



The Eastern Military District and Pacific Fleet Control the Eastern Entrance to the Russian Arctic

OE Watch Commentary: The Eastern Military District and Pacific Fleet continue to control the Eastern entrance to the Russian Arctic. The straight line distance from Khabarovsk to Wrangel Island is 3408 kilometers (2117 miles) and as the accompanying news brief from the *Russian Ministry of Defense* reports, a helicopter unit from Khabarovsk is supplying remote military garrisons on Wrangel Island and Cape Schmidt. The article does not state where the helicopter unit is operating from, but the harbor town of Anadyr is a good bet. The original Anadyr airfield was built during World War II for use in ferrying Lend Lease aircraft from Alaska for eventual service against Germany. The straight line distance from Anadyr to Wrangel Island is 731 kilometers (454 miles). It is still a long haul and rugged flying.

End OE Watch Commentary (Grau)

Source: Eastern Military District Press Service, “Airmen of an Eastern Military District Army Aviation Formation based in Khabarovskiy Kray Take up Duty in Arctic Zone of Responsibility” *Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation*, 29 January 2018. <http://www.mil.ru>

The flight routes go through a number of major mountain passes with difficult climatic conditions, which require the ultimate skills and experience on the part of the flight personnel.

The crews of Mi-26 transport helicopters delivered more than 70 tons of various cargo during their duty last year, to remote Eastern Military District garrisons stationed on Wrangel Island and Cape Schmidt.

In addition, the district’s army aviation crews delivered two hydraulic presses weighing a total of about 15 tons to Wrangel Island to support the work of an Eastern Military District ecological subunit.

“The crews will be transporting personnel during troop rotation at military units in the Arctic zone and also various types of cargo for remote garrisons, using Mi-8AMTSh helicopters. In addition, they will deliver provisions to Arctic operating bases. The flight personnel have arrived in the Arctic zone as part of a routine rotation.”



Map showing the Chukchi Sea, north of the Bering Strait and Sea, between Russia and the United States. Location of Anadyr has been added.

Source: Norman Einstein, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chukchi_Sea_map.png, CC BY-SA 3.0.