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## **Media Statement**

### **For Immediate Release**

## **New clothing range for tackling the icy continent**

Antarctica New Zealand has joined forces with Christchurch company Earth Sea Sky to produce a new range of extreme cold-weather clothing for use on the icy continent.

Iain Miller, Manager Antarctic Support for Antarctica New Zealand, said the organisation was keen to work with a New Zealand-based company. Earth Sea Sky is a New Zealand-owned family business formed in December 1990. Based in Addington, Christchurch, it produces New Zealand-made outdoor garments renowned for performance, durability and functional design.

Some of Antarctica New Zealand's current extreme cold weather clothing (known as ECWs) was up to 30 years old and needed updating, Miller said.

"We have listened to our customers – the many scientists, media and artists who we take down to the Ice every summer season – and now we are responding to their feedback.

"People told us they found our clothing too hot and bulky in certain conditions, so we've worked hard to refine it and make it more user-friendly. Several staff members who have worked out in the field are also contributing to the design process, along with Earth Sea Sky, so it is truly a joint project."

The new clothing range is made of technological fabrics to improve functionality, comfort and flexibility for the many different activities people carry out in Antarctica. All clothing will feature Antarctica New Zealand's brand colours of orange and black.

"While the clothing has improved styling and aesthetics, it still retains the historic links to the original clothing worn by Sir Edmund Hillary," Miller said.

David Ellis, Managing Director of Earth Sea Sky has a heritage of involvement with Antarctica New Zealand. His father Murray Ellis was a member of the New Zealand party of the 1957-58 Commonwealth Trans-Antarctica Expedition led by Sir Edmund Hillary. Murray Ellis helped build the original Scott Base (the New Zealand base) in Antarctica and was one of the team to be the first to arrive overland at the South Pole via motorised transport.

"Earth Sea Sky prides itself on the performance and quality of its clothing. We are looking forward to using our extensive knowledge of construction, design and fabrics to supply this contract. Our family has been involved in supplying Polar clothing and equipment to Antarctica New Zealand for the past 50 years. Having

the opportunity to continue the association is a great honour for our company," Ellis said.

Field trials of the clothing will start in Antarctica in late 2007. It is hoped roll-out of the new range will be possible during the 2007-08 summer season, which finishes next April. Earth Sea Sky will supply approximately 260 to 300 full sets of clothing, ranging from polar fleece pants to technical extreme cold weather jackets made of down.

Ends

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