

Morale Trips

Approved By 

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Purpose

This procedure is to provide guidelines for administering Morale Trips for RPSC personnel as well as administering the trips for USAP participants overall.

Scope/Applicability

This procedure primarily applies to the Chalet Staff who will select the participants for Morale Trips. The Field Safety Department is the primary provider of these trips. At times other departments or organizations will provide trips, i.e. US Coast Guard for 30-minute helicopter trips. Additionally there may be opportunities provided through Helicopter Operations for use of available seats on a helicopter flying to Black Island, Marble Point or other locations. This procedure will apply to those trips as well. At this time the after work hour trips provided by Recreation do not fall under the scope of this procedure.

Terms and Definitions

Morale Trip

Consists of a trip off-station in which an employee is provided time off work to participate often leaving the station for the full day via land or helicopter. These can also be working trips in which Field Safety has work to complete, i.e. flagging routes, drilling holes. Working trips may also be available with a Science Group who requests minor assistance with a specific project. Also includes the Morale Cruises on the US Coast Guard Ice Breaker. These were formerly referred to as “boondoggles”.

Cape Royds/Cape Evans

These are day trips taken during the sea ice phase (late October to early December) of the season and are typically by snow machine with the FSTP crew. The trip focus consists of visiting historic huts and an Adelie penguin rookery.

Room with a View

This is a day trip. It is located on the side of Mount Erebus. Travel is by snowmobile, and typically takes place in the January timeframe.

PHI/HNZ Helicopter Trips

These are short helicopter trips to Black Island, Marble Point *or other locations* on the civilian helicopters either through PHI (Petroleum Helicopters Inc.) or HNZ (Helicopters New Zealand). These trips are offered ONLY if the helicopters are not fully tasked with passengers or cargo. These may also be considered working trips in which the participant goes as a “volunteer assistant” for the science group. Participants must have attended the helicopter safety training or PUSH course before being allowed to participate. Availability of these trips may be infrequent.

US Coast Guard Ice Breaker Trips

Trips aboard the Ice Breaker, typically 4 hours at a time touring around the Ross Sea. These trips take place around the January timeframe.

US Coast Guard Helicopter Trips

These are 30-minute helicopter trips over the sea ice, typically out to the ice edge and do not land. These trips are offered if the helicopters are not tasked with science events. When these occur they usually run 4-5 trips per day and often 2 helicopters at a time. These take place around the January time frame. The USCG, prior to the passengers boarding the helicopter, provides a safety video and instructions.

Responsibilities

Selection responsibility lies with the Chalet staff, either the Administrative Coordinator, Sr. or the Area Director. All Chalet staff should be familiar with the procedures involved with a Morale Trip should there be a cancellation and a replacement needed.

Discussion

In the past the Morale Trips, formerly referred to as “Boondoggles” were handled on a lottery basis utilizing a program in Excel set up with macros to draw names. Due to

numerous comments regarding the system it was determined to adjust the system to a merit based system with the supervisor(s) providing lists to the Chalet. These lists should be in a priority order how the supervisor would like to have their employees participate. The priority should be set up based on performance and safety consciousness both at the work center and within the community. The supervisor may decide to also take into account time with the program. It will be up to the supervisor(s) to insure their employees are fairly prioritized within their respective department.

The Chalet staff should prepare and send out a formatted spreadsheet at the beginning of the season. A deadline for receipt should be by the 3rd week in October, as trips will begin within a couple weeks after the start of Mainbody. The priority lists will be numbered from highest priority (1) to lowest. Departments with larger populations may prioritize numerous people with highest priority (1) to medium priority (2) to lowest priority (3).

Due to the other organizations involved in the USAP a certain percentage of the seats should be set aside for the other organizations. These include SPAWAR/ATS, 109th, SFA (formerly ODF), PHI and grantees (those who primarily work in town or at Williams Field). The seats usually work out to 1-2 seats per trip, depending on the number of seats available.

