

# COMNAP UPDATE: February 2020

If you have any National Antarctic Program news, photos, or other information you would like included in the next COMNAP Update send it to [sec@comnap.aq](mailto:sec@comnap.aq) by 15 April 2020.

The following events will take place in Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, hosted by COMNAP Member the Australian Antarctic Division. Registration for all these events will open on 1 March 2020.



## **30 & 31 July 2020: COMNAP Antarctic Aviation Workshop**

Main point of contact for this workshop is Paul Sheppard (USAP), COMNAP Air Operations Expert Group Leader ([psheppar@nsf.gov](mailto:psheppar@nsf.gov)). Details about the COMNAP Antarctic Aviation project can be found on our Project webpage here: [Antarctic Aviation Project Workplan](#).

## **2 August 2020: COMNAP Symposium “Antarctic Station Modernization: Future-proofing Infrastructure to Support Research and to Reduce Environmental Impact”**

Main point of contact for this symposium is Charlton Clark (AAD), COMNAP Symposium Convener ([charlton.clark@aad.gov.au](mailto:charlton.clark@aad.gov.au)). The **Call for Abstracts** for oral and poster presentations is **now open** (deadline for submission is 30 March 2020). The abstract submission form is available from the homepage of the COMNAP website or can be downloaded here: [Symposium Abstract Submission Form](#).

## **3–7 August 2020: SCAR Open Science Conference (OSC) & SCAR-related business and delegate meetings**

The SCAR OSC website is <https://www.scarcomnap2020.org/>. This website also has all the information on accommodation and registration for all Hobart events. The COMNAP Secretariat is working closely with SCAR OSC organisers to ensure COMNAP AGM delegates have access to all SCAR OSC morning plenary sessions (for a reduced fee that has been agreed as AU\$100/person) and that the COMNAP AGM schedule allows for attendance to all those morning plenary sessions. The OSC schedule includes a joint COMNAP/SCAR Mini-Symposium on Antarctic Conservation Challenges.

## **3–6 August 2020: COMNAP AGM XXXII (2020)**

Main point of contact for the AGM is Michelle Rogan-Finnemore, COMNAP Executive Secretary. The AGM will include the regional break-out groups, the topical sessions focusing on Safety, Air operations, Science facilitation, and a half-day workshop on Communications/Data transfer technologies. The COMNAP AGM webpage will be available soon here: [COMNAP AGM Information](#).

## **6–8 August 2020: Joint Expert Group Human Biology and Medicine (JEGHBM) 3-day Symposium “Lessons from the Poles: Remote living, working & healthcare, and Antarctica as the ultimate space analogue”**

Points of contact for this symposium are Anne Hicks, JEGHBM Leader ([annehicks1@nhs.net](mailto:annehicks1@nhs.net)) and Mike Dinn, JEGHBM Secretary ([mike.dinn@nhs.net](mailto:mike.dinn@nhs.net)). The 3-days are:

Day 1, Thursday 6 August, **Remote Healthcare and Human Endurance** will take place as two sessions as part of the SCAR OSC programme. Posters and oral presentations of novel research. Abstracts for

consideration to be submitted through the OSC website ([scarcomnap2020.org](http://scarcomnap2020.org)).

Day 2, Friday 7 August, **Antarctic Diving** (day following close of COMNAP AGM)

Starting after the OSC morning plenary and mini-symposia session. Open to all COMNAP AGM and SCAR OSC delegates, to share learning, experience and evidence to support those responsible for diving, especially for polar science and for polar operations, logistics and construction. Abstracts for consideration to be submitted by email to Mike Dinn ([mike.dinn@nhs.net](mailto:mike.dinn@nhs.net)).

Day 3, Saturday 8 August, **A Day of Space! Lessons from Antarctica**

With support from the AAD, and considering the recent launch of the Australian space programme, this is an opportunity to immerse ourselves in the space arena. There is a real symbiosis between those living and working in Antarctica, and those trying to live in space with the modern day space race...to get humans to Mars giving focus to that drive. Whilst we focus on Antarctica as an analogue for space, we too can learn from the endeavors in space. Abstracts for consideration to be submitted by way of either method above.

Anyone wishing to attend any part of the 3-day Symposium, will have to be registered either through the SCAR OSC registration process, or, for COMNAP Members, through the COMNAP AGM registration process. Details will be made available soon at [scarcomnap2020.org](http://scarcomnap2020.org).

### **DRAFT COMNAP Statement on Sustainability**

The COMNAP EXCOM tabled and discussed, as part of their Annual Meeting, a DRAFT statement on sustainability. The DRAFT is included below and will be fully considered at the COMNAP AGM XXXII. Anyone with comments or concerns can email the Executive Secretary or any of the COMNAP EXCOM Members to discuss in advance of the AGM.

