

CHAPTER 5:**Travel Guidelines**

An LC-130 plane flown by the New York Air National Guard takes off from the Shackleton Glacier in Antarctica. Four jet-assisted take off rockets can be seen on the side of the fuselage, providing extra power for lifting off the surface.



photo by Charles Kaminski

This chapter gives travel advice for the foreign countries through which you may travel, explains how to obtain your extreme cold weather (ECW) clothing issue, how to transport your baggage, your arrival at the US antarctic station, and your return from Antarctica.

TRAVEL ADVICE**Customs and Mail Warning**

Like any travelers, participants must obey foreign laws. These laws can differ from those of the US, and penalties for violations can be more severe than those of our country. Persons found in violation of these laws are subject to prosecution in the local courts. Association with the US Antarctic Program affords neither preferential treatment nor immunity from prosecution.

Governments are determined to prevent the passage of illegal materials, especially illegal drugs, through their countries. You could be imprisoned for life for bringing or mailing illegal drugs into a foreign country.

Methods of finding illegal materials include the use of trained dogs, handled by the New Zealand Customs Service. At NSF's request all mail destined for Antarctica is screened/inspected by New Zealand Customs Service. On occasion, US citizens have been detained by customs on their return. Some of them have been found guilty of carrying illegal materials and have been fined.

US law also prohibits the mailing of controlled substances, which includes illegal drugs. The policy (6 April 1982 Federal Register, pages 14864-14866) recognizes the responsibility of the US to assure that personnel authorized to use the military postal facilities do not abuse the customs, tax, and other laws of the host country. This applies to articles/mail that are staying within New Zealand. New Zealand Customs Service does not assess a tax or duty for items going to Antarctica.

In addition to being guilty of criminal activity and causing inconvenience and expense to themselves, persons who try to bring illegal materials through foreign countries embarrass their own country. In particular, the New Zealand mail interdictions have delayed mail for all program participants.

- ▶ Obey the law.
- ▶ Do not try to take illegal substances through foreign countries.
- ▶ Do not mail illegal substances.
- ▶ Tell your friends not to mail illegal substances to you.

There are also heavy penalties for concealing dutiable goods from Customs or for making false declarations. It is against the law to take dutiable items (e.g., cameras, radios, binoculars) and to sell them or give them away without paying duty.

Stay in Contact

While awaiting transportation from New Zealand or Chile, keep the local program representatives informed of where you are and how they can contact you. Transport schedules often are revised on short notice.

Be Patient

Whether you travel to Antarctica via a research vessel or by air, you should be prepared to handle delays and changes in schedules. Every effort is made to ensure the safety of program participants and that often means departures are delayed or flights are turned around. This may be due to mechanical considerations, ice conditions, and especially changes in weather.

Currency Exchange

Learn the currency exchange rate before departing for a foreign country. Bank representatives will change foreign money for US money at US international airports. You also can change money at most banks in foreign countries. Remember that banks and stores may be closed on weekends. ATM cards can be conveniently used.

Generally, a better exchange rate will be found in the country whose currency you are purchasing than in the US. Also, in Chile, rates can vary significantly between banks and currency exchange houses.

Chilean and New Zealand banks will not cash personal checks drawn on US checking accounts. Carry enough money in the form of travelers checks or international credit cards such as Visa. Chapter 2: Personal Finances, tells how to transfer money to New Zealand.

Electrical Compatibility

The electrical voltage in New Zealand is 230v 50hz. For Chile it is 220v 50hz. Most portable computers will have an AC converter that will be compliant. The user will require a suitable adapter plug to connect to the wall outlet, which can be purchased from hardware and travel stores. Some small appliances, such as razors and hair dryers, can be purchased with dual voltage capabilities, but would still require an adapter plug to fit into the wall sockets.

You can find information on the type of electricity used and the electrical plugs needed for countries around the world at various web sites. An example is <http://kropla.com/electric.htm>.

Personal Vacations

You may elect to travel to other countries prior to returning to the United States. Any costs associated with the additional travel will be your responsibility. You will need to return to the RPSNZ/AGUNSA office to collect your tickets and any stored baggage. If you wish to spend time in New Zealand or South America, you will need to be in compliance with the immigration policies. When you stay in a country as a tourist, the program is no longer your sponsor, and you are responsible for observing immigration and customs regulations.