Due to the varying sizes of the different divisions within RPSC, each division will be allotted a percentage of the seats per trip based on the projected population.

When the Chalet is selecting RPSC participants, emphasis should be provided to those departments where personnel do not typically have opportunities to get away from the station. These include Supply, Housing, Food Service, Heavy Shop and other FEMC departments.

The lists of participant names who attended a Morale Trip are saved in an excel spreadsheet in the Chalet Drive: folder Morale Trips/name of Morale Trip/Date of Trip (example Cape Royds/11/04/02). This is adjusted so only the names of those who attended are included. Those who cancelled or could not attend are listed at the bottom for the next possible Morale Trip.

General Morale Trips

How it works:

1. FSTP or the Field Service Assistant Supervisor calls the Chalet with dates and times of a trip. Typically only one trip is set up at a time due to the constraints of weather. In the case of Helicopter trips, PHI, HNZ or USCG the Helicopter Coordinator notifies the Chalet of the date and show time of the trips, if a seat should become available. The helicopter trips will require a great deal of flexibility on the part of the work center supervisor and participant as the flights change around at a moment's notice. Helo Ops will try to provide 24-hour advance notification of these trips.
2. Chalet sets out number of seats allotted for each agency and for each division. For the helicopter trips (not including the Coast Guard Helicopter trips) there will likely only be one seat available per trip offered.
3. For RPSC the Chalet staff works through the lists of names supplied by the supervisor.
4. For other agencies the Chalet contacts the POC for each agency, tells them the trip specifics, provides them the number of seats available to their agency and asks for names. The POC typically needs a couple of hours to select their personnel. The POC should contact the Chalet with the name(s) within a couple of hours.
5. Once the RPSC names have been selected the Chalet contacts the supervisor to gain approval for a particular person to participate. It is up to the supervisor to notify the participant initially. Once approval has been gained the Chalet sends e-mail to all the participants with the particulars of the trip. Sample e-mails are below. The Chalet also sets a deadline for declining the trip if the participant cannot attend. If a participant cannot attend it is up to the supervisor to fill the seat, notifying the Chalet of the change of personnel. The participant must be on the supervisor's priority list.
6. The Chalet will keep a log on the combined spreadsheet as to who has participated in a Morale Trip. The supervisor should do the same.
7. If a participant cannot attend on the morning of a trip every effort will be made by the Chalet to find an appropriate substitute either from the supplied list or by contacting another agency's POC. Every effort should be made not to let the seat go to waste. The Chalet is open from 7am to 10pm so notifying the Chalet should be relatively easy.

8. The Chalet staff responsible for setting up the trip should leave a list of possible back ups for the Chalet night person and early morning person if there is an open seat.
9. When the e-mail notification is sent to the participants the FSTP personnel, Field Support Coordinator and supervisors or POC will be copied on the e-mail.
10. For PHI and HNZ trips to Black Island, Marble Point or other locations, participants must have current Field Safety training, either Snow Craft 1 or the refresher course, which includes helicopter safety training. The Chalet staff will check the Safety Training Tracking spreadsheets to make sure a person has attended the required course(s) and double check with the supervisor.
11. For the USCG helicopter trips a safety video is provided prior to the passengers boarding the helicopter.

Sample e-mails for General Morale Trips

General Template

This message is to confirm that you have been selected to participate in an upcoming morale trip. You should have previously received this information from your supervisor but to confirm:

What

When

Where

What to take

Approx return time

It is very important that you report to (place) on time WEARING your USAP issued ECW gear. You need to report to the Field Safety Training Program (FSTP), BLDG 138 by.....(time).

If you find you cannot attend please let the Chalet know by 4pm, x2207 or x2337, so we can find a substitute and not lose the seat. If you find out in the morning that you cannot participate please let the Chalet know at 7am. The Chalet is open until 10pm every evening but Saturday.

