

To: Richard McKee
Executive Officer, Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands

4 November 2013

Dear Richard

The South African National Antarctic Programme (SANAP) would like to again apply this year for the research vessel, *SA Agulhas II*, to visit South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands.

The reason this application is so late, is due to the fact that the voyage schedule has not been finalized until recently. Maintenance work needs to be done at our Antarctic Base and it was possible that two trips to South Africa would have taken place. The maintenance work has however been placed on hold and the voyage can continue as in the past.

I would therefore with this letter like to formally apply for permission to visit South Thule Island and South Georgia.

On South Thule Island we request permission for two SAWS (South African Weather Service) employees as well as the relevant support staff from the vessel to spend approximately 2 – 3 hours on the Island to replace the drifting weather buoy. The SAWS employees will be Mr Dean Amos and Mr Karabo Mokwena. This year the Captain of the *SA Agulhas II* will be Knowledge Bengu.

The data that we collect from the drifting weather buoy not only helps the South African weather forecasters with their 6-hourly shipping chart analysis, but also forms part of the data set that is used for global numerical weather prediction models. As you are well aware, data in the Southern Ocean is very sparse and being granted the opportunity to place the drifting buoy on the Island is not something we can let slip through our fingers! The buoy sends out hourly sea level pressure data and needs to be replaced yearly mainly due to the fact that the batteries will not last for more than two years with the type of exposure it is getting. Up to date we have received over 6000 observations from this buoy.

Please find examples of our shipping chart as well as the data plot for the buoy. For your information I am also including a photo of the buoy.

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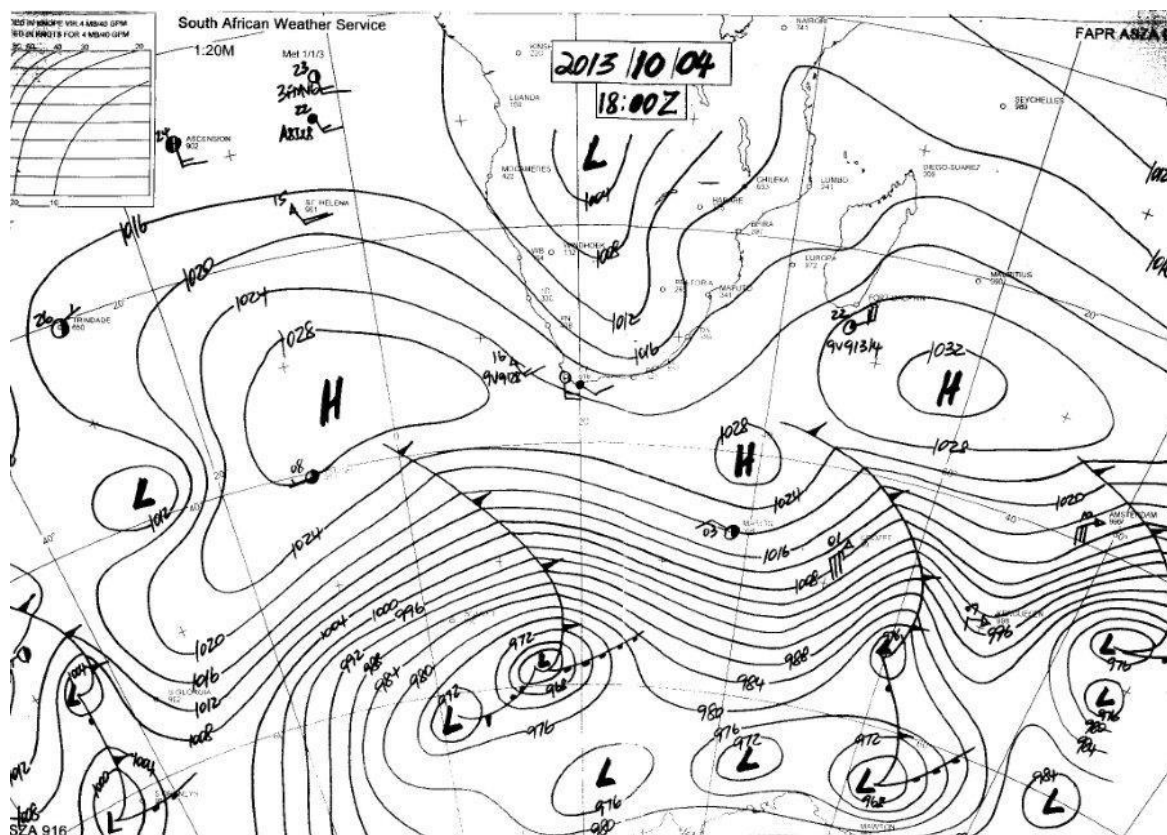




Figure 3: The 2013 placement of the buoy on South Thule.