Grantees and RPSC full-time employees vacationing in New Zealand **before** going to

Antarctica **must** contact the RPSNZ Travel office in Christchurch (telephone 0-800-358-8139) at least three days before their scheduled date to fly to Antarctica (but preferably earlier). Flight schedules to Antarctica often change, and it is advantageous to both you and the RPSNZ Travel office if regular contact is made during the period of leave.

The US Antarctic Program takes advantage of significantly lower rates on airline tickets that are purchased in advance and available for return travel less than one year from the first date of travel. The program requires its travelers to cover the extra expenses of taking vacation en route. If you elect to vacation in New Zealand, and thus extend your stay beyond the maximum stay allowed, the fare difference could be significant.

If returning from McMurdo, your visitor permit received in Auckland on your way to Antarctica is valid until the date shown on the stamp in your passport. If the permit has already expired, and you plan on being in New Zealand longer than two weeks, you must contact the New Zealand Immigration Service within 14 calendar days to extend your permit. If you intend to vacation in New Zealand, and your current permit will expire while you are in New Zealand, apply for an extension in Christchurch **before** your current permit expires. If you have a valid outbound ticket and sufficient funds for your stay, the New Zealand Immigration Service in Christchurch will issue a temporary permit. The RPSNZ Travel Office will assist you in obtaining an extension to your visitor permit by providing a letter to accompany the application form. Ultimately, you are the one responsible for applying for the permit.

TRAVEL THROUGH NEW ZEALAND

Transfer at Auckland. Auckland International Airport is the port of entry into New Zealand for most participants. There, you process through Health, Immigration, and Customs checks. Have your passport, RPSC nine-month visa letter (on company letterhead) in your ticket jacket, boarding passes, and New Zealand Customs declaration form handy. If you are hand-carrying high-tech and/or scientific equipment into New Zealand, be prepared to show your New Zealand Customs “Temporary Importation Into New Zealand” form to Customs officials. In the baggage claim area, carts are available for your use at no cost. After getting all your checked baggage, you are directed to Customs. Then you can recheck your baggage for the domestic flight to Christchurch. This can be done while you are still at the international terminal.

The domestic terminal is 900 meters (1000 yards) from the international one. You can take a free bus or walk between the two.

Flight to Christchurch. The flight from Auckland to Christchurch takes approximately 90 minutes. If your departure from Auckland to Christchurch is delayed or rescheduled (for example, your flight from the States was delayed and you missed your connecting flight) rearrange your onward travel at the appropriate airline counter – there are regularly scheduled flights available. Call the RPSNZ Travel office in Christchurch toll free (0.800.358.8139) and state the change. If you are in a group of Antarctic travelers, elect one member to call with information about everyone in the group.

All participants will be provided instructions via e-mail from the Christchurch Travel Office regarding hotel, ECW issue times, office hours, etc. Please print this document and carry it with you. In addition, DSG will provide travel documents prior to stateside flight departure. If you have any questions, please contact deploy@usap.gov or call the DSG offices: 1-800-688-8606 prompt 2 or local (303) 790-8606 prompt 2.

If you have a problem with mishandled luggage, please do as you normally would stateside: file a claim with the airline upon arrival at Christchurch. Retain a copy of your luggage claim form and talk with



photo by David A. Carson

Lyttelton Harbor is located just a few kilometers from Christchurch, New Zealand.

the Christchurch Travel office so they know you are experiencing a problem.

Travel Service	Telephone:	1.800.390.1449 (from the US)
RPSNZ Limited	Toll-free:	0800.358.8139 (within New Zealand)
38 Orchard Road	Fax:	011.643.357.8850 (from the US)
Christchurch	E-mail:	chctravel@usap.gov
New Zealand	Contact:	Travel Services Representative

NSF in New Zealand. An NSF office in the International Antarctic Center near Christchurch International Airport maintains a working relationship with the host country and supports program activities in Antarctica. Telephone 03.358.8138 (from USA: 1.800.390.1449), Fax 03.358.9060 (from USA: 011.643.358.9060).

US–NZ Antarctic coordination. New Zealand is one of the original Antarctic Treaty signatory nations and has operated an Antarctic program since the 1957-1958 International Geophysical Year. Cooperation with the US is extensive in both science and logistics. US investigators planning cooperative arrangements should plan directly with NZ investigators or research institutions rather than official NZ government units, except when approved in advance by a US Antarctic Program official.

