



USCGC Polar Sea (WAGB 11)

Active Duty Personnel: 138
14 (helicopter detachment)

Reserve Personnel: 0

Civilian Personnel: 0

Payroll: \$4,020,000

Budget: \$937,923

Mailing Address:

Commanding Officer
USCGC Polar Sea
FPO AP 96698-3919
(206) 217-6270



For more information on the Coast Guard visit the Internet at <http://www.uscg.mil>. For recruiting information call 1-877-NOW-USCG.

Established: The U.S. Coast Guard Polar Icebreaker Polar Sea was commissioned Feb. 23, 1978. It was the second of two polar class icebreakers built by the Lockheed Shipbuilding and Construction Company in Seattle, Wash., in the 1970s. It's been home ported in Seattle since its commissioning. Polar Sea has sailed all seven seas, crossed the Arctic Ocean, circumnavigated Antarctica, and visited ports in 24 different foreign countries. On Aug. 22, 1994, the Polar Sea became the first American Surface Ship to reach the Geographic North Pole. The 13,000-ton vessel is able to ram through up to 21 feet of ice or steam continuously through six feet of ice. It can accommodate two HH-65 helicopters and it provides laboratories and sleeping quarters for up to 20 scientists. Duty on an icebreaker can become long and strenuous. The crew can be away from home for up to eight months out of the year.

What we do: Polar Sea's primary missions are scientific and logistical support to various United States' interests in both polar regions. Polar Sea is a significant contribution to the U.S. Antarctic program that is led by the National Science Foundation. Regular deployments to Antarctica in support of "Operation Deep Freeze" entail icebreaking, escorting supply vessels through the ice, and resupplying science stations. Polar Sea provides critical support for a wide variety of scientific research conducted in Antarctica by U.S. and foreign scientists. The deployment to Antarctica involves a five to six month odyssey. With 150 men and women, two helicopters, 1.4 million gallons of fuel and a year's worth of food aboard, Polar Sea can remain underway for long periods. During a

Deep Freeze deployment in the Ross Sea, the icebreaker must prepare for resupplying the principal U.S. station in McMurdo Sound. A channel must be broken through 10 to 30 miles of "fast" ice – sea ice still attached to the shore. Once a channel has been established, the icebreaker escorts a tanker and cargo ship into an ice wharf at McMurdo Station. These supply ships must offload their cargoes during the summer months of January and February, to ensure that the extensive program of research activities can be conducted, and that the bases at McMurdo Sound and the South Pole can remain in operation year round.

Accomplished Operations: In April 2003, the Polar Sea returned from Operation Deep Freeze 2003, where they faced demanding ice conditions primarily due to two icebergs: B-15 and C-19, each approximately 100 miles by 20 miles. Polar Sea also completed an 11-day, 52-mile channel break through ice more than 13-feet thick, accomplishing the longest, single-ship channel break-in since 1963.



Photo taken by: PA2 Devilbiss Date: '97 High resolution copy can be found at <http://www.uscg.mil/images.html>