



**Antarctica  
New Zealand**

An aerial photograph of a research station in Antarctica. The station is situated on a vast, snow-covered landscape. It features several large, rectangular buildings with bright green roofs. There are numerous smaller structures, including tents and trailers, scattered around the main buildings. A winding road or path is visible on the right side of the station. The overall scene is desolate and cold.

# **Antarctica New Zealand**

## **General Manager Antarctic Operations**

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Candidate briefing information

May 2026

# Candidate Information – General Manager Antarctic Operations

Shape the future of one of the world's most complex and distinctive operating environments while leading New Zealand's team in Antarctica.

## About Antarctica New Zealand

Antarctica New Zealand is the government agency responsible for New Zealand's activities in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, including the operation of Scott Base. Its strategic priorities are: maintaining a continuous and effective presence in Antarctica; enhancing Antarctic and Southern Ocean science outcomes and impacts; building and strengthening Antarctic relationships to advance New Zealand's strategic interests; protecting Antarctic and Southern Ocean environments.

### Vision

Antarctica New Zealand is regarded a global leader and trusted partner, striving to value, protect and understand Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.

### Values

People are the key to Antarctica New Zealand's success. Our staff, strategic partners and the science community help us create a high-performance organisation underpinned by a culture of shared beliefs, in particular:

*We are proactive and passionate about what we do*  
*We take responsibility for each other and the environment*  
*We work together to achieve success*  
*We always act with integrity*  
*We pursue excellence in everything we do*

*Ka ngākau whiwhita tātou ki ā tātou mahi katoa*  
*Ka tiaki tātou i a tātou anō, ka tiaki hoki i te taiao*  
*Ka mahi tahi tātou*  
*He ngākau pono ō tātou*  
*Ka whai tātou i ngā taumata tiketike*

- We attract, retain, grow, and inspire the very best people
- We foster high performing, agile, ambitious and proactive cross-functional teams that seek continuous improvement through peer review, constructive criticism and embracing change
- We enhance physical safety, mental health and social wellbeing for all our people with an unrelenting commitment to preventing harm through robust risk management practices, communicating and cooperating with our stakeholders and a learning mindset
- We are proactive stewards of the environment and fervently uphold the principles of the Antarctic Treaty and the Environmental Protocol
- We implement efficient, sustainable, agile and safe delivery of capabilities in Antarctica, and improve on well-tested methodologies through thoughtful adoption of new approaches and technologies.

# Candidate Information – General Manager Antarctic Operations

## The opportunity

As General Manager Antarctic Operations, you will lead the safe, reliable and sustainable delivery of New Zealand's Antarctic programme. You will:

- Provide strategic leadership of Antarctic operational delivery
- Ensure safety, environmental stewardship and risk management excellence
- Lead seasonal operational planning and execution
- Partner with national and international stakeholders including the New Zealand Defence Force and global Antarctic programmes
- Guide operations through significant transformation including the Scott Base redevelopment

## We're looking for

- A senior leader with experience in complex, high-risk environments
- Strong capability in operational governance and risk leadership
- Proven ability to lead through change and ambiguity
- A skilled relationship builder across government and international partners
- Someone who is calm, decisive and resilient under pressure

## Why join us

The next few years are a legacy period. Antarctic science is a priority research area, and Scott Base will be busier than ever, even as aging buildings are replaced. You'll help turn strategy into action by running complex logistics, supporting top scientists and keeping people safe in one of the world's harshest environments.

## Our home on ice

Scott Base is on a low headland called Pram Point at the south end of Ross Island. It is about 3,800 km from Christchurch and 1,350 km from the South Pole. Mt Erebus is to the north-east, and the Royal Society Range is across McMurdo Sound to the west. The research station sits where the Ross Ice Shelf meets the sea ice that forms each winter.

New Zealand built Scott Base for the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition, and it officially opened in January 1957. It has been occupied year-round ever since.

