

II. Expedition Dates

Section II of the 2003-2004 season plan includes information concerning vessel and aircraft operations along with estimated dates of expeditions and other significant events.

Winfly Activities

Annual augmentation of the U.S. Antarctic Program (USAP) begins with austral winter flights (WINFLY), departing Christchurch, New Zealand, and arriving McMurdo Station, Antarctica, about 20 August 2003. The aircraft will carry scientists and support personnel to start early pre-summer projects, to augment maintenance personnel, and to prepare skiways and ice runways at McMurdo Station. This will involve 3 U.S. Air Force C-17 flights and will increase station population from the winter-over level of about 154 to a transition level of about 580 (285 personnel expected to deploy at WINFLY).

Mainbody Activities

Austral summer activities will be initiated on 30 September 2003 with wheeled aircraft operations between Christchurch, New Zealand and the sea-ice runways at McMurdo Station, Antarctica. This will involve approximately 21 C-141 flights, 11 C-17 flights and 4 C-5 flights of transport aircraft of the U.S. Air Force Air Mobility Command (AMC), and 15 flights by C-130 transport aircraft of the Royal New Zealand Air Force. The sea-ice runway operations will cease about mid December 2003. Williams Field will open for the ski-equipped LC-130 aircrafts and at the same time approximately 2 days pass the Ice Runway closure, Pegasus Blue Ice Runway will be open for wheeled aircraft from Christchurch to McMurdo. From approximately early January to the end of the season 18 USAF C-141 flights will finish out the airlift movement. The 109th ANG Airlift Wing will fly north from McMurdo to Christchurch on Saturdays and south from Christchurch to McMurdo on Sundays from 1 November through 7 February.

The 109th Air Wing of the Air National Guard in Schenectady, New York will provide six LC-130 aircraft and six crews for intra-continental flights from late October 2003 through mid-February 2004 when McMurdo Station closes.

Significant Dates

Other significant dates for the summer season include:

1. 28 September 2003 - Palmer Station – Summer Operations Commence
2. 30 September 2003 - McMurdo Station – Summer Operations Commence
3. 06 October 2003 - Marble Point opens
4. 15 October 2003 - Copacabana Field Station opens
5. 24 October 2003 - South Pole Station – Summer Operations Commence
6. 10 October 2003 - Odell Glacier Camp opens
7. 11 November 2003 - Byrd Surface Camp opens
8. 11 November 2003 - Cape Shirreff Field Station opens
9. 23 November 2003 - Megadunes Camp opens
10. 26 November 2003 - Light Ground Traverse leaves South Pole for Taylor Dome
11. 20 October 2003 - Beardmore Glacier-Moody Nunatak opens
12. 13 November 2003 - Peterman Island Camp opens
13. 29 November 2003 - Vega Island Camp opens
14. 01 December 2003 - Seymour Island Camp opens

Ship Movements

Resupply Vessel

The resupply vessel (*American Tern*) is scheduled to complete one trip to McMurdo this season. The ship will depart Port Hueneme, California, early January 2004 after on loading cargo and transit directly to Port Lyttelton, New Zealand. The Resupply Vessel will again on load additional cargo and depart New Zealand for McMurdo Station, Antarctica. Cargo will be off-loaded between 02 – 10 February, after which the ship will depart McMurdo and proceed to Lyttelton, New Zealand to offload cargo destined for New Zealand. It will depart on approximately 20 February for Port Hueneme, CA to off-load waste and recyclable materials from McMurdo Station, approximately 09 March 2004 arrival at Port Hueneme, CA.

R/V *Nathaniel B. Palmer*

The R/V *Nathaniel B. Palmer* will conduct cruises in the Southern Ocean surrounding Antarctica; both a north and southbound research transect between Lyttelton, New Zealand and Dutch Harbor, Alaska; and a science cruise above the Arctic Circle. Scientific research conducted onboard includes the following disciplines: Marine Biology, Marine Geology and Geophysics, and Physical and Chemical Oceanography.

The vessel is scheduled for work in both polar regions during the 2003-2004 season, including the Pacific, Southern and Arctic Oceans, Chukchi and Ross Seas. During the southbound transit following the Arctic Ocean cruise, a seismic sea trial will be conducted to evaluate and test a new multi-channel streamer system. Ports of call include: Barrow and Dutch Harbor, Alaska; Honolulu, Hawaii; Lyttelton, New Zealand; McMurdo Station; and Pago Pago, American Samoa. The NBP will sail in support of approximately nine science cruises during the 2003-2004 season.

R/V Laurence M. Gould

The R/V *Laurence M. Gould* will conduct cruises in the Antarctic Peninsula area of the Southern Ocean and Drake Passage. Research projects supported during the 2003-2004 season will include Marine Biology, Chemical and Physical Oceanography, and Marine Geology and Geophysics. The R/V *Laurence M. Gould* will also provide logistic support to transport scientists, cargo, and personnel to and from Palmer Station from its primary port of Punta Arenas, Chile.

The R/V *Laurence M. Gould* will transport support personnel to and from Palmer Station, provide research support in and around the Bransfield Strait areas, and enter a routine maintenance period from 30 June to 10 August 2003 in Punta Arenas, Chile. Ports of call include: Punta Arenas, Chile and Palmer Station, Antarctica. The vessel will sail in support of nine science cruises, two peninsula research field camp openings and Palmer Station staff and resupply shuttles in the Antarctic Peninsula area during the 2003-2004 season.