



Australian Government

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water  
Australian Antarctic Division



AUSTRALIAN  
ANTARCTIC  
PROGRAM

# Expeditioner Handbook

## Australian Antarctic Program

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## Welcome

Congratulations! You have been selected to travel south as part of the Australian Antarctic Program. One of a select few to experience Antarctica, Macquarie Island or the Southern Ocean as both your home and your workplace.

The success of every expedition depends on its people, and you have been chosen as someone who will contribute positively by doing your job well, being respectful and accepting of diversity, looking out for those around you and looking after yourself.

Antarctica and the sub-Antarctic are not places to be taken lightly. These remote locations, and the oceans around them, can be dangerous. Be proactive in your approach, stay safe and make the most of this incredible experience.

Your contribution as an expeditioner will help Australia deliver our world class science and keep Antarctica protected, valued and understood.

## Introduction

This guide will help you to prepare for life down south and understand your responsibilities as an expeditioner. It provides some background to the Australian Antarctic Program and what you can expect when you depart for Antarctica or Macquarie Island.

As the time for your departure draws closer, you will receive additional information specific to your voyage or flight and your role in the Program.

You are encouraged to regularly review the website at [antarctica.gov.au](http://antarctica.gov.au) to ensure that you are up-to-date on the latest news and information on the Program.

## Australia and Antarctica

The Australian Antarctic Territory (AAT) covers nearly 5.9 million square kilometres, about 42% of the Antarctic continent. Australia's sovereignty over the AAT is based on discovery and a long historical association with this region of the continent. Australia has been active in Antarctic research and exploration for over a century. From the beginning, Australia has made significant contributions to the world's understanding of Antarctica and the global climate system.

### Past and present

Australia has a long history of association with Antarctica. Tasmanian Aboriginal people were the most southerly on the planet during the last ice age. The name of Australia's icebreaker recognises the long connection Tasmanian Aboriginal people have with the shimmering aurora australis. Nuyina (pronounced noy-yee-nah) means 'southern lights' in palawa kani, the language of Tasmanian Aborigines.

Sir Douglas Mawson's 1911-1914 Australasian Antarctic Expedition (AAE) was the first Australian-led Antarctic expedition. Mawson returned to Antarctica as leader of the 1929-1931 British, Australian and New Zealand Antarctic Research Expedition (BANZARE). Antarctic scientists today still refer to the diverse and detailed scientific research that was conducted during these expeditions.

Mawson was a passionate advocate for the Antarctic region. He played a key role in the Tasmanian government's declaration of Macquarie Island as a wildlife sanctuary. He also campaigned for recognition of Antarctica's scientific value and its need for protection.

In 1947, the Australian government established the Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions (ANARE) to establish and maintain permanent scientific stations in the Antarctic and on sub-Antarctic Heard Island and Macquarie Island. Former Antarctic expeditioners started the ANARE Club to maintain friendships and stay in touch with what's happening down south.

Female expeditioners visited Macquarie Island for the first time in 1957. The first women to the Antarctic continent, travelled to Casey station as part of an Australian expedition in 1975, which was designated by the UN as International Women's Year. Women are important to our Program and the community on station, and the AAD continues to work to achieve a better gender balance.

Australia's activities in Antarctica are now conducted under the umbrella of the Australian Antarctic Program (AAP). It continues to conduct world-class science of critical national importance and global significance, and to deliver on Australian Antarctic policy and operational priorities.

### The Antarctic Treaty

Australia was one of 12 original Parties to the Antarctic Treaty. Many countries have acceded to the Treaty since it was signed in 1959. Australia also played a key role in the development of the

Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty which was adopted in 1991 and entered into force in 1998.

The Treaty and its Environmental protocol designate Antarctica as 'a natural reserve, devoted to peace and science'. Under the protocol, mineral resource exploration and mining are banned indefinitely, and care for the environment is key in the planning and conduct of all activities in Antarctica. The Protocol also provides for information exchange and a system of inspection.