Accommodations. Hotel/motel reservations in Christchurch are booked in advance by RPSC for all participants for the length of their stay in Christchurch. This method enables the Christchurch office to find you should there be a change in date or time for your departure to Antarctica.

If you have a specific hotel request, you will have indicated this on the travel request worksheet that you submitted to the DSG in Denver. The DSG will have forwarded this request to the Christchurch office. Every endeavor will be made to book the hotel of your choice; however, it may be necessary to book alternative accommodation if rooms are not available. If you plan to stay with friends in Christchurch, please advise the DSG of the contact telephone number in Christchurch where messages can be left for you. Flight schedules change often, and it is critical that the office knows how to contact you with updates.

Hotel operators in New Zealand expect advance bookings to be honored. If you are not satisfied with your accommodations, please advise RPSNZ Travel, which will arrange for cancellation of the original reservation as well as for alternate accommodation for you. Do not change your reservations without prior approval of the change by the RPSNZ Travel office. If you do not honor your hotel reservation, expect to be billed by the hotel for the first night of the booking. With the high level of tourism in New Zealand, accommodations in summer are sometimes difficult to obtain, and disregard of the arrangements made for you will jeopardize our ability to provide accommodations in the future.

Always lock your hotel/motel room, and take precautions to safeguard your money and valuables. Hotel/motel bills, telephone charges, etc., should be settled the night before your departure from Christchurch.

E-mail and Fax. Christchurch offers a variety of options for sending e-mail and fax services at reasonable rates.

Long distance calls. Most New Zealand hotels permit direct dialing of long distance calls. Long distance calls also may be placed using a pre-paid phone card, or US calling cards from carriers such as MCI and AT&T. New Zealand phone cards can be purchased at the airport and at various shops throughout the country.

Medical care. If you need medical care in New Zealand, please contact the RPSNZ medical coordinator, who will assist you with arranging medical/dental appointments. There will be a charge for your visit to the doctor/dentist. See Chapter 2: Health Insurance.

Public transportation. An extensive network of bus routes serves Christchurch, Lyttelton, the airport and US Antarctic Program offices. There is frequent bus service between the airport, US Antarctic Program offices, Cathedral Square in downtown Christchurch and local hotels. Taxi and shuttle details are provided in your arrival documents.

Car rental and insurance. If you rent a car, be sure you know New Zealand traffic regulations and have sufficient insurance. A booklet on traffic laws called the Road Code is available at auto rental agencies. Traffic regulations are strictly enforced. Driving is on the left side of the road and requires strict attention. A driving permit is not required if you can provide a valid US driver's license.

Extreme Cold Weather Clothing Issue

ECW clothing and accessories will be provided to you at no charge at the Christchurch Clothing Distribution Center (CDC). These items are to be returned to the CDC immediately upon your return from Antarctica. Clothing issued is the property of the NSF. Participants are responsible for all issued clothing.

The issued ECW clothing is functional, sturdy, and cost effective. It includes special items of outer clothing required for the antarctic climate, such as parkas and boots. The majority of clothing is in men's sizes but will fit both men and women. However, to ensure an acceptable fit, be sure to provide accurate measurements on the Personal Information Form (submitted with your medical information).

It is important that you **try on all** of the ECW clothing (including boots) at your fitting session. Any sizing errors will be corrected at that time. The type and amount of clothing you receive depends on where you work and what your job title entails. Most, but not all, of the ECW clothing is mandatory. If you are new to the program, it is best to take all the clothing issued to you. There will be no additional clothing issued. If items are lost in Antarctica, a limited amount of resupply ECW clothing is available on station; however, the resupply stock is older and may not be an exact replacement for the lost/worn item.

The clothing issued to you is **US government property**. You are responsible for it and required to return it in New Zealand or South America during redeployment. Some issued clothing, especially parkas, are subject to theft, and special attention should be taken to prevent loss. Abnormal damages or unreported loss of clothing will result in your being billed for repair or

replacement costs. Any theft or loss should be reported immediately to the NSF representative or the station manager. It is illegal for you to mail government property from Antarctica. It is illegal for individuals to buy or sell government property including clothing.

