**Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station**

**National Science Foundation**

**Celebrating a Century of Science & Exploration**

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Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station is one of three year-round Antarctic research stations operated by the National Science Foundation, which manages the U.S. Antarctic Program. The United States has maintained a scientific station at the South Pole since the International Geophysical year in 1957. The current elevated station, the third station on the site, is the most imposing structure ever built at the Pole and the 13-year construction project required 825 flights by ski-equipped LC-130 aircraft flown by the N.Y. Air National Guard. A total of 24 million pounds of cargo were transported to complete construction.

In November of 2007, Popular Science magazine named the elevated station as one of its “Best of What’s New” innovations of the year. The station was dedicated on 2008 slightly more than 50 years after men spent the first winter at the Pole in 1957, during the IGY. That first group was an 18-member team of U.S. Navy personnel and civilian scientists.

The elevated station replaced a station that was built in the 1970’s. That station was covered by a signature geodesic dome. That station has been dismantled and removed from the continent. The replacement of the dome was given critical support by the external press initially, in 1997 report, argued that the existing facilities at the South Pole were built modestly and potentially unsafe. The report stated the Antarctic today is a continent generally characterized by peaceful, environmentally friendly, human activity. High among the reasons for this situation is the role played by the U.S. in helping create a system of treaties and international agreements governing the nature of human conduct on the continent. The presence of the U.S. in Antarctica is a key element of the continued stability of the region.

**TRANSPORTING MATERIALS TO THE SOUTH POLE TO BUILD THE STATION**

- **Port Rosene, CA, USA**
  - 17 days
  - 8,000 miles

- **Christchurch, NZ**
  - 7 days
  - 2,400 miles

- **McMurdo, Antarctica**
  - 3 hrs
  - 900 m.

- **5 Pole season**
  - 100 days

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**CHALLENGES OF BUILDING AT THE SOUTH POLE**

- **WIND**
  - Contributing winds cause ice pile-up on buildings.
  - Wind can create an ice embankment that has to be shredded.
  - Ice has to be cleared before work can begin.

- **ICE FLOW**
  - The frequency and size of ice flow is unpredictable.
  - The flow of ice can be stopped by adding layers of ice.

- **ICE CREEP**
  - The weight of the building causes the ice to move locally.
  - The building moves and shifts away from the source of pressure.
  - The building is held in place by a system of cables.