## Science program

For more than 100 years Australia has been conducting high quality scientific research in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. The Australian Antarctic Program conducts research for Antarctica and the Southern Ocean that has global benefits and that supports Australia's responsibilities for the region.

Our research addresses critical issues including climate change, the human footprint in Antarctica, the conservation of Antarctic and Southern Ocean wildlife and the sustainable management of Southern Ocean fisheries. Antarctic science is highly collaborative, bringing together researchers from across Australia and around the world.

## Our stations

Australia maintains four research stations year-round: Casey, Davis and Mawson on the Antarctic continent, and Macquarie Island in the sub-Antarctic, as well as several summer-only facilities.

### Casey

Casey is the closest of Australia's permanent Antarctic stations and is situated on the Bailey Peninsula. The low, rocky Windmill Island group lies offshore. Depending on weather conditions, ships take 7 to 10 days to reach Casey from Hobart; to fly it takes about 4.5 hours.

The Windmill Islands are home to tens of thousands of birds including Adelie penguins, giant petrels, skuas and snow petrels. Casey is also the site of large moss beds, forming one of the most significant vegetated areas on the continent.

Wilkins Aerodrome lies 70 km to the south-east of Casey on the East Antarctic ice sheet and supports inter and intra-continental aviation.

Casey has up to 400 expeditioners throughout the summer period, while around 28 stay over winter, including 4 from Wilkins Aerodrome who prepare the runway for the following summer season.

### Davis

Davis is located in the Vestfold Hills about 20 km from the edge of the continental ice sheet. Given good weather and ice conditions, ships take 10 to 12 days to reach Davis from Hobart.

The Vestfold Hills is the largest coastal ice-free area in Antarctica. It covers about 400 km<sup>2</sup> of low-lying hills, deeply indented by sea inlets and studded with hundreds of lakes and tarns of varying salinity. Marine Plain is an area designated as an Antarctic Specially Protected Area (ASPA) to protect outstanding fossil fauna and rare geological features.

Davis has a summer population of about 120 expeditioners and about 25 stay over winter.

### Mawson

Mawson is the most westerly of the three continental stations and is situated on an isolated outcrop of rock on the coast in Mac Robertson Land, at the edge of the Antarctic plateau. It was Australia's first continental station and it is the longest continuously operating station south of the Antarctic

Circle. Depending on weather and sea-ice conditions, it takes 10 to 12 days to reach Mawson by ship from Hobart.

Mawson is located by a deep harbour sheltered from ocean swells, with excellent access to the hinterland and surrounding coastal waters. The station is close to two Emperor penguin colonies and the Rookery Islands ASPA which is home to thousands of Adélie penguins. Spectacular inland mountain ranges are home to breeding snow petrels.

Mawson has a summer population of about 30 expeditioners and 16 stay over winter.

### Macquarie Island

Sub-Antarctic Macquarie Island is located in the Southern Ocean, about half way between Australia and Antarctica. The research station is at the northern end of the island. In good weather, it takes about 3 days by ship to reach Macquarie Island from Hobart. There is no access by air.

Macquarie Island, or “Macca” as it is known, is a Tasmanian State Reserve managed by the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service. It was granted World Heritage status in 1997 as an island of unique natural diversity, a site of major geo-conservation significance and one of the truly remarkable places on earth. The island is a significant breeding place for millions of seabirds and seals.

Macquarie Island has a summer population of about 30 expeditioners and 16 stay over winter.

## Preparing and packing to go south

It can be daunting to think about what's needed to spend up to a year or more away from home. Along with the information below, your Station Leader, Project Leader, Technical Supervisor and fellow expeditioners are all good sources of information when preparing for your trip.

### Antarctic Applications Online (AAO)

We need a range of personal information from all expeditioners before they head south to the Antarctic or sub-Antarctic. This includes things like clothing size, passport details and dietary requirements, which help us to prepare for your expedition.