Over time, the research station has been upgraded and redeveloped to keep supporting New Zealand's work in Antarctica. The Government has set aside \$498m to redevelop Scott Base. Guided by the Scott Base Masterplan, the ageing infrastructure will be replaced in stages, starting with the oldest facilities and the Ross Island Wind Energy system.



# Candidate Information – General Manager Antarctic Operations

## More Detail

[Annual Report 2024/25](#)

[Statement of Performance Expectations](#)

For more information on the history of the Ross Sea region, visit the [Antarctic Heritage Trust](#)

For more information about [travelling to Antarctica](#)



# Role description – General Manager Antarctic Operations

Antarctica New Zealand is the crown entity responsible for developing, managing and executing New Zealand government activities in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. We also manage Scott Base, New Zealand’s Antarctic research station which supports science in the Ross Sea region.

<b>Title</b>	General Manager Antarctic Operations
<b>Reports to</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Team</b>	Antarctica Operations Team
<b>Location</b>	Christchurch/Travel to Scott Base will be required
<b>Date</b>	May 2026
<b>Direct Reports</b>	3 Direct, 10 Indirect + Scott Base Personnel

## Vision

Antarctica and the Southern Ocean: Valued, Protected, Understood.

## Values

People are the key to Antarctica New Zealand’s success. This includes permanent staff, fixed term and contract staff, seconded staff from the New Zealand Defence Force and our many strategic partners in Government, the science community and other National Antarctic Programmes. We seek to create a high-performance organisation underpinned by a culture of shared beliefs:

*We are proactive and passionate about what we do*  
*We take responsibility for each other and the environment*  
*We work together to achieve success*  
*We always act with integrity*  
*We pursue excellence in everything we do*

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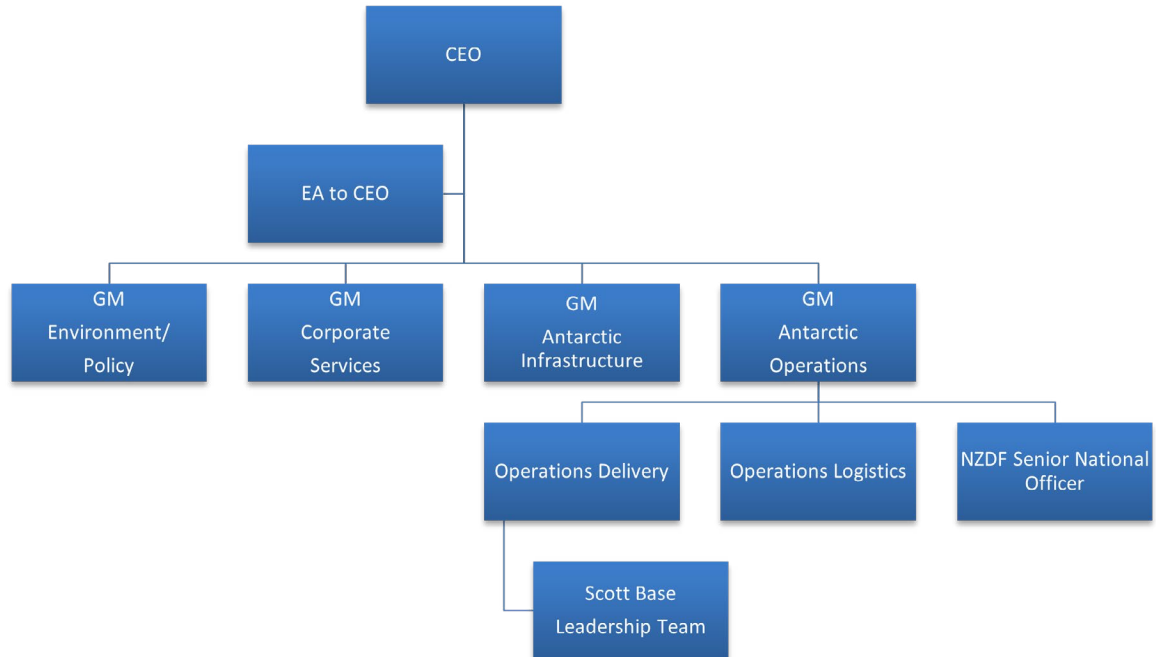
## Business Unit and Role

