FIRST BOEING 757 AIRLINER LANDING ON BLUE-ICE RUNWAY IN ANTARCTICA

News / Manufacturer



The **first ever landing** by a commercial **Boeing 757** passenger airliner on a **blue-ice runway in Antarctica** occurred yesterday at Union Glacier. The landing was a joint partnership between Antarctic Logistics & Expeditions (ALE), Loftleidir Icelandic, and NAS Corporation Limited (NAS). ALE is the parent company of Adventure Network International (ANI).

The Boeing 757-200 ER flight was undertaken to prove the feasibility of landing commercial passenger airliners at Union Glacier, as part of a larger investigation into the use of such aircraft for ALE's Antarctic operations.

ALE is researching the potential for utilizing conventional passenger airliners in addition to passenger/cargo combination aircraft. The Boeing 757-200 ER, fitted with 62 business class seats, will enhance passenger comfort yet maintain the safety of ALE's activities and aircraft resources.

ALE transports 400-500 visitors to Antarctica each season on small group Experiences. The majority come to climb Mount Vinson, Antarctica's highest peak; journey to the South Pole; or visit an emperor penguin colony on the remote Weddell Sea coast. In addition to guided experiences, ALEalso provides logistical support to many National Antarctic Programs and scientific research projects.

ALE has a long history of aviation firsts in the interior of Antarctica. In 1985, its predecessor, ANI,

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pioneered private flights to the continent for an ascent of Mount Vinson. The company was the first to establish an inland, blue-ice airfield in Antarctica, the first to land wheeled aircraft on a blue-ice runway, and the first tour operator to fly guests to the Geographic South Pole.

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