You need to ensure you have a current passport with an expiry date at least 6 months after your scheduled return date.

Please enter your details into 'Antarctic Applications Online' (AAO) at least 6 weeks before your intended departure date. You can find the log-in on the Expeditioner Hub page;

<https://www.antarctica.gov.au/antarctic-operations/expeditioner-hub/>.

### Cargo

Details about specific cargo allowances, packaging, labelling and consignment that apply to you will be provided by your Station Leader and/or Project Lead.

If you are a wintering expeditioner, you are entitled to one cubic metre/250 kg of personal effects that will be shipped to station on designated resupply voyages. This cargo will not be available until the ship reaches your station, which may be some time after your own arrival.

Summering expeditioners are entitled to 50 kg of personal effects.

Cargo must be electronically lodged in the AAD's electronic consignment system (eCon). Items intended for shipment or flight must be delivered to AAD Warehouse or Cargo and Biosecurity Centre by the advertised 'cargo required by' dates.

The movement and carriage of cargo by sea and air is subject to external legislative and regulatory requirements. All cargo, particularly dangerous goods, must be appropriately labelled and packaged for sea and/or air transport. Dangerous goods must be packed and consigned independently to all other cargo. This includes lithium batteries, please refer to the [AAD Safety Standard – Lithium Battery Management](#).

You must speak with Supply Chain Operations about any batteries you plan to transport. If you have more than 60 AAA batteries, 25 AA batteries or 80 CR2450 lithium coin cells, they must be stored and transported in a Designated Battery Storage Container or Facility.

Take particular care in transporting spare lithium batteries for cameras and other devices. Lithium batteries can cause fires. Damaged batteries pose an elevated risk of fire, and must be stored in an appropriately labelled Designated Battery Storage Container.

For more information, refer to the AAD's Lithium Battery Standard: search for 'batteries' on the intranet: [blizzline.antarctica.gov.au](http://blizzline.antarctica.gov.au)

Cargo requiring special handling such as fragile, overweight, dangerous goods, or those of a critical nature must be brought to the attention of Supply Chain Operations staff.

Cargo wanted for use on voyages (known as WOV, cargo stowed separately and accessible while at sea) must be consigned in eCon and approved by Shipping staff.

If you are travelling to Macquarie Island, you must prepare your cabin luggage prior to sailing so it will be waterproof if transferred ashore by small watercraft.

You can find more information about cargo, including instructions on battery transport, on the Expeditioner Hub page; <https://www.antarctica.gov.au/antarctic-operations/expeditioner-hub/>.

## What to take

### Issued clothing and equipment

You will be issued with clothing and equipment specific to the duration of your time down south and your role and occupation, including trade-specific Personal Protection Equipment (PPE). Most of this equipment is the property of the AAD and must be returned at the completion of the expedition.

Ensure you complete your clothing sizes in AAO as soon as possible so we can prepare your Antarctic clothing kit. Your kit will be issued to you by the AAD Expeditioner Clothing Store, which is located at head office in Kingston. You must try on all items of clothing and footwear to determine the fit is correct, and cross-check the items you have received against the issue list provided to ensure you are not missing anything.

It is important you do not use AAD-issued clothing prior to departure, unless it is required for training purposes. If you have used it, ensure that it is thoroughly cleaned before you depart for Antarctica or the sub-Antarctic.

### Prescription sunglasses and safety glasses

Eye protection is a critical part of your clothing kit. Non-prescription sunglasses are provided to all expeditioners.

AAD employees travelling to Antarctica, the sub-Antarctic or participating in voyages for more than 14 days are entitled to receive 1 pair of prescription sunglasses and if applicable, 1 pair of prescription safety glasses or goggles.

For AAD staff, prescription sunglasses can be arranged by the AAD Clothing Store and must be ordered at least 6 weeks before departure. You will need to complete the application form, provide a current prescription (issued in the last 12 months) and provide your pupil distance.

