

NEEM 2007

SITREP no. 2, Tuesday 26. June 2007.

This SITREP covers the period 18. June to 25. June, inclusive.

Movement of personnel:

- 18. June: Claude Laird (US) from Schenectady to SFJ by 109th.
- 20. June: Maria Herholt (D), Susanne Lilja Buchardt (DK), Simon Sheldon (DK), Steffen Bo Hansen (DK), Sverrir Hilmarsson (IS) and Jørgen Peder Steffensen (DK) from SFJ to NGRIP by 109th.
- 22. June: Peter Sperlich (D) from SFJ to CPH by Air Greenland
- 22. June: Claude Laird (US) from SFJ to Schenectady by 109th
- 23. June: Maria Herholt (D), Susanne Lilja Buchardt (DK), Simon Sheldon (DK), Steffen Bo Hansen (DK), Sverrir Hilmarsson (IS) and Jørgen Peder Steffensen (DK) from NGRIP to SFJ by 109th.
- 23. June: Lars Berg Larsen (DK), Maria Herholt (D), Susanne Lilja Buchardt (DK), Simon Sheldon (DK), Steffen Bo Hansen (DK) and Sverrir Hilmarsson (IS) from SFJ to CPH by Air Greenland.
- 25. June: Jørgen Peder Steffensen (DK) from SFJ to CPH by SAS.

Overnighting 109th crew 20-23. June:

LtCol Pete Thalheimer, LtCol Joe Zotto, Maj Stephen Yandik, Maj Blair Herdrick, CMSgt Dan Robertson, CMSgt Dennis Morgan, MSgt Brian Alix, Sra Brett Gatta

Movement of Cargo:

- 18. June: 2000 kg Food and equipment from Schenectady to SFJ by 109th.
- 20. June: 8200 lbs. Equipment and supplies from SFJ to NGRIP by 109th.
- 20 June: 16000 lbs food, radar, weatherport and spare parts from SFJ to Summit by 109th .
- 23. June: 200 lbs Batteries and radios from NGRIP to SFJ by 109th

Activities:

The ice core freezer used at Station Nord last year has been built inside warehouse 442 and after installation of 3-phase 400 V it was switched on and running nicely.

The final cargo for the put-in arrived in Kangerlussuaq with the 109th Monday afternoon. Monday evening saw hectic activity around the warehouse to distribute the loads and weighing pallets. We were perhaps too pressed with time, because at the time the put-in plane was loaded Tuesday morning, it turned out that our measurements of cargo weight were wrong and that the cargo was too heavy for the Aeroplane. We were not able to correct this in time, so to avoid upsetting the flight schedule, the Deployment Commander decided to move the put-in to Wednesday.

All Tuesday until midnight we re-packed all our cargo, and calibrated our scales against the scales of the 109th.

A new plan had to be made: Put-in plane no.1 should fly to NGRIP with the put-in crew. At the same time three pallets (16000 lbs) were flown to Summit on a space available basis.

On Thursday put-in plane no.2 should then fly 10000 lbs cargo to NGRIP on a groomed skiway and certify it for a 16000 lbs cargo landing. Plane no.2 should then fly to Summit,

pick-up the 16000 lbs cargo and fly this to NGRIP.

The put-in at NGRIP occurred in beautiful weather at 10.50 L with Skier 96. The snow was very soft so the crew shut off engines to await grooming of the skiway. Along the skiway the markers are still visible, they can also be picked up by radar. The NGRIP main dome is only access able through the top hatch. Inside, the main dome is intact. The only windows not covered in snow are the top hatch and the two sky lights. At 15.30 L the garage was open and the tracked vehicles were running. Grooming of the skiway began at 16.00 L and continued until mid-night. Everything in the garage was found in good order, but the garage cover was torn several places on the SE side due to the weight of overburden snow and ablations by the frame.

The 5 kW Hatz diesel generator was running at 15.30 and powered the main dome for light, cooking and snow melting.

Weather Wednesday: blue sky, no wind, -4 C.

Thursday, Skier 96 attempted take-off at 5.45 L. Due to a relatively soft skiway (groomed, but not consolidated) and heavy cross winds (15-20 knots, 220 mag – skiway is 300 mag) the take-off was stopped after two attempts. The plane was shut down and abandoned by the crew and the crew took shelter in the main dome. The weather continued to deteriorate.

Grooming was started and continued until the weather made it impossible to continue.

Weather at 11.00 L: Temp. -5 C, wind 30 knots from 220 mag, overcast, surface nil, horizon nil, visibility ½ mile.

At 13.30 L the wind turned to 280 mag. We had snow, blowing snow and visibility reduced to less than ¼ mile. Sometimes the plane could not be seen from the main dome.

Camp personnel and the Air Crew participated in getting all cargo to shelter, digging down to free the windows at the top floor of the main dome and opening one of the air vents to the main generator room. At 18.30 L we started the main generator after preheating with the Herman Nelson. The air hose was let through the window on the radio room and through a hole in the floor to the main generator. After that the temperatures in the main dome rose to above freezing and spirits rose likewise.

By Friday morning the weather had improved. Temperatures were -8 C outside and +15 C inside.

Grooming started at 8.00 and continued until 16.00 L. It was decided, that everybody in camp should leave on Skier 96 since the options of getting all necessary cargo into NGRIP in this flight period were gone. A launch Friday evening was prevented by bad weather at Summit, because the plane needed fuel at Summit to return to SFJ. Friday evening everybody participated in a candle light dinner made by the Air National Guard.

Saturday morning at 4.00 L the weather was good: -13 C, 14 knot from 320 mag. The camp was shut down, and Skier 96 departed NGRIP in first attempt without using ATO. Observed main ski depression on skiway: 4 inches. After refuelling at Summit 7.05 – 8.25 everybody arrived at SFJ at 10 o'clock.

Although conditions were far from ideal, camp crew and flight crew got along very well, and the eagerness of the flight crew to assist in any way was impressive. We thank the flight crew for their help and positive attitude.

All expedition personnel agreed to postpone the field season by 2-3 weeks. Thus we plan to re-deploy the expedition with put-in July 10 and pull-out 7 – 10 August. After this all expedition personnel went home.

As a consequence of this, there will not be a SITREP Sunday 1. July and Sunday 8. July.

NEEM personnel in Greenland: 0

FL J.P. Steffensen