#### **Sustainability Statement [DRAFT]**

Sustainability for COMNAP means caring for the environment, supporting our Members to succeed and fostering strong community relationships while contributing towards a positive, enduring Antarctic future within the Antarctic Treaty System.

The protection of the Antarctic environment and dependent and associated ecosystems is a core provision of the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty 1991.

The COMNAP Members are government entities bound to the provisions of the Protocol through their government's commitment.

As an organisation and through the COMNAP Secretariat, protection of the Antarctic environment by supporting and sharing best practice in regards to cooperative approaches and practices, is a key focus of our organisation's activities and discussions.

Sustainability for COMNAP means caring for the environment, including at a local level, and fostering strong community relationships while contributing towards a positive, enduring future.

## COMNAP Project Updates

### COMNAP Asset Tracking System (CATS)

**Project Leader: Robb Clifton, EXCOM Oversight: John Guldahl**

**IMPORTANT:** The Ship Position Reporting System (SPRS) is no longer being supported.

Now is the time for all vessels to ensure they are set up so that their positions are included in the CATS.

There are many vessels currently operating south of 60S not reporting into CATS yet. Contact James Cusick ([james.cusick@aad.gov.au](mailto:james.cusick@aad.gov.au)) to get CATS position reporting set up. There are technical requirements here: <https://apps.aad.gov.au/comnap/datafeed>. We encourage all aircraft to automatically report their positions into CATS as well, so there is a complete picture of activity. The US Polar Geospatial Centre with the support and leadership of the US National Science Foundation Office of Polar Programs is currently working on producing reduced file size PDF maps to provide an overall snapshot of vessels and aircraft reporting. The PDF file size is under 500KB and so is designed to be sent to those ships whose bandwidth limitations currently do not allow for viewing of the CATS on-line. If you or your vessel wishes to receive these PDF maps that are produced every 24 hours, please send an email to COMNAP Executive Secretary.

### Antarctic Aviation

**Project Leader: Paul Sheppard, EXCOM Oversight: John Guldahl**

This project has five main outputs:

Output 1: “Review ATCM Resolution 1 (2013) and provide COMNAP advice to ATCM XLIII Working Group 1” is on schedule with the first stage of the review complete. All members of the COMNAP Air Operations Expert Group will be asked for their input soon. The results, which will inform a COMNAP Information Paper to the ATCM XLIII, will be drafted and sent to the MNAPs for review before submission.

Output 2: “To perform Air-related Technology Audit” is now complete and technologies identified will be discussed as part of the COMNAP Antarctic Aviation Workshop.

Output 3: “Develop minimum survival equipment recommendations for carriage on aircraft” is on schedule with the draft list of minimum survival equipment recommendations currently with the Air Operations Expert Group and the Antarctic Aviation Project Output 3 Working Group for review and consideration.

Output 4: “Convene Antarctic Aviation Workshop (AAW), Hobart, Australia (30–31 July 2020)”  
The Antarctic Aviation Workshop Agenda & draft Programme is currently under consideration by the Workshop Steering Committee. The drafts will soon be circulated to all MNAPs and will inform a COMNAP Information Paper to the ATCM XLIII (2020). If you wish to be involved in the Antarctic Aviation Workshop as a presenter or discussion panel member, and have not yet contacted Paul Sheppard, please do so now to ensure your involvement. The project manager is still seeking active participation from ICAO and the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for the workshop, but has had no success in making contact. If any National Antarctic Program has a connection with your national governmental aviation authorities and see value in their participation, please feel free to ask them for their involvement and send their name and contact details to the project leader as soon as possible.

Output 5: “COMNAP paper(s) to ATCM XLIV (2021)”  
The results of the project will be fully reported by way of a COMNAP paper or papers to ATCM XLIV (2021). Interim information will be presented to ATCM XLIII (2020). The drafting of these COMNAP Information Papers are in progress.

## **Fire Safety/Fire Suppression Forum**

**Project Co-Leaders: Simon Trotter & Mike Gencarelli, EXCOM Oversight: Agnieszka Kruszewska**

Work on this project is progressing with participants from nine National Antarctic Programs involved. Participants have received a draft outline and are working to incorporate program-specific details into a working draft report (deadline for this is 27 February). If you have not already done so, contact Mike Gencarelli ([mgencare@nsf.gov](mailto:mgencare@nsf.gov)) if you wish to be involved in the project.

