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DHS SELECTS STEVENS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA ANCHORAGE FOR MARITIME RESEARCH CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology (S&T) Directorate announced today the selection of Stevens Institute of Technology (SIT) and University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) as co-leads for a new Center of Excellence for Maritime Research (CMR). S&T will provide each CMR partner with an initial \$1 million cooperative agreement for operations through June, 2015.

“SIT is already contributing to the security of the United States through its research on maritime security challenges, and we anticipate UAA will make similarly significant contributions, in the Arctic maritime environment,” said Dr. Matthew Clark, Director of S&T’s Office of University Programs, which manages DHS’s Center of Excellence (COE) system.

S&T selected the SIT- and UAA-led teams through an open call for proposals and a rigorous competition. This marks the second time SIT and its partners have won this distinction. This is the first COE award for UAA. The new Center will expand efforts initiated in 2008, and develop innovative Arctic research under UAA’s management. The CMR will collaborate with S&T, DHS’s operational components, industrial partners, and other Centers to help the United States address challenges in the maritime domain.

Increased and diversified use of maritime spaces is generating new security challenges and risks, and the potential for increased conflicts among maritime users, stakeholders, and interests. For example, as human recreational and commercial activities increase in the Arctic region, so will DHS’s requirement to understand conditions above, below, and on the surface in this extreme cold environment. The receding of Arctic sea ice has made previously un-navigable waters more available to vessel traffic. Arctic activities, including oil and gas exploration, mineral speculation and exploration, northward-moving fisheries, and tourism are expected to increase dramatically in Arctic waters.

DHS will look towards the new CMR for research to identify better ways to create transparency in the maritime domain along coastal regions and inland waterways, while integrating information and intelligence among stakeholders. DHS expects the CMR to develop new ideas

to address these challenges, provide a scientific basis, and develop new approaches for U.S. Coast Guard and other DHS maritime missions.

CMR will also contribute towards the education of both university students and mid-career professionals engaged in maritime security.

The DHS COEs were established by the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to be a “coordinated, university-based system to enhance the Nation’s homeland security.” S&T’s COEs are a well-integrated network of researchers focused on specific high-priority DHS challenges. The COEs work directly with DHS operational agencies to solve complex and difficult security problems.

For more information about the DHS Office of University Programs and the COEs, please visit www.dhs.gov/st-oup.

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