Antarctica New Zealand

27 October 2026

Tēnā koutou katoa,

As many of you are aware, we are entering a period of significant infrastructure activity as we undertake a major redevelopment of Scott Base. This investment is critical to ensure the long-term capability, resilience, and sustainability of our facilities. However, it will also place temporary pressure on the resources available to support scientific programmes.

While many polar programmes stop or significantly limit their science activity during major building works, Antarctica New Zealand is committed to supporting as much science as possible while recognising the priority and necessity of the rebuild activities through the coming seasons. To allow us to plan significant field seasons effectively within these constraints, this commitment includes provisionally protecting a fixed, limited number of beds at Scott Base, spread evenly across the season. Protecting these “science beds” is a commitment to the science community that evolving redevelopment needs will not fully displace our planned science. Careful planning by our new Science Planning Lead and the Operations team will allow us to support significant science seasons by staggering movements through Scott Base and into the field, running field events concurrently, and managing across the three seasons holistically.

The redevelopment will ensure Scott Base remains capable of supporting world-class Antarctic science for decades to come, providing more resilient infrastructure, improved scientific facilities and increased long-term operational sustainability.

We will work closely with you to balance scientific priorities and logistics needs with available resources and will provide visibility of anticipated impacts wherever possible. The table below summarises the currently planned key rebuild activities, their expected impacts, and the restrictions that may need to be considered during science planning, prioritisation, and resource allocation discussions.

Season	**Primary activities**	**Expected Impacts**	**Likely Restrictions to Science**
2026-2027	Installation of pilings Relocation of water tanks Windfarm works	Increased numbers on base but not to capacity. Noise, dust, activity and crowded conditions. Reduced N/S seat availability and flexibility.	*Limited* – all groups were requested to reduce numbers and time on station, and this community effort, alongside careful planning, was enough to allow all logistically-supportable science events to proceed. A full, busy season is expected.

2027-2028	Completion of piling, incl. HFC piling Building structure and façade Windfarm and battery systems works Commissioning of Ross Island Energy Grid	Significantly increased numbers on base, likely at or close to capacity for much of the season. Noise, activity, crowded conditions, space & resource restrictions. Reduced N/S seat and cargo availability. Little to no flexibility for event plan or schedule changes	*Moderate* - Committed (limited) beds at Scott Base beds ring-fenced for science, with close to a full field season expected through careful management of movements in/out of SB and the field. Prioritisation processes and some event restrictions likely, particularly during peak times; very large events postponed until after the rebuild. Expectation that cargo is sent by vessel by default and reduced to the extent possible.
2028-2029	Completion of structure and façade Install building services Commence fit out (including HFC)	Significantly increased numbers on base, likely at or close to capacity. Significant numbers will remain through the winter. Reduced N/S seat and cargo availability. Little to no flexibility for event plan or schedule changes. Staging space and access to field supplies, HFC labs and science spaces likely to be impacted by mid-season.	*Moderate - Significant* - Committed (limited) Scott Base beds ring fenced for science, with busy early season and managed later season activities expected. Careful management of movement in/out of SB and the field. Prioritisation processes and some event restrictions expected in consultation with affected community. Careful planning by Antarctica New Zealand expected to minimise impact of facilities availability as much as possible. Likely restrictions to cargo and north/south seats. Expectation that cargo is sent by vessel by default and reduced to the extent possible.
2029-2030	Completion of fit out Commissioning of building services	Very increased numbers on station, expected to be at capacity for much of the season; considerable work inside buildings for final fit out. HFC spaces unavailable.	*Expected to be Significant*. A limited number of beds committed for science, with field season details to be provided as we gain better clarity on SBR work plans and investigate creative solutions to manage space restrictions. Additional restrictions are likely, in consultation with the community.

2030-2031	New building works expected to be completed. Demolition and clean up works possible.	Unknown at this stage.	*Limited* – we hope to be returning to a normal season!

Given the space limitations, all logistics support requests will be reviewed through a rigorous prioritisation process, with requests considered collectively across the three seasons. Review criteria will include: science merit and alignment with national and organisational priorities; funding sources and benefits to New Zealand; environmental impact; cargo requirements; logistical considerations and operational constraints; and the balance of events and resources across each season.

Over the coming months, we ask you to support this process by:

- *Providing additional information to support the evaluation of logistical support when requested and to help us fully understand your work and constraints*
- *Considering ways to reduce the size and complexity of your proposed events*
- *Providing accurate and timely planning information to define your workplans early and thoroughly, meeting all L1, L2 and L3 deadlines*
- *Reducing cargo as much as possible and using vessel transport rather than air as your default.*
- *Connecting with us as soon as possible if considering additional field work through this time, before submitting proposals.*

We recognise that these changes will require adjustments to expectations. As a programme, Antarctica New Zealand has prided itself on our ability to adapt to event changes and support evolving plans. **Our ability to accommodate event changes and evolving plans will be significantly reduced in this tightly constrained environment**. We encourage researchers and event managers to engage early with planning teams and to consider opportunities for coordination, collaboration, and efficiencies where appropriate.

We will be holding a series of virtual meetings with affected groups to discuss these changes, explain the prioritisation process, and provide an opportunity for information sharing, questions and feedback. Details for our first meeting are provided below.

We appreciate your understanding, flexibility, and continued partnership as we navigate this period of change. By working together, we can ensure that available resources are directed toward delivering the greatest possible scientific benefit while maintaining a safe and effective operating environment throughout the rebuild.

While these seasons will require careful planning and adaptation, we remain committed to enabling excellent science throughout the rebuild and look forward to working alongside the research community to make the most of the opportunities available.

Ngā mihi,



Jordy Hendrikx,

Chief Executive, Antarctica New Zealand.

Meeting details: Please join us for an information share showing the data behind the decisions presented here on **November 2 at 3 pm**. This will be a virtual meeting and will be recorded.

Join: https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/416393241977 31?p=2f9FTwdUpCePNkXOB1

Meeting ID: 416 393 241 977 31

Passcode: xB2jE74R