

**McMurdo Area User Committee (MAUC)**  
***ad hoc* Meeting**  
**2 December 2010**  
**McMurdo Station**

**Table of Contents**

Attendees..... 3

Meeting Minutes..... 4

***ad hoc* McMurdo Area User Committee (MAUC) Meeting  
2 December 2010  
Attendees**

Science	Laurie Connell	G-439 Co-PI
Science	Jeb Barrett	B-023 PI
Science	Kathleen Welch	B-420 Team Member
Science	Patrick Cassidy	T-350 Team Member
Science	Gifford Wong	I-477 Team Member
Science	Hubert Staudigel	G-439 PI
Science	Frank Rack	G-049 PI
Science	Kathleen Lawson	T-396 Team Member
Science	Joe Pettit	T-295 Team Member
Science	David Withoff	T-396 Team Member
Science	Andrew Klein	B-518 Co-PI
Science	Ron Sletten	G-121 PI
RPSC	Eric Pohlman	Planning Support Manager
RPSC	Mel Moore	Supervisor, Supply
RPSC	David Nelson	Manager, Science Operations
RPSC	Sheryl Wilkin	Administrative Assistant, McMurdo Ops
RPSC	Cara Sucher	Manager, Lab Science
RPSC	Julie Bonneau	Planning Support Specialist
RPSC	Tony Buchanan	MEC Supervisor
RPSC	Cara Ferrier	Assistant Manager, Field Science Support

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Meeting Minutes**

**Updates**

**Staging space** – building 156 was underutilized and SFA agreed to consolidate their items and make some of the space available for other users. Parts inventory has been moved to first floor and some refit to building is underway (asbestos removal, security requirement updates.) Contrary to initial indications, SFA will have to maintain control of some of the upstairs space; however there is approximately 2000-2500 sq. ft. of open space available now to help mitigate the storage space crunch in Crary. Due to safety issues, this space can only be used for storage purposes at present and not as staging space. The building modifications required to allow this to be used as staging space should be complete by next summer, and will include the installations of bays with power and LAN drops. Project leads for this effort include Dave Nelson at RPSC, Jessie Crain at NSF.

**Action Item: To avoid further delays, Dave Nelson is drawing up a timetable for completion of establishing staging space in Bldg. 156.**

**Housing** – population pressures will be similar next summer. RPSC is considering using commercial hotel software to improve scheduling efficiency but this will not solve the problem when there are more people on station than existing housing can accommodate. Currently there is not enough furniture for each resident in a room, Temporary bunk beds are being installed and will be replaced by safer ones for next season. There are no plans to add needed closet space for additional residents. Suggestion: that larger rooms be used instead of the smaller ones for additional roommates (3 people per room in upper case dorms) Suggestion: that conducting training off-ice would reduce number of beds needed on station (1 week less for every resident is significant). In a post-meeting recap, it was noted that recently established housing rules may have been created without grantee input, and that in the process it may not have been noted that upper case dorms were fitted with wireless so that grantees could use their living space as office/work space to relieve crowding in Crary.

**Recommendation that a committee form and revisit housing allocations, and that Curtis Harry lead this committee.** Hubert Staudigel has volunteered to be a science member on a committee along with NSF and RPSC personnel.

**Vehicles** – the no Pisten Bullys in town rule - will be implemented next summer. Exceptions to this rule will need to be established for frequent users of the vehicles and those transporting heavy gear, which may encompass nearly all science users. Suggestion: that the new rule will not have very much impact on actual Pisten Bully traffic patterns, and will not result in hoped for maintenance savings. Suggestion: that high maintenance costs are an unavoidable cost of doing business in McMurdo, and that comparisons with Pole operations are inappropriate because both the use of the vehicles and the environment are so different.

**Recommend against implementing this rule because it will not result in substantial savings, but will have a severe negative impact on the users' ability to conduct science safely.** Recommend an alternative solution such as bridge over the bond strand between Crary and the sea ice be implemented instead.