USCG Helicopter flights

You have been scheduled for a 30-minute helicopter ride on the USCG helicopters. Your times are below. Please show at the indicated show time, which is ½ hour before you will fly. You need to go to fish huts #1 and #11 just above the Helicopter Hangar. BE SURE TO WEAR YOUR FULL ECW GEAR, INCLUDING BUNNY BOOTS OR APPROPRIATE SUBSTITUTE FOR MILITARY, WATER BOTTLE AND CAMERA! You do not need to bring your orange bag with extra gear. Have fun!

If you find you cannot attend please let the Chalet know by 4pm, x2207 or x2337, so we can find a substitute and not lose the seat. If you find out in the morning that you cannot participate please let the Chalet know at 7am. The Chalet is open from 7am-10pm every day but Saturday.

Cape Royds or Cape Evans

This message is to confirm that you have been selected to participate in an upcoming morale trip. Tomorrow.....(date) you will go out to Cape Royds (Cape Evans) to hopefully see penguins and visit the historical hut. You should have previously received this information from your supervisor. You need to report to the Field Safety Training Program (FSTP), BLDG 138 by.....(time).

It is very important that you report to FSTP on time and WEARING YOUR USAP ISSUED ECW GEAR. We expect you will return by 5:30pm. BE SURE TO BRING YOUR CAMERA, WATER BOTTLE, EXTRA SOCKS AND A SNACK IF YOU THINK YOU NEED IT. LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED. You will be riding on snowmobiles so you will need to wear your warmest ECW gear. Make sure you bring your bear claw gloves and goggles. You will need to follow the NSF Code of Conduct guidelines for visiting the historical huts and Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

If you find you cannot attend please let the Chalet know by 4pm, x2337, so we can find a substitute and not lose the seat. If you find out in the morning that you cannot participate please let the Chalet know at 7am. The Chalet is open from 7am-10pm every day but Saturday.

Room with a View

This message is to confirm that you have been selected to participate in an upcoming morale trip.....date, time. You will go by snowmobile to Room with a View on the side of Mount Erebus. You should have previously received this information from your supervisor. You are to report to Field Safety Training Program (FSTP), BLDG 138 no later than 9am-tomorrow morning.

It is very important that you report to FSTP on time and WEARING YOUR USAP ISSUED ECW GEAR. You will be riding on snowmobiles so you will need to wear your warmest ECW gear. Make sure you bring your bear claw gloves and goggles. Also bring your water bottle and, of course, a camera. We expect you to return by 4pm.

If you find you cannot attend please let the Chalet know by 4pm, x2337, so we can find a substitute and not lose the seat. If you find out in the morning that you cannot participate please let the Chalet know by 7am. The Chalet is open from 6am-10pm every evening but Saturday.

PHI/HNZ Helicopter trips

This message is to confirm that you have been selected to participate in an upcoming morale trip via helicopter to (Black Island, Marble Point, other location). You should have previously received this information from your supervisor but to confirm:

What

When

Where

What to take

Approx return time

It is very important that you report on time WEARING your USAP issued ECW gear. You must bring your orange bag with extra ECW gear as well as your water bottle. Don't forget your camera! You need to report to the Helo Pax Building, #36, located behind the gym, at....(time).

If you find you cannot attend please let the Chalet know by 4pm, x2337, so we can find a substitute and not lose the seat. If you find out in the morning that you cannot participate please let the Chalet know at 7am. The Chalet is open until 10pm every evening but Saturday.

US Coast Guard Morale Cruises

The Coast Guard Ice Breaker typically offers Morale Cruises for the town. These 4-hour trips accommodate up to 300+ people and are anywhere from the last week of December to the 2nd week in January. Once the total numbers of available seats are determined they are divided up according to the percentage of groups on station.

Utilizing the “muster” or daily population count can provide this information. Once the number of seats available to RPSC is calculated, a message (example below) is sent out to the supervisors. This message should include an attachment in Excel for the supervisors to use to submit names of interested personnel and which cruise they prefer to go on. Due to the large numbers the cruises can accommodate, these trips are done on a first come first serve basis, however it can be up to the supervisor to prevent someone from going based on their performance.

