

ARCTIC

SP-28: Time to evacuate

Goskomgidromet (the State Committee for Hydrology and Meteorology) has approved a plan of measures for evacuating the North Pole-28 (SP-28) Station, whose drift speed has increased significantly to 20-30 kilometers a day and more. The floe now risks splitting, and the consequences are unpredictable.

As officials reported in the Sevmorput' (Northern Sea Route) administration, between 20 and 29 January the atomic-powered ship Rossiya anticipates approaching the ice edge in the area where the floe, with the drifting station, is expected to emerge.

The ice floe is in a current that is carrying it out of the central Arctic basin. In order to evacuate the station's personnel and equipment, Goskomgidromet has leased the atomic-powered ship from the Murmansk Steamship Agency. The Rossiya is presently leaving the Arctic and will stop at Murmansk, both to prepare for this voyage and to take on board a group of research officers from AANII (The Arctic and Antarctic Scientific Research Institute). The group will assume scientific support for the icebreaker's forthcoming cruise to SP-28: their responsibilities will include preparing ice charts, weather forecasting, and other work...