



Australian Government

Department of the Environment,
Water, Heritage and the Arts
Australian Antarctic Division

Communicating with Antarctica

A Guide for Family and Friends



Contents

Introduction	03
Liaison and Support Services	04
Australia Post Mail to Kingston	05
Australia Post Mail to Antarctica	05
Mail Delivery by Air	07
Mail Delivery by Sea	07
“Hybrid” Mail Delivery	08
Email at Kingston and the Stations	10
Email on Chartered Ships	11
Telephoning the Stations	12
Faxing the Stations	14
Telephoning and Faxing <i>Aurora Australis</i>	14
The Antarctic Family and Friends Association	15



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Front cover

Emperor penguins - Mawson. © Robyn Mundy
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Page 4. Casey. © Chris Wilson

Page 6. *Aurora Australis* at Rumdoodle. Photographer unknown.

Page 9. Fingerpost sign at Casey. © Chris Wilson

Page 10. © Todor Iolovski

Page 13. Southern Ocean. © Rob Bryson

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Introduction

This booklet is for family and friends to assist them to be able to maintain contact with their expeditioners.

There are a number of communications services that assist family and friends to maintain contact with expeditioners and, depending on their location, an expeditioner may have access to the following services:

- Australia Post mail during the summer shipping season
- Email
- Telephone
- Facsimile

An expeditioner who is working at Davis, Mawson, Casey or Macquarie Island Stations has access to more facilities than an expeditioner who is working at a remote field camp or is travelling to, or from, Antarctica.

The Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) provides an Expeditioner Liaison & Training Coordinator (EL&TC), who is based at Kingston, as a point of contact for family and friends of expeditioners.

If you have any questions about anything in this pamphlet, please don't hesitate to contact the AAD on (free call) 1800 030 680 and we will be happy to answer your questions.

Liaison and Support Services

As mentioned earlier the EL&TC is the main point of contact for family and friends of expeditioners.

AAD, through the services provided by the EL&TC, is committed to ensuring that expeditioners and their loved ones are informed and provided with advice in preparation for the period of separation. EL&TC assists with separation and communication issues and is able to provide supportive contact to those seeking further help.

EL&TC has access to options and resources to assist people when required and may be contacted by telephone on 1800 030 680; this is a free call from within Australia, except from mobiles, or by email at eltc@aad.gov.au



Australia Post Mail to Kingston

Many expeditioners spend some time at Australian Antarctic Division Headquarters, Kingston, prior to leaving for Antarctica.

Any mail sent to them during this period should be addressed as shown below:

(Name of expeditioner)
Australian Antarctic Division
TRAINING
203 Channel Highway
Kingston Tasmania 7050

After arrival at AAD the mail will be delivered to the expeditioner's work area via the AAD internal mail system.

Australia Post Mail to Antarctica

Australia Post mail to Antarctica, including Macquarie Island, can only be delivered during the Antarctic Summer, which is generally considered to be from October until March.

Any mail sent to them during this period should be addressed as shown below:

(Name of expeditioner)
Australian Antarctic Division
****Davis Station**
203 Channel Highway
Kingston Tasmania 7151

**or Casey, Macquarie Island, Mawson, or Heard Island, as appropriate.

The mail will be sent to the applicable station on the first available flight or voyage.

All mail items must meet Australia Post Dangerous & Prohibited Goods & Packaging Post Guidelines. Further details are available from your local Post Office or the Australia Post website www.australiapost.com.au



Mail Delivery by Air

The AAD will endeavour to transport mail to the stations by air but it is important for families and friends to understand that all cargo, including mail, must be prioritised for each flight, and whilst every effort will be made to include mail we cannot guarantee its delivery on a specific flight.

While we appreciate that mail has high personal value to expeditioners, the size and range of our aircraft require that we impose payload and space restrictions on all our cargo, including mail. To ensure that all expeditioners have equal access to mail delivery, and because of the payload limitations, equitable restrictions (size and volume) have been placed on all mail carried to and from stations by aircraft. We seek your assistance and co-operation in applying these restrictions.

We ask that you limit mail to a moderate number of C5 envelopes (27X19cm) with a maximum weight of 500g each, and two 'shoe box' sized packages with a maximum weight of 3kg per item, per expeditioner. You may find it useful to use the packing boxes available through the Post Office (Australia Post) that will meet our guidelines, these are:

- BP (400x200x180mm) or
- BM (310x225x102mm)

Priority for delivery will be given to C5 envelopes.

Packages that cannot be delivered by air will be delivered on the next scheduled voyage to the station.

Mail Delivery by Sea

If sending mail only on voyages that directly visit your expeditioner's station, then you will not need to follow the restrictions in respect to size and weight - those restrictions only apply where mail will be transported by air.

Parcels personally delivered directly to the AAD in Kingston and not sent via Australia Post will be sent as cargo and may not be delivered on the expected voyage. In order to have parcels treated as mail items and placed in the mail bags they must be posted through the Australia Post system.

“Hybrid” Mail Delivery

As mentioned earlier, mail can only be delivered to the stations during the Antarctic Summer. Although email is the preferred method of written communication, AAD appreciates that some people do not have access to email. To assist these people, AAD provides a “hybrid” post/fax service.

Letters sent via Australia Post to the address below will be faxed to the appropriate station or ship:

**Personal Faxes
Australian Antarctic Division
203 Channel Highway
Kingston
Tasmania 7050**

Alternatively, letters may be faxed to the AAD Communications Centre on 03 6232 3288 and they will be forwarded to the appropriate station or ship.

