

Department of
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Ministère des
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extérieures

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CANADA CONSENTS TO U.S. ICEBREAKER POLAR STAR

NAVIGATING THROUGH NORTHWEST PASSAGE

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, announced today that the Canadian Government granted its consent to a U.S. request under the Canada-United States Arctic Cooperation Agreement to have the U.S. Coast Guard icebreaker Polar Star navigate through the waters of the Northwest Passage. This request was anticipated in our news release No. 219 of October 6. The Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker John A. MacDonald will accompany the Polar Star and an officer of the Canadian Coast Guard will be on board the U.S. vessel.

The Polar Star sustained damage while assisting, in U.S. waters, the Canadian Coast Guard icebreakers Martha L. Black and Pierre Radisson. Unable to continue on its westward journey from its location off the Alaskan coast due to extremely heavy ice conditions, adverse winds and engineering trouble, the Polar Star will proceed east through the Northwest Passage in order to exit the Arctic, as did the two Canadian icebreakers.

The U.S. authorities have undertaken to ensure that the Polar Star will operate in a manner consistent with the pollution control standards and other provisions under the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act and other relevant Canadian laws and regulations. In addition, the United States has provided an undertaking to be responsible for costs incurred in the unlikely event of any pollution caused by the Polar Star.

The Canadian Government also consented to the conduct of marine scientific research during the Polar Star's voyage. The information obtained in such research will be shared with Canada as envisioned in the Arctic Cooperation Agreement.

- 30 -

Secretary of State
for
External Affairs

Secrétaire d'État
aux
Affaires extérieures