E-mail is also sent out the other agencies with the attachment. They are to provide the listings of their personnel. These names will be incorporated into the overall manifests. At that time of year the following groups are on station to send in names:

ATS/SPAWARs

PHI

NSF – grantees (contact the Crary Lab and the LDB facility at Willy, they will post a sign up list)

109th

SFA (formerly ODF) – they should include Kiwi Cargo, NAVCHAPS and any other military related agencies in their list

Kiwi Cargo - may be sent in by ATO

Once the lists are received manifests are created. The lists are needed to present to the ship so they have a record of who is on board. The manifests need to be posted in B155 at least one day prior to the first sailing. Alternates can be lined up as well; typically everyone can be accommodated on the ship.

At the time of the trip 2 people are needed down on the dock to check people in. It is wise to take 2 clipboards and pencils; pens won't work in the cold. The passengers need to form two lines. The process typically takes 20 minutes for everyone checked in, provided there are two people working the lines. The manifest is then given to some one on the ship.

Sample e-mail to solicit names – USCG Morale Cruise

The United States Coast Guard will be providing xxx # of morale cruises on the (name of the ship). These are trips generously provided by the US Coast Guard out to

the ice edge and back. It is a chance to drink some coffee, do some shopping and see the sights at the ice edge.

The cruises will take place on.....(passengers should arrive at the pier no less than 30 minutes before the sailing time)

The Chalet will manifest the passengers for all agencies.

We are asking you, as supervisors, to submit names of interested personnel and on which cruise you are approving them to go. Knowing that the Sunday trips will fill up more quickly than a weekday trip (*if offered*) please attempt to distribute interested personnel evenly between trips. (*Typically a weekday trip is set up to accommodate night workers*) Because there are not as many night workers there **may be** extra space on this cruise. RPSC has been allotted xxx # of seats. Please send your names in the attached Excel spreadsheet to..... Please send the information as quickly as possible and no later than close of business..... Once a cruise is full we will accept 25 alternate names and then close the list. NAMES ARE ON A FIRST COME, FIRST SERVE BASIS, although we hope to accommodate all those wishing to participate.

Only people whose names have been submitted by supervisors will be manifested to go. The same rules apply to the vessel as to a plane or helicopter; anyone boarding the boat without being manifested is subject to termination.

ECW gear is not required for the trip but please dress warmly. Please DO NOT wear Bunny Boots, but do bring warm, comfortable footwear. There is absolutely no alcohol allowed aboard the ship.

The manifests for the different cruises will be posted downstairs in B155 by ~~xxxx~~ time and date.

Please coordinate submission of the names with department managers to ensure no names are overlooked or duplicated.

Notification posted with manifests for USCG Morale Cruises

These are the official manifests for the US Coast Guard Morale Cruises. If your name is not on a manifest you may show up at the pier and wait until all passengers have boarded. If there is room you may be able to board the ship, but do understand if you cannot be accommodated due to space restrictions. Dress warmly and be at the ice pier

30 minutes before the cruise departs. Remember NO BUNNY BOOTS AND NO ALCOHOL!

References

Field Science Support and Helicopter Operations

United States Coast Guard

Records

Electronic Excel spreadsheets tracking names from each department for each trip. This notes the morale trip that person received. Saved in Chalet Drive: Morale Trips/Specific by Trip Name/list of names by date (example: Cape Royds/11/04/02) by Administrative Coordinator, Sr. Accessed by Chalet staff and Area Director, may be requested by other managers. Saved up to three years with deletion possible after that time.

Paper copies of United States Coast Guard Morale Cruises' list of names. Organized by Chalet Staff. One copy made for U.S. Coast Guard personnel. Saved until cruises are completed for the season, not saved past the summer season, discarded.