To assist in the smooth traffic flow between Australia and the stations please follow the following guidelines:

- Do not write the name of the expeditioner on the outside of the envelope.
- Do clearly write the name of the expeditioner and the station at which they are working, or ship on which they are travelling, on the first page of the letter enclosed in the envelope.
- Do not use paper larger than A4 and only write on one side of the paper.
- Letters to expeditioners at permanent stations should be kept to a maximum of four pages and letters to ships and remote field camps should be a maximum of one page.
- Post messages early for delivery on special occasions such as birthdays, Christmas, Passover or Mid-Winter celebrations (21 June).

Letters and faxes are shredded after they have been sent.



DARWIN

12375

SOUTH POLE • • 2637

BYRNE
5195

MAWSON • • 2029

URVILLE 12

CHRISTCHURCH

PEDU
4422

MIRNY 725 • • 1396

MELBOURNE

DAVIS

DNEY

MACQU • • 18 287

3930 304 • • DELAID

VOSTOK

Email at Kingston and the Stations

All expeditioners are provided with an AAD email account that can be used both at Kingston and the stations.

The format of the email address is
firstname.familyname@aad.gov.au

Thus, an expeditioner called Martin Swabble will have the email address martin.swabble@aad.gov.au



Email on Chartered Ships

The format above does not work when an expeditioner is travelling on board chartered ships; whilst on board, the expeditioner's email address has the abbreviated name of the ship inserted in the domain portion of the address.

Thus, if travelling on *Aurora Australis*, Martin Swabble's email address would be martin.swabble@aurora.aad.gov.au

The email system on a chartered ship is not a standard "real-time" email system in which the message arrives in the recipient's mailbox virtually as soon as it is sent.

The system operates as a "store-and-forward" system and received emails are stored on a server at Kingston and downloaded by the ship three times a day. Thus, it can take an extended period of time for a reply to be received.

The email system operates over a maritime satellite network and, in order to minimise costs to AAD, it is essential that email transfer times are kept to a minimum. To achieve this size restrictions have been put in place:

- A size restriction of 30 KB is applied to all messages (including mail headers, attachments and mime encoding of content), both to and from the ships. Larger messages are automatically rejected, and the originator informed. If it is essential that a message gets through to the ship, an email should be sent to comeng@aad.gov.au requesting that the message be released.

Therefore, it is suggested that:

- If replying to a message, do not include the entire original message.
- Do not use long signatures, preferably turn the signature off.
- Do not send attachments.

Email messages should only be sent as "plain text" without HTML formatting.

Telephoning the Stations

An AAD-owned satellite network, known as ANARESAT, provides telephone access between the stations and the rest of the world.

Telephones are located at the stations in all workplaces and bedrooms in the main sleeping and medical quarters (SMQ).

The procedure for calling a station from Australia is:

- If required, dial the access code for the carrier of your choice.
- Dial **0011** (International access code).
- Dial **672** (Country code for Australian territories and Macquarie Island).
- Dial the **access code** for the station:
 - **10** for Davis
 - **11** for Mawson
 - **12** for Casey
 - **13** for Macquarie Island
- Dial XXXX (Where XXXX is the **four digit extension number at the station**).

For example, to call extension 8857 at Casey a caller in Australia would dial **0011 672 12 8857**.

Extension numbers for the station should be provided by the expeditioner, either whilst they are at Kingston or after arrival at the station.

Callers from outside Australia should substitute 0011 in the above example with the international access code required by their local carrier.



Faxing the Stations

Faxes can be sent to the stations by faxing them to designated numbers at Kingston that are configured to automatically forward the fax to the appropriate station.

The numbers are:

Davis	03 6283 2657
Mawson	03 6283 2757
Casey	03 6283 2857
Macquarie Island	03 6283 2957

At the station, the fax will be printed out and delivered to the recipient by Telecommunications personnel.

Telephoning and Faxing *Aurora Australis*

The same maritime satellite network that is used to transfer email is also used for telephone calls.

The procedure for calling *Aurora Australis* from Australia is:

- If required, dial the access code for the carrier of your choice.
- Dial **0011** (International access code).
- Dial **870 350 300 271**
(*Aurora Australis* Radio Room).

The fax number for *Aurora Australis* is **0011 870 350 300 273**.

Telephone numbers will be advised separately if a vessel other than *Aurora Australis* is chartered.

It is not cheap to telephone ships at sea and, like when calling Antarctica, it is up to each individual to decide which carrier best suits their needs in terms of cost and convenience.

The Antarctic Family and Friends Association

The Antarctic Family and Friends Association is a support and social group for families and friends of expeditioners working on Australian Antarctic stations. There are branches of the Association in all states and members meet each month for informal social get-togethers. Each state has an annual Midwinter event to celebrate the half-way mark for wintering expeditioners.

The membership consists of family and friends of current and former expeditioners, so it is always possible to find someone who is having, or has previously experienced, the trials and tribulations of having an expeditioner “down south”. The Association aims to be a source of friendship, comfort and information for members. For those new members less familiar with the Australian Antarctic Territories, the Association can point you towards sources of information.

New members not living in metropolitan areas can be put in touch with other members living nearby and get-togethers are sometimes organised “out-of-town” so that country members can participate. Members receive a newsletter with details of each State’s monthly meeting, also with anecdotes and articles relating to Antarctica. Overseas members are also eligible to join. Membership application forms are available from EL&TC. Enquiries can be made to Tina Congues on 03 9794 6683 or email tina.congues@hotmail.com



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AUSTRALIA

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international: +61 3 6232 3209
Expeditioner Liaison & Training Coordinator 1800 030 680

Facsimile

(03) 6232 3288
international: +61 3 6232 3288

www.antarctica.gov.au