ABOUT COMNAP

What We Are About

COMNAP brings together the National Antarctic Programs, the agencies tasked by their government to implement and manage their national activities in Antarctica, including organising expeditions.

Most of these activities focus on the support of scientific research but do also contribute to the governance and environmental protection of the Antarctic region under the auspices of the Antarctic Treaty. As a Council of managers and operators, COMNAP is competent in the realm of operational implementation, safety, technology and information sharing and provides the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings (ATCM) and the Antarctic Treaty Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP) with relevant technical advice developed using members' pool of expertise.

COMNAP's primary function is to exchange practical, operational information to help all National Programs fulfill their various missions, together or independently. Assistance includes mutual support in the design, improvement and operation of Antarctic facilities and support infrastructure, including 37 year-round stations and several seasonal stations with a combined winter population close to 1100 and a peak summer population around 4000, 30 airfields, a number of aircraft and some 40 ships.

How We Began

The National Antarctic Programs have their foundation in the early expeditions sent to explore, map and study Antarctica in the 19th and 20th centuries.

These early expeditions already relied on international cooperation, as illustrated by the first two winter expeditions: on board the Belgica (1897-1899) under Belgian Adrien de Gerlache and at Cape Adare (1898-1900) under Norwegian Carsten Borchgrevink. These first two wintering parties involved 29 men from 9 different nations, all part of today's 31 COMNAP nations.

COMNAP has its roots in this long-standing, ongoing tradition of international collaboration in the conduct of Antarctic expeditions. After many years of informal, ongoing collaboration, coordination and mutual assistance, the National Antarctic Programs formally established COMNAP in 1988.

COMNAP was guickly recognised as a valuable component of the Antarctic Treaty System and in 1991 was granted observer status at Antarctic Treaty Meetings (ATCM). It also has observer status at meetings of the Antarctic Treaty Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP). COMNAP provides the ATCM and CEP with technical advice in the realm of operational implementation, safety, technology and information sharing.

Membership of COMNAP is open to the National Antarctic Programs from countries that are signatories to the Antarctic Treaty and have ratified its Protocol on Environmental Protection.

COMNAP currently brings together the National Antarctic Programs from 29 countries: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, Russia, South Korea, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Uruguay. Two more National Programs, from Estonia and România, are in the process of joining (current at 01-June-2006).

How We Work

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COMNAP works primarily through a number of groups focused on various areas of expertise such as ship and air operations, environmental management or training. This includes in particular a Standing Committee on Antarctic Logistics and Operations (SCALOP) which regroups the National Programs' heads of operations

Each group has two main functions in its domain of expertise:

- · Continually exchange practical, operational information to help identify practical solutions in the support of Antarctic Programs and facilitate relevant cooperation and collaboration;
- · Respond to requests from COMNAP for specialist advice on specific issues and for developing common solutions or guidelines as the need arises.

A COMNAP secretariat currently based in Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, provides a central point of contact, operates common communications infrastructure and a central information repository and maintains coordination between the members.

The COMNAP Council meets at least once a year and has ultimate decision power on all COMNAP matters. Each member Program is represented on the Council both by its 'Manager' and by its representative on SCALOP. Each Program has one vote and decisions are normally taken by consensus.

A COMNAP Executive Committee is responsible for COMNAP matters between meetings of the Council.

What We Do

COMNAP is focusing its efforts on furthering the development of effective, sustainable Antarctic expeditions, in particular through the use and continual improvement of best operational and environmental practices and through facilitation and promotion of collaboration and coordination between Programs.

It includes the development and publication of a number of comprehensive procedures and guidelines on topics such as air safety, operation of aircraft near wildlife, shipping in Antarctic ice-covered waters, waste management, prevention of oil spills, contingency planning.

