

THE COMNAP FAMILY AND ITS WORK

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COMNAP brings together the National Antarctic Programs, those agencies tasked by their government to implement and manage their national activities in Antarctica, including organising expeditions. While most of these activities focus on the support of scientific research, they do also contribute to the governance and environmental protection of the Antarctic region under the auspices of the Antarctic Treaty.

COMNAP's primary function and activities are related to the exchange of practical, operational information with a view to improving the way all National Programs can fulfill their various missions, together or independently. That includes mutual support in the design, ongoing improvement and operation of their Antarctic facilities and support infrastructure, including year-round and seasonal stations, ships, airfields and aircraft.

COMNAP works primarily through a number of groups focused on various areas of expertise such as ship and air operations, environmental management or training. This includes in particular a COMNAP Standing Committee on Antarctic Logistics and Operations (SCALOP) which regroups the National Programs' heads of operations. Each group has in its domain of expertise two main functions:

- maintain a continual exchange of practical, operational information to identify practical solutions in the support of Antarctic Programs and facilitate relevant cooperation and collaboration;
- respond to requests from COMNAP for specialist advice on specific issues and for developing common solutions or guidelines as the need arises.

The presentation will outline how the COMNAP family works together to continually improve the operational capabilities and performance of the National Antarctic Programs, which indirectly but very tangibly results in improved support to scientific research in the region. and contrasted with prior measurements at equatorial and mid-latitudes, including a discussion of its possible origin.