

Flight dispatched with supplies for North Pole team

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L-R: Ann Daniels, navigator, Martin Hartley, expedition photographer, and Pen Hadow, expedition leader, pose in this undated photo in the Arctic. A plane set off Wednesday during a break in bad weather to re-supply three stranded British researchers, who are trapped and fighting to survive in the North Pole, organizers of the aid effort said.

A plane set off Wednesday during a break in bad weather to re-supply three stranded British researchers, who are trapped and fighting to survive in the North Pole, organizers of the aid effort said.

The flight from the remote Inuit hamlet of Resolute on Cornwallis Island in northern [Canada](#), was expected to reach the team by 2030 hours GMT.

The aircraft is scheduled to land on an [ice](#) strip identified by the research

team with the help of satellite data.

The exploration team -- Pen Hadow, Martin Hartley and Ann Daniels -- set off on an 85-day hike to the [North Pole](#) on February 28 to measure the thickness of sea ice when bad weather hampered supply flights.

They were down to half-rations and battling desperate sub-zero [weather conditions](#).

"It'll be a relief to get our new supplies," Hadow said Wednesday in a statement from the London headquarters of the Catlin Arctic Survey.

"Until (the plane) does arrive, we need to conserve energy and can't really move on."

The expedition now expects to arrive at the North Pole in late May.

During the past 18 days, temperatures dropped below minus 40 degrees Celsius, which also is equivalent to minus 40 degrees Fahrenheit, and the brutal cold was accompanied by strong winds.

Three earlier flight to drop food supplies to the team had to turn back because of bad weather.

In a statement on Tuesday, Hadow described the team's desperate plight.

"We're hungry, the cold is relentless, our sleeping bags are full of ice and because we're not moving, the colder we get," he said.

The team aims to gather data to complement satellite and submarine observations to measure the sea ice and plot how fast it is disappearing during their 850-kilometer (530-mile) trek.

Global warming is believed to be the main culprit in the rapidly melting north polar ice cap that is freeing up new [sea routes](#) and untapped mineral resources on the ocean bottom.

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