If there is less than 6 weeks before departure, or if our standard sunglass frames do not adequately fit your face, you may choose to arrange your own prescription sunglasses.

If you require prescription safety glasses or goggles, you must arrange these yourself. The AAD will reimburse the cost, subject to expense caps. Reimbursement of expenses can be made through the AAD finance system.

Expeditioners not employed by the AAD should approach their employer if they require prescription sunglasses, safety glasses or goggles.

More detail can be found in the AAD's Prescription Eyewear Procedure on the AAD's intranet [blizzline.antarctica.gov.au](http://blizzline.antarctica.gov.au) or email [clothing@aad.gov.au](mailto:clothing@aad.gov.au) for a sunglasses application form.

### Toiletries

Bath towels and bed linen are provided on station, but some expeditioners prefer to take their own.

Basic toiletries such as toothpaste and toothbrushes, soap, shampoo and conditioner, menstrual products, shaving cream and razor blades are all available on station. If you prefer to have your own particular brands, you should take your own supplies.

Expeditioners travelling to the Antarctic and sub-Antarctic can claim reimbursement for the cost of personal hygiene products e.g. menstrual, sexual health and contraception products. The claim form can be found on the Expeditioner Hub page; <https://www.antarctica.gov.au/antarctic-operations/expeditioner-hub/>.

On voyages, emergency supplies of personal hygiene products are available from the self-help area on the ship. It's recommended you pack extra supplies in case of delays and other unforeseen circumstances.

For those on station, you should pack enough personal hygiene products in your cabin baggage to cover the time between when you arrive on station and when your unaccompanied personal effects (UPE) arrive. There are emergency supplies of menstrual products in first aid kits and at the field huts.

Make sure any toiletries you pack are low phosphate, biodegradable products. Do not take any aerosols. Do not pack products containing plastic microbeads. The listing of 'polyethylene' in the product ingredients is a good indication that plastic microbeads are present. They may also be listed as 'HDPE', for 'high-density polyethylene', or 'PEHD'.

### Indoor clothing

You will need to bring a range of clothing to wear indoors. Buildings in Antarctica and the sub-Antarctic are heated to around 19 degrees, so pack some casual clothing such as jeans, shorts, tracksuits, T-shirts and jumpers. You may also want to pack gym gear, clothing for fancy dress and special occasions. Take some indoor shoes such as sneakers or fleecy lined 'ugg' boots. Outside boots are not allowed inside.

### Outdoor recreational clothing and equipment

You may wish to bring your own recreational clothing such as a lightweight windproof jacket, daypack and walking boots. If so, please talk to your Station Leader and Field Training Officer as it will need to meet appropriate standards.

If you are packing your own recreational clothing or equipment that could be confused with returnable Antarctic clothing and equipment, complete and return an Equipment Declaration form, available under 'Expeditioner Forms' on the Expeditioner Hub page; <https://www.antarctica.gov.au/antarctic-operations/expeditioner-hub/>.

### Hobby materials

You can undertake a wide range of hobbies while you are away, but you must take your own materials south with you. Some examples of common hobby materials to take south include musical instruments, needlework, art and craft supplies, and dressed timber for woodwork.

### Batteries

Cold temperatures deplete battery power. Take a sufficient number of batteries for all electrical appliances including cameras and laptop computers. Rechargeable batteries are of no use in the field unless a generator or solar panel are available! The AAD does not provide batteries for personal electronic items.



## Cleaning your gear

Caring for the fragile Antarctic and sub-Antarctic environment begins before you leave.

Thoroughly clean personal clothing and equipment before departure to ensure they are free from food scraps, soil, insects, seeds etc. Pay particular attention to velcro fastenings, boot linings, clothing seams and pockets.

Vacuum all pockets, then warm wash and dry clothing items. Vacuum inside your boots and scrub them well on the outside to ensure they contain no traces of soil. Items that have been in contact with the ground such as footwear, camera bags, rucksacks and tripods must be thoroughly washed with a bleach solution.

