



NATIONAL ICE CENTER
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8 Jan 16

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

From: Director, National Ice Center
To: Whom It May Concern

Subj: NOTICE OF ICEBERG TRACKING THRESHOLD CHANGE

1. Background. Since 1978, the U.S. National Ice Center (USNIC) has tracked icebergs in the Southern Hemisphere utilizing the criteria of 10 nm on the longest axis. In light of improved satellite imagery availability and resolution, the USNIC is expanding its criteria to include icebergs of twenty square nautical miles or greater. Upon implementation, this will add an additional 17 icebergs to the database as of 1 January 2016, and these icebergs will be tracked regularly.

2. Method. Ice Analysts use a combination of Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR), visible, and infrared remotely sensed imagery in Antarctica to analyze the daily ice edge, produce a weekly hemispheric ice concentration and stage of development analysis, locate and track icebergs, and produce tailored products for operating units. USNIC has been compiling the latitude, longitude, and general size of icebergs seen during their routine monitoring of sea ice conditions around the Antarctic continent since 1978 and sharing them with the public.

3. Naming Convention. The naming convention for the icebergs will remain the same. Names will be derived from the Antarctic quadrant in which they were originally sighted. The quadrants are divided counter-clockwise in the following manner:

- A = 0-90W (Bellingshausen/Weddell Sea)
- B = 90W-180 (Amundsen/Eastern Ross Sea)
- C = 180-90E (Western Ross Sea/Wilkesland)
- D = 90E-0 (Amery/Eastern Weddell Sea)

When first sighted, an iceberg's point of origin is documented by the USNIC. The letter of the quadrant, along with a sequential number, is assigned to the iceberg. For example, C-19 is sequentially the 19th iceberg tracked by the USNIC in Antarctica between 180-90E (Quadrant C). Icebergs with letter suffixes have calved from already named icebergs, where the letters are added in sequential order.

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This is not intended to be a comprehensive list. The USNIC will continue its practice of issuing Notice to Mariners through the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency if a tracked iceberg heads north of 60S and out of the Southern Ocean. The Notice to Mariners are for Safety of Navigation. All of these icebergs, by definition, would be considered "Very Large" icebergs; the waters surrounding the Very Large icebergs are assumed to contain traces of smaller bergy bits or growlers, as are often found in Antarctic waters.

a. Growler: an iceberg less than 2 meters (6.6 feet) across that floats with less than 1 meter (3.3 feet) showing above water; smaller than a bergy bit.

b. Bergy bits: large chunks of glacier ice (a very small iceberg) floating in the sea; bergy bits are usually less than 5 meters (15 feet) in height with areas ranging from 1,000 - 3,000 square feet. They are generally spawned from disintegrating icebergs.

Information on Southern Hemisphere icebergs will continue to be posted to the website every Friday, with size, position, and remarks at http://www.natice.noaa.gov/pub/icebergs/Iceberg_Tabular.pdf

4. National/Naval Ice Center. The U.S. National Ice Center is a tri-agency operational center represented by the United States Navy (Department of Defense), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Department of Commerce), and the United States Coast Guard (Department of Homeland Security). The National Ice Center's mission is to provide global to tactical scale ice and snow products, sea ice forecasting and other environmental intelligence services for the United States government.


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