The Antarctic Operations Team is responsible for enabling New Zealand’s year-round presence in Antarctica through the safe, reliable and environmentally responsible delivery of operational, logistical, and infrastructure services that support science, stewardship, and our international commitments. Operating in a highly complex and high-risk environment, the team plans, coordinates, and delivers seasonal operations, maintains critical assets and facilities, leads on-ice safety and emergency response, and works closely with national and international partners to ensure programme success.

The General Manager Antarctic Operations provides strategic leadership, governance, and assurance for all Antarctic operational activity. The role is accountable for setting operational direction and intent, overseeing risk, safety, and environmental performance, and ensuring operations remain resilient, sustainable, and fit for the future. Through clear leadership and delegation, the GM enables effective delivery while representing the organisation at senior inter-agency and international levels and maintaining confidence with the Chief Executive and Board.

# Role description – General Manager Antarctic Operations

## Team



## Key Accountabilities

### Safety, Environment & Incident Leadership

Accountable for:

- Antarctic operations that consistently operate within Antarctica New Zealand's Health, Safety and Environmental Management Systems and meet all safety, environmental, and regulatory expectations
- A strong, embedded safety culture that actively prioritises harm prevention and environmental protection across all operational, field, and on ice activities
- Organisational preparedness to respond effectively to on ice emergencies and complex, coordinated incident scenarios
- Clear, confident, and coordinated incident leadership that protects life, the environment, organisational reputation, and international partnerships
- Trusted, effective operational relationships with the Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand, Ross Sea partners, and relevant international bodies that support timely, well coordinated response and recovery
- Sustained organisational confidence that safety, environmental stewardship, and incident response capabilities are robust, practiced, and fit for purpose.

# Role description – General Manager Antarctic Operations

## Strategic & Governance Leadership

Accountable for:

- Clear strategic direction and governance that enables effective, well-managed Antarctic operations
- Executive-level leadership as a member of the Senior Leadership Team, contributing to whole-of-organisation performance and decision-making
- Assurance to the Chief Executive and Board that operational risks, controls, and performance are understood and appropriately managed
- Accurate, complete, and well-managed records of operational decision-making in accordance with Information and Records Management policy
- Fulfillment of additional reasonable executive accountabilities as assigned by the Chief Executive, consistent with the scope of the role

## Antarctic Operations Leadership and Management

Accountable for:

- A clear, effective operational leadership model that provides confident, consistent leadership at Scott Base across summer and winter operations
- An engaged, capable, and well supported operations team that is motivated, aligned to organisational intent, and enabled to deliver safely and effectively
- Continuity, clarity, and confidence in on ice leadership during routine operations and during periods of heightened risk, complexity, or change
- Successful operational integration of major transformation and change programmes, including Scott Base Redevelopment, without compromising safety or delivery outcomes
- Operational resilience and performance through periods of organisational and system change
- Long term operational readiness and leadership capability that positions the organisation to respond to future uncertainty, emerging risks, and evolving strategic demands

## Seasonal Intent, Planning & Outcomes

Accountable for:

- A coherent annual and seasonal operational intent that aligns strategic objectives, partner commitments, and delivery capability
- A robust seasonal operations plan that is achievable, safe, and clearly aligned to organisational priorities
- Successful delivery of agreed season-level outcomes, while maintaining appropriate delegation of day-to-day execution



# Role description – General Manager Antarctic Operations

## External Partnerships & System Commitments

Accountable for:

