Updating requirements for Information Exchange on national expeditions

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Working Paper submitted by the United States and Italy

Abstract

The United States proposes revisions to the information Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties (CPs) submit to the Treaty’s Electronic Information Exchange System (EIES) regarding their national expeditions. Additionally, we strongly encourage all CPs to provide all requested information to the EIES.

Introduction

The Antarctic Treaty and its Environmental Protocol have fundamental information sharing requirements, as elaborated in Antarctic Treaty Articles III and VII, and Environmental Protocol Article 17 and Annex I. The ATCM decided via [Decision 4 (2012)](https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fats.aq%2FdevAS%2FMeetings%2FMeasure%2F514&data=02%7C01%7CMunteanWG%40state.gov%7C8ed701d3157c4e5e73e408d7dccd89cd%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637220647642959588&sdata=EdLzW7c%2BiooCSjDMfsEeiQqpd8USrQTYi%2BupaGp3mfw%3D&reserved=0) that CPs would use the EIES to exchange information in the most efficient and timely manner possible, and in accordance with the Treaty and the Environmental Protocol. The Annex to Decision 4 (2012) provides details about the information that CPs agreed to provide. This Annex has been updated four times, with the most recent update approved at ATCM XLII (Prague) via [Decision 7 (2019)](https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fats.aq%2FdevAS%2FMeetings%2FMeasure%2F700&data=02%7C01%7CMunteanWG%40state.gov%7C8ed701d3157c4e5e73e408d7dccd89cd%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637220647642959588&sdata=VyOs0YMv2lKCPj7FBzv%2BBDg9guBf3wVrxJJWXXNbma4%3D&reserved=0) as proposed by Argentina in [WP66](https://documents.ats.aq/ATCM42/wp/ATCM42_wp066_e.doc). The updates to the Decision 4 (2012) Annex demonstrate the importance that CPs place on information sharing and that, as the agreed upon implementation tool, the EIES can and should be periodically refined. Previous updates to the Decision 4 (2012) Annex focused on information exchange related to non-governmental expeditions. This proposed update serves as a complementary refinement by focusing on national expedition information.

CPs input information to the EIES via a password-protected portal at <https://www.ats.aq/e/exchange-requirements.html> in one of three reports: Pre-Season (upcoming season, preferably by October 1), Annual (previous season by October 1), and Permanent Information (at any time). The most recent two seasons of those three reports are available to the public at [Latest Reports](https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fats.aq%2FdevAS%2FInformationExchange%2FLatestReports%3Flang%3De&data=02%7C01%7CMunteanWG%40state.gov%7C8ed701d3157c4e5e73e408d7dccd89cd%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637220647642969579&sdata=L5iCKoDgGx9%2FrP%2FuDkY1vFSD5o%2BGT3K4kfbXQ%2FIrW6E%3D&reserved=0). The Annual Report for many years is available in the [Archives](https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fats.aq%2FdevAS%2FInformationExchange%2FArchivedInformation%3Flang%3De&data=02%7C01%7CMunteanWG%40state.gov%7C8ed701d3157c4e5e73e408d7dccd89cd%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637220647642969579&sdata=3Y5WZVH9w6JBHmlGZ6%2FfOr3QDamZLDGu6WymlY8qdPo%3D&reserved=0). The information submitted by the CPs only becomes available to other CPs and the public when the CPs authorize it. The Antarctic Treaty Secretariat provides technical assistance for EIES.

It is noted that for the EIES to serve its intended functions and for Parties to meet relevant Treaty obligations, it is important that all CPs consistently and timely report required information. The United States strongly encourages all CPs to provide all requested information to the EIES specified above and as agreed in Decision 4 (2012) and subsequent decisions.

Proposal

The United States proposes a number of updates to the Annex to Decision 7 (2019) in order to facilitate the input and usage of information concerning national expeditions in the EIES. In addition to the brief explanation of the proposed changes below, a marked-up version of the Annex is attached to this working paper.

For Section 1.1 Pre-Season “Operational information”, the United States proposes:

* 1.1.B “Vessels”: replacing “vessels” with “ships” to align the EIES with the Treaty text and clarify that these are non-military ships;
* 1.1.C “Aircraft”: eliminating the field for reporting intracontinental and local helicopter flights and clarify that these are non-military aircraft;
* 1.1.E “Military”: streamlining information about the personnel in expeditions, clarifying that armaments on all military personnel and equipment should be reported, adding guidance on the information that should be provided about military equipment located in the Antarctic Treaty area, and adding the same fields for military ships and aircraft as exist in 1.1.B and 1.1.C for non-military ships and aircraft.

For Section 3 “Permanent Information”, the United States proposes:

* 3.2 “Operational Information”: Editing this field to have similar format and information as proposed in the Pre-Season report, including delineating non-military and military vehicles and equipment.