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# Retrieval, examination and dissemination of Antarctic data

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Within the Physical Sciences Division of the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) many datasets are collected pertaining to the fields of space physics, meteorology, atmospheric chemistry, glaciology and oceanography. Such a diverse spectrum of datasets presents a particular challenge for the Data Managers who have the responsibility of providing the facilities for retrieval, examination and dissemination of data. Factors influencing the choice of retrieval methods in a remote environment are examined; these may include accessibility of site, the requirement for additional ancillary, auxillary and meta data, the necessity of real-time access, and available bandwidth. Next, the requirement to record and catalogue the information (in near real-time if the data is to be made immediately available) in such a way that is easily searchable irrespective of the raw format of the data is considered; a relational database lends itself to this task. Points to appreciate when designing the database are discussed (including the use of standard dictionaries and metadata standards). It is also necessary to consider at this point the physical and virtual organisation of the raw data itself and the potential ways in which the data may be actually used. Finally, the interfaces to the catalogue and the associated data are discussed and applications and utilities demonstrated using a variety of tools including geo-browsers and other user interfaces giving access to data summaries and raw data as appropriate.