**Contract** - Existing support contract is extended through March 31, 2011. The rumor that planning and ordering for this season were delayed because the contract was not in place is not true.

**Medical** – PQ requirements are set by NSF. Changes introduced now are very abrupt, with only a few days of notice provided. This does not work well with the existing science planning process spanning years between when key technical personnel are identified in the proposal and the year when they are scheduled to deploy. It was suggested that the implementation schedule of PQ policy changes allow adequate lead time for resolving related personnel issues, or that existing personnel be grandfathered in per the regulations in place at the time of the proposal submission (and noted that this procedure should also apply to changes beyond PQ policy).

**Action Item: Stacy Kim will contact the Science Advisory Board and request that they discuss PQ and medical review issues with NSF.**

**Infrastructure** – most infrastructure-related decisions are handed down from NSF. The RPSC organizational chart is posted in the library but cannot be made available electronically due to privacy issues. Raytheon newsletter and PS news might be a good information conduit for grantees on upcoming changes and plans. During the season it is available on the I drive in McMurdo.

**Suggested Action Item: Karen Joyce will try to get PS News posted on the USAP.gov website year 'round.**

**Email distribution list** – exists for deploying scientists with the Deployment Specialist Group (DSG) (Lynn Dormand, Manager.) Send messages that you want distributed to Steve Kottmeier. Note that list does not include non-deploying (but active) researchers, nor does it include all MAUC members.

**Ice Core Temperatures** – current best practice is -50 degree storage and transport, but McMurdo does not have that capability yet. Progress towards this procedure can be monitored with Julie Palais.

**New plans** - DNF storage for incoming cargo is very tight. Be accurate in estimating DNF and other cargo sizes and weights, and let planners know if cargo weight or cube changes. It was suggested that RPSC personnel can obtain this information directly from Port Hueneme as soon as the cargo enters the system (usually in July for ComSur), to help with the planning process.

**Field camp cargo** – the science community understands that new rules requiring each cargo item to be weighed individually (verses being assigned a standard weight from reference documentation) were initiated by the Air Force in response to an issue with an

overweight plane; however they are unclear on the details of the situation and request clarification on this. They also noted that the additional time and effort required to complete this tasking impacts their project schedules.

**Suggested Action Item: The group requests that RPSC provide additional information on this requirement.**

**Crary crowding** - Coffee house is available as additional work space (not staffed) Monday to Saturday from 2am – 11am and from 4pm – 11pm, and Sunday from 11am – 10pm. There are a few computer connections available but no wireless.

**Trainings off ice** – the refresher course offered in Christchurch is excellent. Most other courses could also be moved off ice, and conducted via video. Suggestion: Conduct as many of the trainings as possible in CONUS via the online presentation and test format currently used for the Security Information Awareness Training. MacOps, Environmental, Dry Valleys, Crary Safety, and the lecture portion of the refresher, Light Vehicles, Track Vehicles, and Skidoo can all be done this way. This will ease the challenges scientists face managing their teaching responsibilities and having field time, reduce costs for on ice personnel, and reduce population pressures in McMurdo. Of remaining trainings, shift as many as possible to Christchurch to further reduce population pressure in McMurdo. These trainings include the hands on portion of Track Vehicles, Skidoo, and refresher training (as was done later in the season this year).

**Recommendation: put needed presentations online.**

**Video conferencing** – a perfect example of the need for this was the inability to use the phone system for a conference call during the Ad Hoc MAUC meeting; two off-continent committee members dialed in but were not able to connect into the McMurdo phone system. There is enough bandwidth to support science use of common video conferencing (iChat, GoogleVideoChat, Skype) without needing the special permission that is now required in SIP process. **Recommendation that the SIP process be streamlined by making videoconferencing for science purposes available without individual project review.**

**Morale trips** – the current single pool system allows one opportunity per person to go off station – whether it is a sleigh ride to Pole or to help diving groups clear an ice hole right in front of the station. **Recommendation that a new pool be established for volunteer work, separate from morale trips.** This would help the community stay interested and excited in their support role, and boost science groups' education and outreach potential.