- Effective operational partnerships with national and international agencies, including NZDF, COMNAP partners, and Antarctic programmes
- Delivery of Antarctica New Zealand's commitments through bilateral, joint logistics, and inter-agency support arrangements
- Whole-of-system operational commitments that are credible, deliverable, and aligned with organisational capability

## Continuous Improvement & Operational Maturity

Accountable for:

- Ongoing improvement across operational systems, tools, and practices (including planning, assets, base management, risk, Emergency Management, HSE and field safety)
- A learning-focused operational culture that uses experience and performance data to improve future delivery
- Increasing organisational operational maturity over time

## Key Challenges and Opportunities

- Keeping people and the environment safe in an extreme, high-risk operating environment
- Delivering complex operations within tight seasonal, budget, and resource constraints
- Maintaining reliable operations while major change (e.g. Scott Base Redevelopment) is underway
- Providing clear leadership and decision-making in high-pressure and emergency situations
- Balancing competing demands from science, partners, government, and international stakeholders
- Preparing the organisation for uncertainty and change (environmental, geopolitical, workforce)

<b>Internal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chief Executive</li><li>• Senior Leadership Team members</li><li>• Scott Base Leadership Team</li><li>• Scott Base Redevelopment Project Team</li><li>• Antarctica NZ Board Members</li><li>• Delivery Manager, Logistics Manager, SNO</li><li>• All staff</li></ul>
<b>External</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ministry of Foreign Affairs &amp; Trade</li><li>• New Zealand Defence Force Head Quarters</li><li>• Other National Antarctic Programmes (USAP, KOPRI, PRIC, ENEA, AAD)</li><li>• New Zealand Antarctic Researchers</li><li>• Antarctic Heritage Trust</li><li>• Crown Research Institutes, Universities, Non-government Organisation's</li><li>• Science Stakeholders</li><li>• Scott Base Redevelopment Project contractors and consultants</li><li>• Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand (RCCNZ)</li></ul>

## Role description – General Manager Antarctic Operations

Capability area	Description
<b>Qualifications, Certificates and Memberships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degree qualified or substantive senior leadership experience in complex or high-risk operating environments</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge, Skills and Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive leadership experience (typically 10+ years) leading complex, high-risk operational programmes, preferably in remote, expeditionary, emergency management, or cold-weather environments</li> <li>• Demonstrated success leading organisations or teams through significant change and transformation, while maintaining safe and reliable operations</li> <li>• Strong understanding of operational governance, risk management, and assurance in safety-critical environments</li> <li>• Proven experience contributing at Senior Leadership Team / executive level, shaping organisational strategy and enterprise decision-making</li> <li>• Sound financial acumen, with experience managing constrained budgets and maximising value while balancing risk, safety, and delivery outcomes</li> <li>• Knowledge of National Antarctic Programmes, international operational partnerships, and shared logistics models is highly desirable</li> <li>• Understanding of, and commitment to, tikanga Māori and Treaty of Waitangi principles within an organisational and leadership context</li> </ul>
<b>Judgement, Temperament and Influence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Values-led leader who fosters a strong culture of safety, integrity, collaboration, and continuous improvement.</li> <li>• Ability to implement strategic direction and translate long-term intent into practical operational outcomes through others</li> <li>• Highly developed capability in risk-based decision-making, particularly where information is incomplete and consequences are significant</li> <li>• Strong systems thinker, able to balance discipline, governance, and process with agility in unpredictable environments</li> <li>• Demonstrated ability to build and sustain engaged, empowered, and accountable leadership teams</li> <li>• Skilled at developing and maintaining trusted relationships with senior government, defence, and international stakeholders</li> <li>• High levels of diplomacy and judgement when operating in complex, multi-agency and international settings</li> <li>• Calm, credible, and decisive under pressure</li> <li>• Resilient and balanced when managing competing priorities, shifting constraints, and unexpected events</li> <li>• Committed to developing people and building sustainable organisational capability over time</li> </ul>