

McMurdo Area User Committee (MAUC)
ad hoc Meeting
1 December 2011
McMurdo Station

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***ad hoc* McMurdo Area User Committee (MAUC) Meeting
1 December 2011
Attendees**

McMurdo

Science	Stephane Coutu	A-137-M
Science	Ian Dalziel	G-079-M
Science	Ralph Harvey	G-058-M
Science	Jim Karner	G-058-M
Science	Kathleen Lawson	T-396-M
Science	Joe Pettit	T-295-M
Science	Sean Place	B-199-M
Science	John Schutt	G-058-M
Science	Jonathan Thom	O-283-M

RPSC	Meagan Burger	Administrative Assistant
RPSC	Michael Carmody	Meteorological Operations Manager
RPSC	Cindy Dean	Environmental Education
RPSC	Tom Ellis	Director of Operations
RPSC	Karen Joyce	Crary IT Manager
RPSC	Al Martin	McMurdo Area Director
RPSC	Teri McLain	Manager, Laboratory Science
RPSC	David Nelson	Manager, Science Operations
RPSC	John Rand	Planning Support Manager
RPSC	Dave Scheuerman	McMurdo Station Manager

Via Teleconference

Science	Michael Gooseff	B-508-M
Science	Stacy Kim	B-200-M
Science	Matthew Lazzara	O-202-M/O-283-M
Science	Paul Morin	G-434-M
Science	Frank Rack	G-049-M
Science	Jeff Severinghaus	I-169-M

RPSC	Leslie Blank	Planning Support Manager
RPSC	Addie Coyac	Planning Support Manager
RPSC	Steve Kottmeier	Director of Science
RPSC	Lindsay Powers	Manager of Science Planning
RPSC	Beth Watson	Planning Support Manager

ad hoc **McMurdo Area User Committee (MAUC) Meeting**
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Meeting Minutes

Introductions

Agenda Issues

1. Staging Space

- Building 156 upper level has been cleared out and is available for science storage space overflow needs.
- Funding is required to complete the modifications required to allow this space to be used as staging space.
- Proposed modifications include installing bays with power and LAN drops and bench space upstairs and a garage door and hoist access downstairs.
- The MAUC requests that this project remain a high priority for the contractor throughout the contract transition period.
- During their McMurdo site visit, the Blue Ribbon panel was advised that Science Support considers providing additional staging space for science projects one of their highest priorities (**action item # 1 below**)

Discussion:

- **Dave Nelson:** Additional storage space needed for science cargo and instruments to include lab benches, a garage door, setup space, etc.
- **Tom Ellis:** Invite key members of MAUC to determine placement of tables; request input from people who will utilize space.
- **John Schutt:** New space may not address needs of field parties who need boxed gear to be accessible for 1-2 weeks; Ex. BFC: gear not centrally located, dispersed in various locations.
- **Dave Nelson:** No particular restriction on how space is utilized; may be good space for instrument integration.
- **Joe Pettit** asked what John would recommend, to which John replied that we should complete the expansion of SSC Phase 2
- **Ralph Harvey:** New storage spaces may be inefficient if these units are dispersed in different locations; Bldg. 156 space may work for instrument groups, but not be good for groups with sleds, etc. Example – locating items down the hill will require vehicles, etc. to transport
- **John Schutt:** SSC may be best space.
- **Dave Nelson:** Original plans for SSC included second phase.
- **Stacy Kim:** Staging area in Bldg. 156 may free up space in BFC. New storage space is a great step forward, but not the final solution. Still need additional staging space. Would like to have this project tracked throughout contract transition.
- **Dave Nelson:** Plan to maintain project continuity during contract transition. Rough estimate of cost may be \$30,000 to \$50,000 to finish retrofitting this space.