These measures will help prevent accidental import of alien species and disease to the Antarctic and sub-Antarctic environment.

## Packing your gear

When packing your gear as cargo you should ensure all clothing, footwear, personal effects and scientific equipment are free from food scraps, soil, insects, seeds etc. This also includes new items in original packaging.

Clean items should be packed into new cardboard boxes, or clean/new plastic bins. These should then be completely sealed.

Polystyrene beads, chips or similar packaging are prohibited in Antarctica. Where possible remove excess packaging such as paper, plastic and cardboard to reduce waste on station.

## Drug and Alcohol Policy

AAD strives to create a culture and environment focused on the health and wellbeing of all staff and expeditioners. We aim to create a psychologically safe and inclusive workplace, where alcohol is consumed responsibly, at appropriate times, in accordance with current health guidelines, and where illicit drugs are never used.

The AAD Drug and Alcohol Policy is available on the Expeditioner Hub page; <https://www.antarctica.gov.au/antarctic-operations/expeditioner-hub/>. It outlines the guidelines for use, purchase and consumption of alcohol.

Some expeditioners purchase a supply of alcoholic beverages to send south for personal use on station. Your Station Leader will give more advice on purchasing and consigning alcohol to station during your pre-departure training period.

At stations and field camps, the consumption of alcohol is only permitted at designated times outside of work hours. These are determined by Station Leaders in consultation with the AAD Station and Field Operations Manager.

Mandatory drug testing for all aviation safety sensitive roles is conducted as part of your pre-departure medical examination. Additional drug and alcohol testing may be conducted while on expedition, when operationally indicated and as per the AAD Drug and Alcohol Policy.

## Sales and tax-free purchases

Australian Border Force requires sales and tax-free purchases using the Tourist Refund Scheme (TRS) to fit within the sizing guidelines presently used by airlines for cabin baggage. All duty free and TRS

purchases must be included within personal cabin baggage limits. Note that the personal carriage of alcohol is prohibited on AAD ships and aircraft.

If you are travelling to Macquarie Island or Heard Island from an Australian port, TRS refunds or duty free purchases are not available. For further information, visit the Australian Border Force website ([www.abf.gov.au](http://www.abf.gov.au) – search for 'TRS').

## What not to take

Some items are prohibited.

- No alien species – like soil, insects and seeds that could hitch a ride on your clothing, personal gear and equipment.
- No polystyrene beads, chips or packaging – wrap fragile items in clothing, foam or paper instead.
- No personal supplies of food – unless commercially packaged and sealed.
- No excess packaging or items that will quickly end up as waste.
- No illicit drugs.
- No prescription medication that has not been disclosed to the Polar Medicine Unit
- No firearms.
- No PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) or pesticides – these are banned under the Antarctic Treaty's Environmental Protocol as they may persist in the Antarctic environment and damage local wildlife.

## Personal considerations before you leave

There are a range of personal issues that you should carefully consider and act on before you depart.

### Financial

Ensure you have internet banking access before you go south, and that your credit card is valid for the whole period you're away. If you are an AAD employee, your salary is paid into a nominated Australian bank or credit union account. Internet banking is available, but you won't be able to receive SMS codes, so make sure you set up alternate verification methods.

If there is a possibility you may need to have funds drawn from bank accounts during your absence, seek advice from your financial institution about establishing a joint account or providing another person with access.

Carry some cash (for example up to \$300) to purchase miscellaneous small items on the ship and on station, and to have available on Return to Australia (RTA). Your Antarctic postmaster can only accept cash on behalf of Australia Post.

### Health and medical

You will have a full medical examination before joining the AAP. However, you must advise the Polar Medicine Unit (PMU) as soon as possible of any illness, injury or significant change in your medical condition, health or wellbeing prior to departure. Early notification will help to ensure your ongoing medical fitness and minimise the impact to your health.