To McMurdo Station

Report for your flight at the time given to you by RPSNZ Travel Services. If you are scheduled for an early morning departure, you should order a taxicab or shuttle the night before. Allow at least 20 minutes to drive from Christchurch city center to the International Antarctic Center.

You will be asked to pack one bag with personal items/clothing and other essentials required for a one- or two-night delay. In the event your flight turns around (boomerangs) or is otherwise delayed after you have checked in, this is the only bag that will be returned to you.

As part of the check-in process you will be given time to change into your ECW gear, pack your carry-on and boomerang bags, and store any other baggage that you will not need in Antarctica in the CDC secured storage room.

Notify the RPSC representative or the agent of any accompanied cargo or baggage that exceeds your authorized weight. Remember that authorization for excess baggage

Bring Your Own:

- Water bottle
- Sunglasses
- Extra socks*
- Extra long underwear*

* You will be issued two pairs of wool socks and one pair of lightweight long underwear (top/bottom).

The Following Must be Worn or Carried on All Flights



- Closed-toe shoes or boots must be worn.
- In the event of a 'turn-around,' only the boomerang bag will be returned to passengers.

must be obtained in advance from RPSC. Failure to do so may force loading this cargo on a later plane. This also applies to your northbound return. See Chapter 3: How and What to Pack.

Your passport should be ready for inspection by New Zealand Customs.

You will be issued an Antarctic Departure Card, which you are required to complete before moving through to the Antarctic Passenger Terminal (APT). Your passport will be checked and the Departure Card taken from you at check-in at the APT.

After dressing for your flight and completing your Antarctic Departure Card, you may walk through to the APT for official check-in and weigh-in. This is commonly known as 'bag drag.'

After being checked through the APT, you will no longer have access to your baggage except the carry-on piece. You may not leave the area unless authorized by officials. Transportation to the plane is provided. Personnel who, in the judgment of the airplane crew, are intoxicated will not be permitted to board airplanes, either en route to or from Antarctica, or when traveling within the Antarctic continent.

You will fly between New Zealand and Antarctica on an NSF- or military-owned LC-130 Hercules turboprop airplane operated by the US Air Force 109th Airlift Wing, on an NSF-chartered C-17 plane (jet powered) operated by the US Air Force Air Mobility Command, or a Royal New Zealand Air Force C-130. The LC-130 flight takes about 8 hours; the C-130 flight, about 7 hours; the C-17 flight, about 5 hours.

These cargo and troop planes are not designed primarily for passenger convenience. Sack lunches are served during the flights at no cost to the traveler. Toilets are provided on all planes, but the facilities can be awkward.

On the plane, you will hear an announcement that you are about to arrive at McMurdo Station. The air crew will ask you and your fellow travelers to pick up all the trash and put it in containers. Then, recalling the clothing instructions, organize yourself and your gear. Shortly, you will be instructed to fasten your seat belt.

The weather in Antarctica is likely to be clear, cold, and very bright. After the plane has stopped, gather your possessions, zip up your parka, and put on sunglasses and gloves. An air service representative will board and brief you about disembarking.

On arrival at McMurdo Station, you will be given an in-brief and instructions about collecting baggage and about your housing. Generally, your checked baggage will be ready for you at the Movement Control Center (MCC) in McMurdo two hours or so after you arrive. For larger groups, RPSC often sends a vehicle to the MCC to pick up and distribute baggage.

Return to New Zealand

Grantees: At least 10 days prior to your planned departure from Antarctica, advise the NSF passenger coordinator in the Chalet or the science coordinator at South Pole of your intended departure date from Antarctica and of any stopover en route to your airport of departure. The staff will, in turn, coordinate your requirements with the Raytheon Polar Services (NZ) Limited representative in Christchurch. You should also ensure that your retrograde cargo is ready for transport. See Retrograde Cargo in Chapter 4.

RPSC Employees: Weeks before redeployment begins, employees are given check-out instructions, and personal flight request information is collected. Prior to completion of your contract, your supervisor will schedule you on one of the return flights from McMurdo to Christchurch. You will also be given a travel fund for your redeployment from Antarctica.

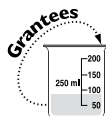
NOTE: Redeployment travel is coordinated by the Christchurch Travel Office.

