnel. Under Commander Gon’s leadership, the Center produced 50,000 snow and ice products and continued to modernize its systems and processes to better support the Fleet and various operational customers. The Center boosted its external visibility, participating in numerous community outreach events, professional conferences, and media engagements. Commander Gon boasted, “I challenged the team to kick the doors open, welcome everyone, talk to everyone and anyone who would listen, and tell them what we do. The team executed this vision brilliantly.”

The presiding officer of the ceremony was Captain Mark Murnane, USN, Commander, Fleet Weather Center, Norfolk. During his speech, Captain Murnane mentioned, “Today we honor the

impressive accomplishments...of the USNIC...For at least the next few minutes of today's ceremony, we are all Sailors, and part of the broader Navy family that is dedicated to keeping our forces safe and secure...due to the dedication and ingenuity of this great team." Remarking upon Commander Gon's time in Command, Captain Murnane stated, "I know you led with character, excellence, and respect...Your team did all this with a character-based focus on what right looks like and what the future of the USNIC needs to bring to the fight. I know you have turned over a Command ready for the challenges ahead, and better for the experience of your leadership. Job well done..." In regards to Commander Wendt, "...you and the team are bound for greatness...know that your team is ready today and everyday to get after this mission."

Commander Gon will now serve as Operations Officer, Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command in Stennis, MS.

Commander Wendt most recently served as Fleet Oceanographer for U.S. Second Fleet in Norfolk, VA. Upon assuming command of NAVICECEN, Commander Wendt addressed the USNIC, "It is clear to me that I have big shoes to fill, and I am excited to work with the amazing team [Commander Gon] helped build, train, and lead. I pledge to give you my best – each and every day...I will do everything I can to support your efforts and enable your success."

Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command directs and oversees more than 2,500 globally-distributed military and civilian personnel who collect, process, and exploit environmental information to assist Fleet and Joint Commanders in all warfare areas to make better decisions faster than the adversary.

For more information, please contact:

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