

2.1.5 SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

Activities to support the drilling, production, and operations are presented below.


Transportation of Freight

Equipment and materials are generally transported via the road system to Nikaitchuq. Shipment of large equipment and significant resupply of materials between OPP and SID occurs either during the open water season via barge or during the winter season using the ice road. A 200-ton shallow draft (3 feet) tug and barge is used to transport heavy freight between OPP and SID during the open water season. Freight transportation to SID via barge (open water season) or wheeled vehicles on the ice road (winter season) are shown in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1 Transportation between OPP and SID

Transportation Method	WINTER					SPRING		SUMMER			FALL	
	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
Hovercraft												
Crew Boats												
Barge												
Ice Road												

Note:

 = typical use season

During most winters, an ice road between OPP and SID is constructed to provide highway vehicle access. An ice road is typically available beginning from early to mid-February to mid-April. The ice road season varies from year to year and is dependent on field conditions, weather and other factors. The driving surface of the ice road is typically 4.25 miles long and 60 feet wide. The ice road is approximately 72 inches (6 feet) thick on floating ice, with a capacity of 250,000 pounds. The ice road is used for crew changes and material transports when available during the winter.

Typical ice road construction is used for the OPP to SID ice road. The ice road is surveyed and delineators placed along the planned route; holes are drilled along the proposed ice road path and suction pumps installed to pump sea ice on top of the ice to thicken the road surface; ice chips are used to repair cracks and to strengthen ice ramps and areas prone to cracking; and the ice road is capped with fresh water. The ice road is maintained throughout the ice road season.

Transportation of Personnel

Typically, personnel travel from areas in Alaska and the Lower-48 states via commercial aircraft to the Prudhoe Bay/Deadhorse airport, then by ground transportation (bus or truck) to OPP on existing gravel roads. Personnel travel to SID by crew boats (open water season), hovercraft (shoulder season), or wheeled vehicles on an ice road (winter season). The typical transportation methods and season are shown in Table 2-1.