COMNAP also publishes the Antarctic Flight Information Manual (AFIM), that provides information on all landing facilities in Antarctica, and a map of National Antarctic facilities

Examples of issues addressed by COMNAP and its groups in 2006 are:

- · Review of fuel-related guidelines;
- · Development of an integrated accident, incident and near-miss reporting and analysis system, with a focus on analysing and sharing experience and solutions;
- · Review of field safety issues;
- · Air transport aspects of international cooperation;
- · Principles for Search and Rescue cooperation;
- · Assessment of both negative and positive impacts of interaction between National Programs and other operators;
- Review of ballast water practices;
- · Improved safety of navigation through the support of hydrographic surveying and charting;
- · Facilitation and support of the development of joint National Program staff training initiatives.
- Establishment of common standards for medical screening for the interchange of personnel between National Antarctic Programs;
- Facilitation of partnerships between National Programs in Education, Outreach and Communication (EOC), in particular in support of the IPY
- · Practical application of State of the Environment indicators, in particular parameters to measure the assessment of human impact at visited sites and methodology for evaluating impacts;
- · Operational aspects of biosecurity threats;
- Facilitation of the uptake of best practices for monitoring;

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(2) Concordia Station opened 12/1997 for summer-only operation. Opened for year-round operation 12/2005.
(3) Original SANAE Station opened 12/1997 for summer-only operation. Opened for year-round operation 02/2016.
(4) Toul Station opened Feb 1990 for summer-only operation. Opened for year-round operation 02/2015.

Antarctic Treaty (AT) membership data is supplied by the Antarctic Treaty Secretariat in 2006. Internet Address: http://www.ats.aq

· Facilitation of the exchange of operating experience and development of cooperative projects in alternative energy and emerging technologies







The Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs www.comnap.aq info@comnap.aq

MAP **ANTARCTICA** and the Southern Ocean

MAIN ANTARCTIC FACILITIES OPERATED BY THE NATIONAL ANTARCTIC PROGRAMS IN THE ANTARCTIC TREATY AREA (SOUTH OF 60°LATITUDE SOUTH)

COMNAP in Brief

COMNAP brings together the National Antarctic Programs from 29 countries from Europe, Africa, Asia, the Americas and Australasia, with two more in the process of joining. The functional basis for COMNAP, within the Antarctic Treaty System is that, as a Council of managers and operators, it is competent in the realm of operational implementation, safety, technology and information sharing. It provides the Antarctic Treaty, on request, with technical advice developed using members' pool of expertise.

The National Antarctic Programs are those agencies tasked by their government to implement and manage their national activities in Antarctica, including organising expeditions. While most of these activities focus on the support of scientific research, they do also contribute to the governance and environmental protection of the Antarctic region under the auspices of the Antarctic Treaty.

The National Antarctic Programs have their foundation in the early expeditions sent to explore, map and study Antarctica in the 19th and 20th centuries and COMNAP has its roots in the long-standing, ongoing tradition of international collaboration in the conduct of Antarctic expeditions.

COMNAP's primary function and activities are related to the exchange of practical, operational information with a view to improving the way all National Programs can fulfill their various missions, together or independently. That includes mutual support in the design, ongoing improvement and operation of Antarctic facilities and transport infrastructure.

In addition to supporting its members, COMNAP works with the other Antarctic bodies to support effective, sustainable Antarctic expeditions and the success of the Antarctic Treaty System.

Where to find us

Visit us at www.comnap.aq or 25 Salamanca Square, Hobart, Tasmania Email: info@comnap.aq; Fax + 613 6233 5497; Tel + 613 6233 5498 Postal: The Executive Secretary, COMNAP Secretariat, GPO Box 824, Hobart, Tasmania 7001 Australia

Looking for Antarctic information material?

Visit www.comnap.aq/publications for more maps, brochures and other Antarctic information material related to the activities of the National Antarctic Programs.

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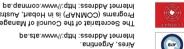
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MAIN ANTARCTIC FACILITIES

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The Antarctic Spatial Data is from the following source:

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(1) Original Belgrano Station opened 1955. Replaced by Belgrano II 1979.

aphical data is derived from the Antarctic Digital Database (Version 4). Features include Coastline, Contours, Glacier Flow Lines and Exposed Rock utific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR). The Maximum Sea Ice Extent is based on passive microwave data between 1989 and 1999

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All other information is from the following sources:

The Topographic data, Entarctic Polar Front and Maximum Sea Ice Extent data, is supplied by Australian Antarctic Division

