

Chapter 22

Search and Rescue

The USAP has Search and Rescue (SAR) programs to respond to emergencies at all USAP Stations.

At all locations the USAP policy is to launch a SAR when a local sea-ice group or a helicopter has not checked-in and is overdue by 30 minutes. Remote rescues will be initiated upon request, or if a field party fails to respond or communicate a check-in with anyone for 72 hours. Since most rescues use fixed-wing aircraft, helicopters or a vessel, weather delays may be significant in the event a rescue is launched. Parties in remote locations should be prepared for a substantial wait before help arrives.

When faced with any emergency, two simple rules apply:

1. Take whatever immediate actions are necessary to preserve life or prevent further injuries.
2. Then stop and think things over.

The first rule ensures that members of the party are not endangered unnecessarily. You cannot afford to have more victims than you already have. The second rule suggests you take an inventory of your situation, including the assets available (check the listing of survival cache and hut locations in Appendix B to see if

any are nearby) and the skills of your people - then come up with a plan.

Above all else, you must **Think Before You Act!**

22.1 Medical Evacuations

All medical evacuations (Medevacs) are initiated by the medical personnel on station. Patients will be transported to either Punta Arenas or Christchurch by the quickest means possible. Weather, aircraft, or ship availability all are factors in the amount of time it takes for a medevac to occur.



Figure 22-1: A medevac at Palmer Station.