- **Action item # 1: Dave will inform the Blue Ribbon Panel that science division's top priority is the additional expansion of SSC.**

2. Housing

- McMurdo Housing policy is currently being reviewed and revised by NSF.
- Grantee comments/recommendations for consideration can be submitted to Al Martin to relay to George Blaisdell at NSF.
- A current housing issue related to shuttle transportation schedules for LDB participants will be investigated by Al Martin (**action item # 2 below**)

Discussion:

- **Matthew Lazzara:** Rooms designed for two people sometimes house three.
- **Al Martin:** NSF is reviewing McMurdo housing policies; Al is working with George Blaisdell on this. Please submit comments/recommendations for consideration to him. The revised policy may be available in three weeks time.
- **Stephane Coutu:** Concerned because (LDB) balloon and science crew are all housed in dorm 203 and take the same shuttle to LDB. Everyone needs bathroom facilities at same time, but the facility is not designed to handle that volume of activity. This is a problem because of the limited transportation options available to the group this year. This was not an issue last season when transportation departure times for Willy Field were staggered.
- **Tom Ellis:** Scientists should submit their work schedules to RPSC so that shuttle schedules can be designed to accommodate their needs
- **Action item # 2: Al Martin will discuss the possibility of adding additional shuttles to the schedule to address this particular need.**

3. Helo No-Fly Zone Regulations

- The grantee community requests clarification of the safety zone requirements for helicopters departing the pad in front of the station related to the use of the sea ice in this vicinity for snowmobile parking and dive huts.
- Andrew Barry - Department of Interior's Aircraft Management Division (AMD) representative and Dave Nelson discussed this with Jack Hawkins, Antarctic manager of Petroleum Helicopters Inc. (PHI) (**action item # 3 below**)
- Jack Hawkins explained that helicopters need to hug the shoreline when departing McMurdo in order to minimize the negative impact of turbulence on the aircraft and on the sling loads they are carrying. The prior snowmobile parking area was directly under the shoreline flight path, which created an unsafe condition for people and equipment operating in that area. This is why the snow machine parking area has been moved further out this season.

Discussion:

- **Matthew Lazzara:** No-fly zone area coverage is broader than in previous years, resulting in the snow mobile parking being moved approximately one mile away from station.

- **Stacy Kim:** No-fly zone (or *Crash zone* for the area in front of McMurdo station where helo pilots can dump sling loads if necessary without damaging snowmobiles, etc.) is for the safety of community. Understands that the entire town is under no-fly zone this year, but notes that there's been no change in the formal regulations to indicate this and that the consequences of increasing the zone size were not discussed with grantees or shuttles department. Requests that snowmobile parking be moved closer to town.
- **Ralph Harvey:** Relating to the comment that the snow machines are parked one mile further out than in prior years - looking out the window, he estimates that they have been moved out about 200 yards and notes that there are also two fish huts located in the vicinity.
- **Action item # 3: Tom Ellis will discuss this issue with AMD rep Andrew Barry and Liz Kauffman to find out what space restrictions are necessary from a safety perspective.**

4. Sea Ice Regulations

- MAUC requests clarification of the current safety regulations for sea ice travel related to ice thickness and crossing cracks, and they recommend that these standards be brought into alignment with CRREL recommendations.
- Dave Nelson will investigate if the sea ice safety standards currently in place include an additional safety factor (**action item # 4 below**)

Discussion:

- **Matthew Lazzara:** FSTP does not have enough staff to provide the escort required for each science group working on the sea ice this season
- **Stacy Kim:** Understands that sea ice thickness regulations have doubled so that these are now far in excess of historical CRREL safety standards; feels that sea ice safety requirements should be based on studies conducted by CRREL.
- **Dave Nelson:** NSF may have applied an additional safety factor to the values calculated by CRREL when determining the current ice thickness requirements.
- **Action item # 4: David Nelson will check with NSF and CRREL to determine if an additional safety factor is included in current sea ice safety calculations.**
- **Al Martin:** Is this current issue due to thickness regulations or to particular features of this year's ice (particular sea ice cracks, etc.)?
- **Stacy Kim:** Everyone is trained on how to drill cracks to determine if they are safe. Goal is to focus on safety without implementing unnecessary safety regulations.
- **Joe Pettit:** In previous years, there was a designated FSTP person to assess the sea ice on a daily basis who published regular sea ice reports.
- **Dave Nelson:** This season started one week late impacting FSTP's ability to assess sea ice conditions in early season. When the requirement for additional safety measures was identified, RPSC requested funding to hire an additional FSTP instructor on 10/7. The individual accepted on 10/14, and deployed on 11/7.

