



Media Release
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Belgian Antarctic Expedition 2006: Site Preparation Expedition

The International Polar Foundation, in collaboration with the Belgian Defence Ministry, took on the transport of the first equipment shipment for the Belgian Antarctic Station. The Belare 2006-2007 team in charge of the mission left from Oslo on October 28th 2006 and reached Breid Bay (Antarctica) some 70 days later.

The expedition, lead by Alain Hubert, had an important objective of preparing the site for the construction phase, planned in November 2007.

This expedition reached Antarctica aboard the Ivan Papanin, an ICE class cargo which was rented jointly by the International Polar Foundation (IPF) and four other partners for a duration of three years. The load was essentially composed of logistics equipment (cars, fuel, camps, workshop, tools, etc.), building material for the garage (wood), and windmills.

The load was brought all the way to the construction site, 180 km from the coast. On the way, fuel depots were installed and a camp base was mounted for bad weather conditions.

The mission met its objectives: logistics infrastructure was installed, first building materials were brought to the construction site, first windmill was erected on the ridge for testing, and all vehicles and material were stored in preparation of the winter.

Other activities included a microbiological study of the site, further testing of the equipment, recognition of the road joining the station to the coast, and a detailed study concerning the attachment of the station to the mountain ridge.

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BACKGROUND:

The International Polar Foundation (IPF) is an international not-for-profit organization, headquartered in Brussels (established as a "Fondation d'Utilité Publique" in Belgium in 2002, with HRH Prince Philippe as Honorary President). It also has branches in Great-Britain, France, Switzerland and the United States.

The IPF's mission is:

To communicate and educate on the reality of climate change through the findings of Polar sciences and thereby convince society to act responsibly now to ensure a sustainable world for future generations.



For more detailed information about the IPF visit www.polarfoundation.org.