You should be immunised and/or boosted against COVID-19, polio, diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough (pertussis), hepatitis A and B and seasonal influenza prior to departure. Other vaccines such as chicken pox, human papilloma virus (HPV) and meningitis vaccines should be considered depending on medical advice. Older and at-risk expeditioners should consider a shingles vaccine to minimise their risk during potential periods of relative immune suppression such as at the end of a winter.

If you require further vaccination while you are attending pre-departure training at the AAD, you can arrange this through your station doctor. If you are still in your home location, you should continue to consult with your local GP.

Additional vaccinations or public health measures, including quarantine or isolation, may be offered to or required of specific groups and individuals. This is likely to occur when occupational and public health risk assessments of proposed activities, roles and phases of the season indicate they are needed.

You should have a thorough dental examination and any necessary treatment prior to departure. Evidence of immunisations and dental examinations will be required.

You may receive communications or notifications from the PMU electronically via email, SMS or via electronic apps. These are important and may notify you of times of medical risk, results from medical examinations or your appointments. Please be sure to take any action requested.

If you have concerns about any health-related issues prior to departure, contact the PMU on +61 3 6232 3569, or for urgent matters 24 hours a day call the PMU Hotline +61 3 6232 3293.

## Insurance, health insurance and workers compensation

If you are not an AAD employee, you are strongly advised to obtain adequate private insurance to cover loss or damage to clothing, personal effects and valuables transported to Antarctica. Few insurance companies offer this service, so it's recommended you resolve this as soon as possible.

You should carefully consider your individual situation before suspending private health insurance while in Antarctica or the sub-Antarctic. Check the product disclosure statement and seek professional advice. Medical support on station and ships is provided by the AAD and Medicare is not applicable.

If you are not employed by the AAD, you may need to clarify worker's compensation issues and procedures with your employer before departure. For example, you should know who to contact in case of workplace injury or illness, and how to submit a claim.

## Separation from friends and family

You should read and take into consideration the information contained in the Antarctic Separation Guide, which is available on the Expeditioner Hub page; <https://www.antarctica.gov.au/antarctic-operations/expeditioner-hub/>.

You may find it useful to read and discuss this with your loved ones to ensure you are all fully prepared for the departure, separation and return home.

Refer to the section on Expeditioner Wellbeing later in this Handbook for more resources to support you and your family.

## Voting responsibilities

Australian citizens may have the opportunity to vote in national or state elections when down south, though some states do not have provision for Antarctic voters.

You should register as an Antarctic voter on the AEC website (visit [www.aec.gov.au](http://www.aec.gov.au) – search for 'Antarctica') to be kept informed of opportunities to vote, and avoid penalties for not voting.

## Will and Power of Attorney

You may wish to have a Will prepared before departure. This ensures personal estates will be distributed in accordance with your wishes and not as the law demands where no Will exists.

Some personal things can be challenging to do from Antarctica, so you may like to consider a Power of Attorney. You should seek advice from a legal professional within your own state or territory about appointing a Power of Attorney, as conditions and restrictions can vary from state to state.

## Working at the AAD at Kingston

AAD's main office is in Kingston, Tasmania, just south of the capital Hobart. Prior to departure AAD-employed expeditioners will be required to spend some time here, as agreed with your Technical Supervisor.

When you arrive at Kingston, you will be welcomed by your Technical Supervisor and may start with a group of other new expeditioners. You will be issued with a security pass to access the site and will be provided log-in details to access AAD's ICT network, including your email. You should check your email regularly – it's an important communication tool through your onboarding period.

If you are an expeditioner at Kingston and not engaged in training or preparatory work, you may be expected to assist with general tasks in support of the upcoming expedition. You will report to either your Station Leader or Technical Supervisor. If you are unable to attend the workplace or work, you should let them know by 9:30 am on the day of absence.

## Training

You may be required to attend a range of training activities such as field, community and professional training. You will be notified of any training requirements, briefings and dates if they apply to you.