- **Sean Place:** His science group was affected by sea ice safety issues. Doubling of the thickness constraints became a limiting factor making it “almost impossible” to access key study areas. Science needs an FSTP person here early to assess sea ice conditions and inform grantees. Feels it is not feasible to send an FSTP person with every group, and that the current thickness constraints will become more problematic over time. He would find it very helpful to have a personalized briefing on the sea ice conditions affecting his study areas from FSTP personnel during his sea ice refresher course.
- **Joe Pettit:** It’s been 10 years since we’ve had sea ice conditions similar to what McMurdo experienced this season. Institutional knowledge may have been lost over this time period; but hopefully it will be regained in the coming year.

5. Community Space

- Community space continues to shrink with the demolition of existing buildings.
- MAUC believes this loss of space is detrimental to station morale and hopes to discuss this issue with the Blue Ribbon Panel and NSF.

Discussion:

- **Matthew Lazzara:** Less space is available for community use than in the past. Greenhouse, ceramics building, bowling alley have not been replaced. The science community feels that the Chapel is under-utilized.
- **Joe Pettit:** We are losing space through attrition; old buildings come down and are not replaced. This affects the health and welfare of the community which is important. Would like a formalized the process for who determines what constitutes appropriate use of the Chapel.
- **Al Martin:** NSF is restricting the use of the Chapel to a limited number of activities to allow adequate time for quiet time, etc. Chaplains, community, and NSF need to be involved in these discussions. Station management is the POC.
- **Action item # 5: Al will discuss these MAUC concerns with George Blaisdell at NSF.**

6. Airfield Transportation

- The MAUC requests that shuttle service be scheduled automatically to meet the arrival of Ken Borek Air (KBA) aircraft in order to minimize the wait time for the passengers and crew arriving on these flights.

Discussion:

- **Matthew Lazzara:** Understands that passengers arriving late in the day on KBA aircraft often experience long delays waiting for transport from the airfield to town.
- **Dave Nelson:** Solution may be to contact shuttles when a flight departs from the field location instead of waiting to contact shuttles after they arrive at the airfield.
- **John Schutt:** Historically, a vehicle was waiting for us upon arrival. Now, if two planes land at the same time, the shuttle fills up and some passengers must wait

- **Ian Dalziel:** After departing from a different time zone and arriving at the airfield having had little sleep in transit, it's tiring to wait for shuttles.
- **Al Martin:** Recommends that individuals work with shuttles directly on this.

7. Forms within the Support Information Packet (SIP)

- The MAUC requests that all new forms include an explanation of how the information being collected will be used and additional space for comments.
- Adding pictures to help identify the what equipment items are available would also be very useful reference information to include in the SIP.

Discussion:

- **Matthew Lazzara:** Are SIP improvements possible? Ex. 1) Adding pictures to supplement equipment lists. 2) Updating forms to include an explanation of the purpose of form and a comment section for additional information.
- **Ian Dalziel:** Interviewing new PIs about SIP design would be efficient and beneficial.
- **Stacy Kim:** Believes communication issues exist between science planning and work center management.
- **Dave Nelson:** IT crews interview grantees to better understand their technology needs.
- **Matthew Lazzara:** Human involvement is helpful in clarifying grantee needs.
- **Joe Pettit:** Finds it helpful to speak with his science planner in advance of completing his SIP to resolve planning questions and to ensure that project details are identified in the appropriate sections of the SIP.

8. Other Past Issues

- There is some confusion regarding information requested in the Operational Requirements Worksheet (ORW) and in the SIP related to contractor-supplied laboratory stock verses vendor items that must be purchased by the grant.

Discussion:

- **Sean Place:** Feels that grantees are not well-informed about what materials are supplied by Crary until they get to the SIP process; however they need to have access to this information to complete their ORW correctly. He is also surprised by the lower level of detail requested in the ORW compared to the SIP.
- **Addie Coyac:** The science planning group reviewed the ORW format two years ago and created the current format to streamline the application process in hopes that researchers who were not completing the longer form would respond better to a reduced list of questions.
- **Stacy Kim:** Identifying what items are provided by Crary verses what items need to be purchased by the grant has been very difficult for the past two years because

- **Addie Coyac:** Science planners are hoping to get more direction on this as well.

