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The Department of External Affairs announced today that the annual spring re-supply of the Canadian-United States Arctic weather stations, in which the Royal Canadian Air Force will this year co-operate with the United States Air Force, is now under way.

This air transport operation to the weather stations in the north of the Canadian Arctic islands, established jointly by the Meteorological Division of the Canadian Department of Transport and the United States Weather Bureau, will be carried out from the central joint weather station at Resolute Bay, Cornwallis Island. It will include the establishment of another joint weather station - the most northerly in North America - at the northeastern tip of Ellesmere Island. The new station will be some 500 miles from the North Pole and is to be named Alert after Sir George Nares' ship which wintered in the vicinity in 1875-76.

The supplies to be transported include provisions, scientific instruments and fuel oil moved by ship to Resolute last summer. These will be delivered to the joint stations at Mould Bay, Prince Patrick Island; Isachsen, Ellef Ringnes Island; and Eureka on the west coast of Ellesmere Island. The spring air lift will continue until the end of April or early in May. While there will be sunshine 24 hours a day in the northern Arctic before the end of April, minimum temperatures will remain far below zero until about May 15.

The joint stations are each staffed by a Canadian officer-in-charge and equal numbers of United States and Canadian weather service personnel. Replacement staffs will take up their duties this spring when the stations are re-supplied. Weather reports from the joint Arctic stations are transmitted four times daily by radio to Edmonton, Alberta, and teletyped from there for distribution to forecast centres on the North American continent. They also receive world-wide distribution.

Since the inception of the joint Arctic weather station programme in 1947, the United States Air Force has carried out the air lift to the four joint stations at present established. This spring the U.S.A.F. is using C-47, C-82 and C-54 type planes of the Military Air Transport Service, and the R.C.A.F. is participating with a North Star transport from 426 Squadron, Dorval, P.Q. The scale of R.C.A.F. participation in the supply of the joint weather stations by air will be increased in 1951. It is expected that the R.C.A.F. will take over full responsibility for the work in 1952.

(A simultaneous announcement is being made in Washington).