

By ANDREW DARBY
HOBART

Antarctic adventurers may get official cold shoulder

Australian authorities may crack down on adventurers to Antarctica after a near-tragic accident involving two Victorians who were warned not to make their journey.

They were told officially their plans were inadequate, that it was likely something would go wrong on their chosen route, and that others would have to rescue them.

Peter Bland, a 32-year-old Melbourne marketing manager, is recovering in Punta Arenas, Chile, from serious injuries caused when an avalanche carried him over an ice cliff into a crevasse near Charcot Bay on the Antarctic Peninsula on January 30.

He survived two nights in the crevasse while a rescue was organised in atrocious weather. His partner, Jay Watson, also 32 of Melbourne, raised the alarm with their yacht-based support party. They accomplished the initial rescue but it was completed only at considerable cost — about \$100,000 — to Chile.

● Two women who were trying to be the first of their gender to cross Antarctica quit yesterday short of their goal.

American Ann Bancroft, 45, and Norwegian Liv Arnesen, 47, used skis and parasails to cover about 2500 kilometres via the South Pole. But they failed to pick up winds needed for the final 760 kilometres across the ice shelf to McMurdo base.



Ice desert: Ann Bancroft and Liv Arnesen on the Antarctic ice. They got to within 760 kilometres of their goal. Picture: REUTERS