Excess Baggage. Remember that prior approval for excess baggage is required for anything over the standard limits (see Chapter 3) and that prior approvals are required for both south and northbound travel. If you check-in for a northbound flight in McMurdo without the necessary



photo by Kristan Hutchinson

A US Antarctic Program participant weighs her baggage at the Antarctic Passenger Terminal in Christchurch, New Zealand.



excess baggage approvals, you will be required to mail that excess at your own expense through the US Post Office at McMurdo Station.

Be sure to carry your **passport on your person** and not in your hand-carry bag. You may not have access to your hand-carry prior to passing through customs.

Upon your return to Christchurch from McMurdo, you will be met in the terminal building customs area by personnel from the Raytheon Polar Services Company (NZ) Representative. Transportation will be provided to the CDC so that you may return your cold weather clothing issue and retrieve personal belongings stored in the security room. You will be given information about your accommodations and travel before departing for your hotel by taxi or shuttle bus. Your airline tickets will be attached to your arrival documentation at the CDC or available from the Travel Office.

Before leaving the Auckland or Christchurch airport on an international flight, a NZ\$25 departure fee is payable and may be included in your ticket purchase.

NOTE: Remember that your APO privilege to mail boxes at US rates expires in 10 days. See Chapter 3: APO Privileges.

TRAVEL THROUGH CHILE

Over the years the US has staged its Antarctic Peninsula operations, which depend mostly on ship transport and research cruises, through both Chile and Argentina. Any deployments through Argentina, or other countries, are coordinated in advance directly with the NSF and RPSC. In Chile, the US Antarctic Program has contracted with Agencias Universales S.A. (AGUNSA) to provide support and manage local offices.

Chile and the US cooperate frequently in Antarctica. Chile is an Antarctic Treaty nation, and it has year-round stations along the Antarctic Peninsula. Argentina and the US have also cooperated in a number of antarctic projects. Argentina is also an Antarctic Treaty nation, and it has a year-round research program that centers on the Antarctic Peninsula.

While Spanish is the predominant language, English is spoken by many of its citizens, including agents employed by RPSC to assist you in your passage. A simple Spanish phrase book may prove helpful.

Health. If you require health care on your travel through Chile, contact the local AGUNSA office for assistance in making appointments. Be prepared to pay for services at your appointment. See Chapter 2 on health insurance.

The two cities that you will pass through in Chile are **Santiago** (population: 5 million), the capital, where your plane from the US will land, and **Punta Arenas** (population: 150,000), from where you will depart for Antarctica. In the austral summer, Santiago is hot, and the weather in Punta Arenas can vary from cold to warm. Chile's food and lodging costs are about the same as or less than in the US.

Arrival and departure taxes. US passport holders who are first-time visitors to Chile will be required to pay an international arrival tax of US\$100 upon arrival in Santiago, Chile. This can be paid in US dollars or by credit card. This arrival tax payment is good for the life of your passport and should be secured in your passport. RPSC employees who go through the Denver office for Orientation prior to departure will receive \$100 at that time to cover the Entrance/Tourist tax.

On arrival at the Santiago airport you will be met by an AGUNSA agent, who will assist you through customs and help you to make the onward domestic flight to Punta Arenas. The agent will direct you from the international terminal to the domestic terminal and ensure that you get on your flight to Punta Arenas. The agent will also advise you of any costs for airport taxes or excess baggage. In an **emergency**, the US Embassy in Santiago may be phoned at 330-3321 or 330-3700 (from the US: 562-330-3321 or 562-330-3700).

Costs for hotel rooms, incidentals, and meals will be paid by you. The agents and ships representatives can provide local information as to restaurants, money exchange, etc.

The flight to Punta Arenas takes approximately 3-1/2 hours. Again, a representative from the

husbanding agent, AGUNSA, will meet you at the airport and provide transportation to a local hotel or the vessel. You may be asked to board the vessel immediately upon arrival in Punta Arenas. However, the majority of people traveling to the station are scheduled to spend one night in a hotel and board the ship the following day. Generally, if you are not asked to board the ship immediately, you should not request to do so since it means the ship is not yet ready to take passengers. Be on schedule, as time to complete your outfitting is limited and ship schedules are often tight.

AGUNSA manages the US Antarctic Program ECW clothing warehouse. The airport representative will greet and assist you, notify you of your ECW clothing issue time, your ship embarkation times, and help you with local authorities.

