

《CCTV9英语新闻：中国组织团队营救雪龙号》

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China sets up team to rescue stranded icebreaker

China has set up a leading team to rescue its icebreaker Xuelong, or Snow Dragon, which has been trapped by heavy flocs since it rescued passengers on a Russian vessel stranded in Antarctica on Thursday.

The State Oceanic Administration (SOA) announced on Saturday the team will map out rescue plans and make "all-out efforts" to coordinate rescue operations, despite there is no immediate danger to personnel aboard Xuelong, which has abundant fuel and food supplies.

The SOA also ordered its marine forecasting department and meteorological center to step up the collection and analysis of meteorological data, so that weather information will be updated and forwarded to Xuelong in a timely manner.

Xueying 12, a helicopter on board Xuelong, on Thursday successfully evacuated all the 52 passengers aboard the Russian vessel MV Akademik Shokalskiy that has been stranded since Christmas Eve to the Australian icebreaker Aurora Australis.

However, after the rescue, Xuelong's own movement was blocked by fields of floating ice.

Currently, Xuelong is located at 66.65 degrees south latitude and 144.42 degrees east longitude. It is surrounded by flocs up to four meters thick and is about 21 km away from unfrozen waters, according to the SOA.

Qu Tanzhou, director of the State Oceanic Administration's Chinese Arctic and Antarctic Administration, said the planned expedition by Xuelong is inevitably affected and changes are expected to be made to the vessel's mission after it gets out of trouble.

"If the ship is stranded for a very long time, which is very rare indeed, then we'll have to evacuate the people onboard and leave the vessel there," he said.