

ARLIS - ICEBREAKER HEADQUARTERS

The call for more icebreakers is top headline news lately. The need to boost the fleet has been characterized as crucial to the U.S.'s national, economic, and strategic interests. While it's important to build them according to today's standards, the currently existing icebreakers were built years ago with technologies developed and undertaken by the U.S. government in support of Arctic research efforts. This backbone of research will have relevance to today's designers.

What library has been reliably and consistently collecting and cataloging these government icebreaker reports? ARLIS, of course! Alaska Resources Library and Information Services (ARLIS), through its affiliation with nine state, federal, and university agency libraries, has been collecting Alaska-, arctic-, and polar-related materials since before statehood – around the same time some of the current U.S. icebreakers were built.

According to the National Academy of Science, today's icebreakers were developed with technology developed 30 years prior. ARLIS has amassed a large collection of research materials on the technology of icebreakers and Arctic ice in general. This baseline material will be extremely useful to those tasked with understanding, improving and updating technologies related to icebreakers.

Historic topics such as hull form and structural design are covered in depth in the ARLIS collection, and more up-to-date materials are available via professional journal literature searches using the topical databases and online journal retrieval available at ARLIS. Research on the nature of sea ice, ice resistance, environmental effects of icebreakers, and records of sea ice observations throughout Alaska villages – all at ARLIS - continue to have intrinsic value and withstand the test of time.

As contractors and government undertake these important tasks related to developing today's icebreakers, ARLIS materials will be available via onsite research and interlibrary loan to researchers worldwide.