

26TH NOVEMBER

I woke up around 8 after a great night's sleep and got to work on my diary. I then went and had breakfast with Hamish and at 10.00 we all attended our logistics meeting given by ALE which is the company that arranges for us all to fly down to Antarctica. We had a briefing on weight restrictions, the delays we can expect to encounter with regards to weather, not standing too close to the illusion when it takes off from the ice and that sort of thing. There are about 40 of us flying on the first trip in which is scheduled to leave on 27th November. The illusion jet cannot land on the ice if there are crosswinds above 20mph so we need to permanently be on standby for a weather report from Patriot Hills. There are 30 or so people going to be climbing Vinson and the rest are people going to the south pole. We have to have all our bags ready to be collected and to be put on the illusion by 4.00pm today which is what I've spent the morning doing. I feel like I haven't got enough clothes but that's because I'm generally overweight half the time!!

I did some interviews after the briefing as this is my first time to Chile since climbing Everest with the Chilean team. I was most upset when one journalist looked at me up and down and asked me why I wasn't taller!! My Jimmy Choo shoes have obviously been left behind for my Antarctica expedition so I'm in my flats much to the relief of Guy and co!!

I'm now fully ready amazingly enough and as soon as my bags are collected to go to the illusion, I plan to brave the rain and go for a quick run. Our plane is piloted by 2 Russian pilots, Sacha and Alexei who have flown in every war zone possible... they have even done formation flying in those illusion jets with 30 of them flying side by side so hopefully they can get us onto the ice ok!! I'm not looking forward to any of the flights that I have ahead and Hamish is trying to get me to sit in the nose cone of the jet so I can see the ice runway rushing up towards us... I guess he wants to see me crying on camera already at this early stage! I will keep you posted via dispatches or email tomorrow as to whether we have a window to get to the ice or whether we are still here in Punta Arenas tomorrow!