The Global Drifter Program (GDP) is kind enough to annually provide SAWS with additional drifting weather buoys to be handed over to the Government of South Georgia for deployment during the year. In the past the Captain of the *Pharos* has been kind enough to deploy buoys in the area of the Falkland Islands. Below, please find an image that shows the deployment tracks of the buoys deployed during the annual SANAP cruise as well as from the *Pharos*. This goes a long way to seed the Southern Ocean with autonomous data platforms.

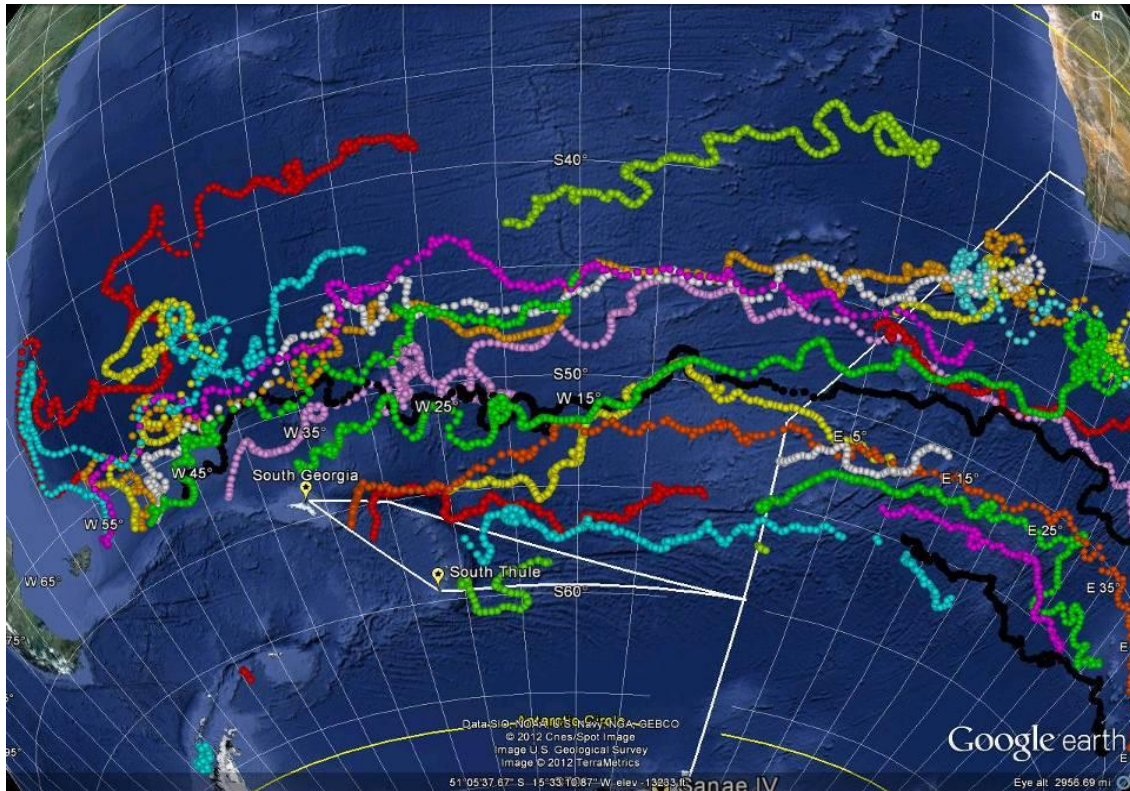


Figure 4: Drifting buoy tracks deployed during the annual SANAP cruise as well as by the *Pharos*.

SANAP and its participants are quite well versed in protecting sensitive environments such as the Antarctic and sub-Antarctic Islands. Large scale eradication programmes are currently underway on Gough Island, including the mammoth task of trying to get rid of the common house mouse and the spread of *Sagina*. The Prince Edward Island Management Plan governs the science and work done on Marion and Prince Edward Island.

All participants on the 2013/2014 SANAP Antarctic cruise are made aware of the dangers of introducing any form of alien to these Islands. All passengers and crew take part in boot washing and all clothing/ backpacks are thoroughly checked for seeds. Please find attached to this application the information documents provided to all voyage participants and conservation certificate that each as to sign. Copies of the signed certificates can be made available to you if requested.

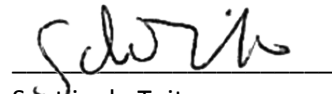
The latest versions of the Biosecurity Measures and Visitors Information have been downloaded from your website and distributed to participants to the voyage.

The voyage schedule as it currently stands, estimate the date of departure for South Thule to be 27 December 2013. It takes about 10 days for the ship to get to the Island, depending on the type of oceanographic research being done. From there the ship will continue to South Georgia. The ship should not be expected at South Georgia before Monday, 6 January 2014. Will this be an appropriate time for a visit to drop off the drifting buoys?

As in the past, SAWS will gladly pay the fee associated with the visit to the Islands. The invoice can be forwarded to santjie.dutoit@weathersa.co.za.

I hope that you will find this in order and look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Santjie du Toit', is positioned above a horizontal line.

Santjie du Toit
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