9. New Issues / New Business

- Shared Science Information for Outreach Purposes
- Sleep Kits Shipped as Cargo
- Contract Award

Shared Science Information

- Per Sridhar Anandkrishnan – various members of the USAP science community hope to improve science outreach efforts by providing science updates on their projects during their field seasons for others to use.
- Per Dave Nelson – one option to facilitate this might be to make flash drives of information available for this purpose.
- Update from Addie Coyac on the 2011-12 Science Planning Summary (SPS): A password-protected version of this document was made available on line in early November, and a request to post the SPS on the McMurdo intranet is currently under consideration at NSF as of 2 December 2011 (**action item # 6 below**)
- As chairman of the MAUC, Matt Lazzara requests additional input from the community on making project-specific information more available for outreach and education purposes.

Discussion:

- **Dave Nelson: Sridhar Anandkrishnan** has noted that some grantees would like to be able to share more details about their projects with teachers and other interested parties than what is currently available on USAP and RPSC web sites
- **Matthew Lazzara:** Can RPSC include more project-specific science information on the USAP website?
- **Kathleen Lawson:** Noted that the on-line Science Planning Summary has not been updated for 2011-12.
- **Addie Coyac:** The online version of the 2011-12 Science Planning Summary should be available soon
- **Action item # 6: Addie will provide additional information on accessing the 2011-12 Science Planning Summary online.**
- **Matthew Lazzara:** Welcomes additional ideas on the broader subject of the collection and distribution of project-specific material for outreach and education

Sleep Kits – shipped as cargo verses personal baggage

- A change in policy requires that sleep kits for individuals working in the deep field must be shipped through the cargo system instead of being processed as hand-carry baggage.

- Dave Nelson discussed this issue with Michael Davis (**action item # 7 below**) and has noted that sleep kits are required to be shipped via the cargo system:

1) To ensure that cargo weights are accurately reported so the aircraft stays at or below maximum takeoff weight and stays within the center-of-gravity envelope.

2) To avoid instances where passengers have forgotten to include their sleep kit as hand-carry and have arrived at their destination without it.

- The process in use requires that each sleep kit have a name tag and a TCN number that is recorded in the Cargo Tracking System (CTS.)
- The flight manifest includes the name of each passenger and requires that a matching sleep kit TCN be identified for the passenger before they can board the airplane.
- The hard link between the passenger name and the sleep kit TCN on the manifest assures that passengers do not travel without their sleep kits.

Dave understands that this new system may seem un-nerving to those who prefer to not let their sleep kit out of their sight; however it has proven to solve more problems than whatever lingering concerns it creates.

Discussion:

- **Ian Dalziel:** Is concerned that the new policy for shipping sleep kits as cargo to field camps creates the potential for the sleep kits to go missing due to human error. If the sleep kits are delivered to the wrong site, an individual could arrive in camp without this essential camp gear.
- **Dave Nelson:** Michael Davis instituted this change to address the issue of people placing Do Not Freeze (DNF) items in their sleep kits without marking them DNF. Because the cargo staff were not aware of this situation, accidents occurred that compromised the sleep kits. This new procedure was put in place to be sure that all sleep kits are labeled appropriately and are carefully tracked.
- **Action Item # 6: Dave Nelson will review this issue with Michael Davis and provide further clarification**

Contractor Award

- As of December 1st, 2011 there is still no decision on contractor award, and there is no proposed timeline for this.

Discussion:

- **Frank Rack:** Asked for an update on the transition process for the contractor.
- **Dave Nelson:** Noted that RPSC has started the process, but without an award being made, there is no one to work with on this. Expecting an announcement soon on who that will be.
- **Ralph Harvey:** When does RPSC's contract end?
- **Dave Nelson:** End of RPSC contract is March 31, 2012.

10. Wrap-up / Summary

From MAUC chairman Matt Lazzara: Many thanks to everyone who participated in the meeting at McMurdo and via teleconference today!