## **COMNAP Website Upgrade**

**Project Manager: Andrea Colombo, Oversight: Michelle Rogan-Finnemore**

Over the next two months, we will be decommissioning the current COMNAP website and launching the new (and improved) COMNAP website. Hopefully, you will not experience any problems during the transition process. Nevertheless, if there is a break in availability of the website, please email the Executive Secretary or the Project Manager for any documents or information that you need access to during any website downtime. When the new website is up, and running, you will need a new password and your email address will become your username. We will make contact with you to ensure you have your new username and password details.

Thanks to the COMNAP MNAPs who have already confirmed members access for their program. If you are an MNAP and have not yet confirmed who within your program should have a “member only” access, please do that by Friday 21 February 2020. If you are unsure if you replied, email the Project Manager to check ([andrea.colombo@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:andrea.colombo@canterbury.ac.nz)).

We also need new photos for the website. If you wish to share any photos of your National Antarctic Program we would love that. Send us an email on how to access the photos and giving us permission to use them publicly on the COMNAP website.

## **COMNAP Expert Group Update**

### **COMNAP Environmental Protection Expert Group**

**Expert Group Leader: Ceisha Poirot, EXCOM Oversight: Ho Il Yoon**

Through this Expert Group, COMNAP has recently undertaken a requested consultation on the [DRAFT] *SCAR Code of Conduct for Geosciences Field Research Activities in Antarctica*. Comments and replies have been consolidated and will be sent back to SCAR soon. SCAR intends to present the Code of Conduct to the CEP XXII (2020) Meeting in Helsinki, Finland. National Antarctic Programs may therefore wish to discuss the Code of Conduct with their CEP delegation.

## **Other National Antarctic Program Updates**

**Welcome** to Andrii Fedchuk, Head of Ukraine’s International Scientific & Technical Cooperation Department, who is now the DMNAP for the Ukrainian National Antarctic Program.

### **From the Korea Polar Research Institute (KOPRI)**

The 26th International Symposium on Polar Sciences organized by KOPRI will be held on May 12–13, 2020, Incheon, Republic of Korea. This symposium themed “Finding solutions to global issues: Polar science and technology” aims to bring polar scientists together to discuss their research findings and to promote international collaborative research. The abstract submission deadline has been extended until February 21, 2020. Registration will be available at the symposium website from February 7 to April 24, 2020. Full information can be found at <http://www.kopri.re.kr/eng/html/sym/060201.html>.

## From the Netherlands Polar Programme

The Netherlands Polar Programme usually has four mobile laboratories located at Rothera Research Station in their Dirck Gerritsz Laboratory. Due to intense building activities at Rothera two labs, called *Hoop* (*Hope*) and *Liefde* (*Love*) were shipped back last season to the Netherlands for maintenance and will be redeployed to Rothera when building activities are finished.

Now, *Hoop* is currently on the Germany vessel *Polarstern* for a year, to be utilized during the MOSAiC expedition in the Arctic. Dutch scientists are working in *Hoop* right now in the polar night (see photo at right by Esther Kokmeijer).



*Liefde* still awaits maintenance, but even so it was put to good use in the Rotterdam Photo Festival last week. It was shown at the festival to the general public as an authentic lab that served in Antarctica while, at the same time, three Dutch artists showed their polar art work in the lab container (see photo at left by Anna Koppen). In addition to *Liefde*, the festival put together sixty empty containers as an exhibition village for young emerging artists. The polar lab provided a special attraction in that specific setting. A nice and successful communication and outreach effort for our polar programme and for the artists.

## Neighbours meet for Science Symposium in Antarctica

Expeditioners from four nations with neighbouring stations in East Antarctica gathered at India's Bharati Station on 17 January 2020 for the inaugural 'International Conference on Antarctic Research (ICAR)' – a clever acronym that also stands for the participating nations: India, China, Australia and Russia! The neighbouring stations in the Larsemann Hills region of East Antarctica are Davis (Australia), Progress (Russia), Zhongshan (China) and Bharati (India) and each was represented at the day-long meeting by scientists and science support personnel (see photo above of participants in ICAR outside of Bharati Station. Photo by National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research). The event was an excellent opportunity to share information, in support of international collaboration, about each nation's Antarctic science activities with other nations active in East Antarctica, particularly in the Larsemann Hills region.



## From the Spanish Polar Committee

Spain is carrying out an intervention to contain the erosion of the coastline in Deception Island where their Gabriel de Castilla Station is situated. This erosive process has been observed during the last decade. Five years ago, Spain started some initial works but, unfortunately, the



results were not successful. After three years of technical assessments, based on scientific and technical research, the most appropriate solution that included the consideration of the lowest impact on the environment was undertaken. The work consists in building a retaining wall along the coastline near the station. This solution was started during this summer season (2019–2020) and is expected to be completed during the next austral summer season 2020–2021.