Santiago

AGUNSA	
Agencies Universales, S.A.	
Andrés Bello 2687	Telephone: 56-62-203-9000
Piso 15	Fax: 56-62-203-9009
Las Condes	E-mail: ebraniff@agunsa.cl
Santiago, Chile	

Punta Arenas

AGUNSA Main Office	Telephone: 65-61-248706/241065
Av. Independencia 772	Fax: 56-61-228239
Casilla 60-D	E-mail: den-agunsaPA@usap.gov
Punta Arenas, Chile	

AGUNSA	Telephone: 011-566-124-7503
Warehouse Port Area	Fax: 56-61-226095
Casilla 60-D	E-mail: den-agunsaPA@usap.gov
Punta Arenas, Chile	

NOTE: Nothing may be charged to the agent that has not been approved in writing by the NSF/OPP.

ECW Clothing

ECW clothing and accessories will be provided to you at no charge from the Punta Arenas warehouse. These must be returned to the warehouse immediately upon your arrival in Punta Arenas on your return from Antarctica. You are responsible for the safekeeping and accountability of all items issued and may be charged for loss or damage as a result of gross negligence or willful misconduct.

The ECW clothing issued is functional, sturdy, and cost effective. It includes special items of outer clothing required for the antarctic climate, such as parkas and boots. To ensure an acceptable fit, be sure to provide accurate measurements on the Personal Information Form (submitted with your medical packet).

It is important that you try on **all** the ECW clothing (including boots) at your fitting session. Any sizing errors will be corrected at that time. The type and amount of clothing you receive depends on where you work and what your job title entails. If you are new to the program, it is best to take all the clothing issued to you. There will be no additional clothing issued. If items are lost in Antarctica, a limited amount of resupply ECW clothing is available on station; however, the resupply stock is older and may not be an exact replacement for the lost/worn item.

Baggage

Due to crowded conditions on the research vessels, you should pack required clothing and personal items you'll need on the journey into a single piece of luggage. The remainder of your luggage will be stowed in the ship's hold and returned to you on arrival at the work site.

Only science equipment that is used in multi-year projects may be stored in the warehouse if approved in advance by NSF.

To Palmer Station

Travel to Palmer Station and other Peninsula research sites is primarily via the R/V *Laurence M. Gould*. The ship transit takes 4-5 days depending on routing. Once embarked, the RPSC representative and ship's personnel will outline ship procedures, safety policies, and room assignments.

Ship transits are usually crowded, so please comply with regulations and show courtesy in the dining areas. Meals are provided free. If you are prone to motion sickness consult with your personal physician prior to deployment. Over-the-counter type pills (e.g., Meclizine) are often sufficient to relieve sea-sickness.

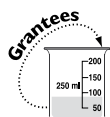
On arrival at Palmer Station, please clean your cabin and ensure you take all your baggage and personal items with you when you disembark.

Return to Chile

Grantees: At least 3 weeks before you plan to return from the Antarctic Peninsula area to South America, give your northbound travel plan to the RPSC administrative coordinator at Palmer Station or the marine projects coordinator on your ship. Identify any requirement for excess baggage or special handling of material. Airline and hotel bookings will be confirmed for you with the appropriate agent. You should also ensure that any retrograde cargo is ready for transport: see "Retrograde (return) Cargo" in Chapter 4.

RPSC Employees: Prior to completion of your contract, your departure will be scheduled; you will have indicated any travel plans and will be given your travel fund.

On arrival in South America, you will be met by the AGUNSA representative who will give you your airline tickets and collect your ECW clothing issue. For personnel traveling straight through Chile to the US or on NSF/OPP-approved business travel, AGUNSA will confirm travel arrangements and transport personnel and baggage to the airport. Individuals with personal deviations from the Punta Arenas/Santiago/US direct route will be directed by AGUNSA to coordinate their personal travel. **Personal travel arrangements can be completed by calling American Airlines' Meeting Services at 1.800.433.1790.** Individuals on personal travel are responsible for their own transportation to the Punta Arenas airport, and will not receive a 'meet and assist' service in Santiago. ■



*The Research Vessel
Laurence M. Gould near
the Antarctic Peninsula.*

photo by Zee Erans