

# Health, Safety and Environment Information Bulletin

## Polar Bear Encounter – Summit Station, Greenland

**Summary:** Early on the morning of June 13, 2018 a Polar Bear arrived on site at Summit Station Greenland. Upon sighting of the bear, all personnel were safely sequestered indoors while a response plan was developed. After 36 hours, the bear did not respond to warning /hazing efforts, nor did it show any signs of moving on from the Station. With authorization from the Greenland authorities, the bear was eventually dispatched by a professional hunter. No person was injured during the incident and all actions were taken in collaboration with the Government of Greenland.

**Situation:** This event was unprecedented, and though the probability of another Polar Bear encounter is low, the consequences are high. It is noted that, during the past 3 years, polar bears have twice arrived at a similar research camp on the ice sheet north of Summit Station. CPS is working on several initiatives to reduce and mitigate the consequences of a future polar bear encounter at a CPS managed location. See below for a synopsis of the initiatives underway and please reach out to CPS and/or the NSF (Jennifer Mercer) with any questions or concerns.



- Actions Being Taken:**
- Removal of tents at Summit Station and Raven Camp as sleeping quarters and the assessment and procurement of hard sided berthing for staff and researchers.
  - Training provided by biologist (Specializing in bear behavior) on bear behavior and how to interpret it.
  - Assessment of early warning systems to detect bears and alert onsite CPS staff and scientists in advance of human interaction.
  - Development of standard operating procedures to follow in the event a bear is observed in the area.

*Lessons Learned are for Jacobs (CH2M), Client, and Subcontractor use to assist in incident prevention and continuous improvement in HSE performance. Reference to specific organizations, projects, and individuals should be avoided to respect confidentiality and privacy.*

- Procurement of firearms, and training for selected individuals on firearms for bear protection. Firearms may be used only after authorization from the Greenland authorities to dispatch a threatening animal, or in the case of imminent human danger.
- Parallel actions are being taken at Raven Camp
- Science projects on the ice sheet will receive polar bear training and will develop their own risk mitigation procedure for observing and handling a polar bear

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**Developed by: CPS HSE Team**

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