

Meteorological Services

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- Work was completed on updating the average daily sky cover values on all South Pole LCDs (local climatological data sheets) from December 1968 through November 1985. The archived NCDC data set has been adjusted 12 hours, the difference between LST and UTC, to determine the average daily sky cover values with respect to UTC. These new values shall replace the current sky cover values in the LCDs, reported in LST. With this complete, focus has shifted to updating the department's F6 reports from 1959-1985 and 1994-1996 with the new data contained in the LCDs.
- At 21:09, Wednesday, March 16th, a malfunctioning BIF tech room furnace allowed smoke to build up in the BIF (Balloon Inflation Facility), resulting in a fire alarm and an activation of the Emergency Response Team (ERT). Power and fuel was immediately shut off to the BIF and the building ventilated. Power was out for about an hour as ERT members and Utility Technicians (UTs) assessed the situation. The tech room furnace remained off overnight and was repaired by a UT the following morning. The door between the tech room and the inflation room was kept open to ensure that heat generated by the inflation room furnace would keep the tech room warm. Following the event the senior meteorologist looked over all upper air equipment and computers and found no damage. All SPAWAR computer equipment came on-line in normal fashion once power was restored to the BIF.
- The Campbell-Stokes Sunshine Recorders were taken off the roof and brought inside for the winter season on the 21st. Even though the sun was still slightly above the horizon the sunlight was no longer strong enough to burn a trace on the suncards. Sunshine amounts for the days leading up to sunset were estimated by the meteorologists.
- This year's sunset was observed at 2035UTC on the 23rd. The sunset time calculated by the US Naval Observatory was 0154UTC on the 23rd, but the upper portion of the sun was seen beyond that time due to the additional refraction of light caused by the unique properties of the polar atmosphere.
- All routine data collection and reporting activities continued as normal.

Weather: March 2011

Temperatures:	Date	
Average		-56.2°C / -69.2°F
Departure from Normal		-2.3°C / -4.2°F
Maximum	03/18/11	-43.2°C / -45.8°F
Minimum	03/14/11	-65.6°C / -86.1°F
Station Pressure in millibars:		
Average pressure		682.9 mb / 20.166 in. Hg
Departure from Normal		+1.7 mb / +0.050 in. Hg
Highest pressure	03/24/11	694.1 mb / 20.497 in. Hg
Lowest pressure	03/13/11	671.2 mb / 19.821 in. Hg
Physiological altitude in feet and meters:		
Average physio-altitude		10,519 ft/ 3,206 m
Highest physio-altitude	03/13/11	10,962 ft/ 3,341 m
Lowest physio-altitude	03/24/11	10,102 ft/ 3,079 m
Visibility:		5 days with ¼ mile or less
Wind:		
Average Wind Speed		11.6 mph / 10.1 knots
Departure from Normal		-0.8 mph / -0.7 knots
Maximum Gust	03/18/11	31 mph / 27 knots
Maximum Gust Direction		Grid Northeast
Vectored Wind Direction		080 degrees
Vectored Wind Speed		8.7 knots
Prevailing Direction		Grid East or 090 degrees

**** Records****

No records were tied or broken during the month.