

Alpha Ridge Test of Appurtenance (ARTA)

Newsletter #8

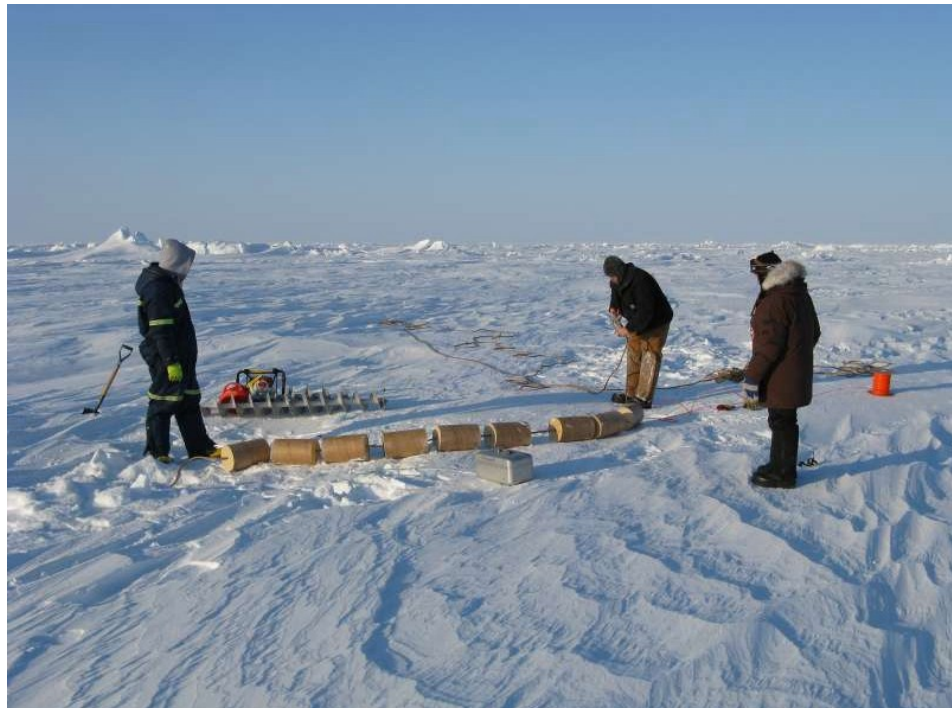
1 April after supper.

Today we got started setting out explosives for the first seismic line. The three helicopters came out to the Icecamp this morning, and since they plan to stay they had quite a load on. As well as the three pilots Steve McGreer, Gerard Hartery, and Orin Durey, there was an engineer, Jake Doyle, and lots of spare parts and other equipment. After getting themselves

all straightened away, we all set out to deploy explosives. Alain Belzile and Ron Verrall were in the Bell 407, Steve's helicopter. Our job was to haul explosives out to the ice. At each shot site we picked a location as near as possible to the 'X' that Ruth had marked on the map, and we unloaded the appropriate amount of explosive. The first picture shows Alain with 30 boxes of explosive together with primacord, rope and everything else necessary to do three sites.

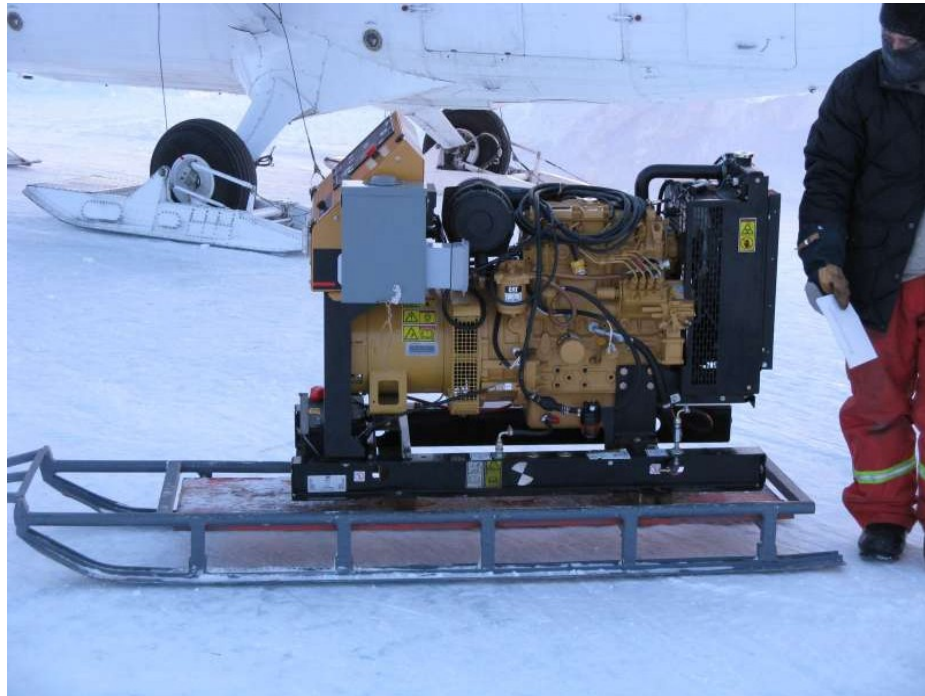
The other two helicopters were responsible for drilling the hole(s) at the different sites, for lowering the explosives to the correct depth and for setting up the charge with primacord

ready for blasting. Lloyd Litwin and Kirby Kleiter went out with pilot Orin, and Tim Cartwright



and Bob Olsen went out with pilot Gerard. Each of these two helicopter worked on its own and was responsible for its own set of holes. The picture above shows Bob and Tim getting ready to lower a string of ten charges. You can see the drills, the long support rope in the background and the red primacord off to the right. Alain is giving a hand where he can. He looked after the primacord as the charges were lowered to depth. The various helicopters usually don't meet like this in the vast wastes of the Arctic Ocean. This meeting was unusual in that Tim and Bob had the hole drilled before we arrived with the explosives.

Previously, the helicopters have not stayed overnight at the icecamp because they could not be kept warm; the camp didn't have enough power. Yesterday a large (20 kVA) generator was delivered by Twin Otter. (See picture on the left.) The mechanics had the usual teething problems to get it running properly, but it's working well enough to keep the helicopters out



here. Jon Biggar says that when all five helicopters are out here, they will take nearly all the power this generator will produce.

The rest of the camp is powered by a much smaller generator. However, it's a beautiful machine (right), and any of us who went without power during the severe weather of the last few years would look at it with a touch of lust.

Tomorrow we expect to get the rest of the charges out, and we hope to get a good start setting out recording boxes.

Best Wishes,
Ron Verrall

We'd like to hear from you. Send your comments to: Name: ronverrall Address: gmaildotcom

