

# U.S. COAST GUARD INTERNATIONAL ICE PATROL

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The mission of the International Ice Patrol is to monitor iceberg danger near the Grand Banks of Newfoundland and provide the iceberg limit to the maritime community. Ice Patrol was established as a direct result of the tragic sinking of RMS *Titanic* in 1912 after striking an iceberg in the North Atlantic. Except for the years of the two World Wars, the Ice Patrol has been active each ice season since 1913. During this period, the Ice Patrol has amassed an enviable safety record - no vessel heeding the published iceberg limit has collided with an iceberg.



4231 SUITLAND RD.  
SUITLAND, MD 20746  
860-235-8171  
[SMB-IIP-COMMS@USCG.MIL](mailto:SMB-IIP-COMMS@USCG.MIL)

**Icebergs:** Greenland glaciers calve thousands of icebergs each year, with an average of 500 drifting south in the cold Labrador Current to threaten transatlantic shipping transiting the Grand Banks of Newfoundland between February and July. The combined threat of fog, icebergs, and severe storms common to the North Atlantic, plus the concentration of fishing vessels and oil platforms makes the Grand Banks one of the most dangerous areas in the world for marine transportation.



**Iceberg Reconnaissance:** U.S. Coast Guard fixed-wing aircraft equipped with radar operate out of St. John's, Newfoundland during the ice season to conduct the primary reconnaissance for the Ice Patrol. Aircraft also deploy oceanographic equipment such as drifting buoys to obtain real-time ocean current and sea surface temperature data.

**Operations Center:** Iceberg reports are entered in a computer model that uses ocean current and other environmental data to predict iceberg drift and deterioration. Model output is used to establish the iceberg limit that is distributed through the World-Wide Navigational Warning Service.

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