- Attendance at ship and air pre-departure briefings is compulsory – if you don't attend, you don't go!
- Attendance at training is compulsory unless recognition of prior learning is granted.
- You must provide the Expeditioner Training Unit with certified copies of all relevant certificates and licences when requested.
- Your participation in the Australian Antarctic Program is dependent on your successful completion of training.

Some training programs are held several weeks prior to departure and you may need to travel to Hobart to attend specific training courses. The AAD also has a number of online training modules which may be required before attending face-to-face training.

## Transport to Hobart

AAD-employed expeditioners will be provided with flights and accommodation in order to commence work and complete training in Hobart before deployment south.

During the pre-departure training period, a bus is usually provided for travel between Hobart and the AAD, or you will be provided with taxi vouchers. If you are attending training at another site, your transport will be arranged. Staff car parking is available at the AAD.

## Health issues while at Kingston

There are Antarctic Medical Practitioners at Kingston preparing for their deployment south, and they are available to provide some medical advice to expeditioners if circumstances permit.

If you do not have access to your usual General Practitioner, the PMU can refer you to a local Hobart medical clinic. It is critical you do not delay advising PMU doctors of any change in your medical condition, health or well-being prior to departure so we can arrange appropriate care or medical support for you.

## Bike and shower facilities

There are excellent facilities at Kingston for those who wish to ride bikes to work. There is a purpose-built facility for the secure storage of bikes, as well as showers and change rooms.

## Gym membership

Membership to the Kingborough Sports Centre is available to expeditioners who are employed by the AAD for three months or longer. Just show your security pass to staff at the gym to be issued a membership card. There are a range of classes and equipment available: [kscfitness.com.au/classes](https://kscfitness.com.au/classes)

## Antarctic Café

The Antarctic Café is located at the Kingston office. It is downstairs from the reception area and sells coffee, light meals and snacks.

## Shipping and air transport

The AAD operates shipping and air transport to Antarctica. Seasonal shipping and air schedules are published on the AAD website. Be aware that these schedules sometimes change due to operational reasons.

You will receive specific transport information relating to your voyage or flight approximately 6 weeks before departure.

All expeditioners must carry a valid passport (and visa if required) when travelling south. The expiry date must be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return date.

Baggage restrictions apply on ships and planes. You will be notified of the personal baggage allowance limit in advance. Baggage will be weighed, and excess baggage will not travel with you. It will need to be consigned as cargo for a future flight or voyage.

Strict drug and alcohol policies apply to all ship and aircraft travel. Alcohol is not permitted to be transported as cabin baggage or on flights. All personal alcohol must be consigned as cargo on resupply voyages.

Australian Border Force and Biosecurity Tasmania regularly inspect cargo and baggage coming into and out of Australia, and may use specially trained detector dogs. AAD security staff may also conduct inspections. These checks may be conducted on accompanied baggage, in cabins, internal mail, cargo or unaccompanied baggage.

### Aviation

The AAP runs an intercontinental Airlink from Hobart to Wilkins Aerodrome near Casey station. This route is flown by an Airbus A319-115LR and Royal Australian Air Force C17-A Globemaster III.

The A319 moves approximately 400 passengers each summer season and transports a limited amount of high priority, lightweight cargo. The C17-A carries up to 72 tonnes of cargo in 'heavy lift flights' and can airdrop essential supplies and equipment year-round, including in winter when the stations are inaccessible.

Intracontinental services are provided by fixed wing aircraft and helicopters. These link the stations and provide access to other areas of Antarctica for scientific field work.

### Shipping

The AAD's flagship vessel is the icebreaker RSV *Nuyina*, a scientific research and resupply ship. It has laundry facilities, communal computers, books and magazines, board games, audio visual equipment, gymnasium, sauna and a shop. Sheets, doonas, towels and soap are supplied on board. Smoking is permitted only in designated areas. Dietary requirements will be catered for given reasonable notice prior to departure.

Other ships are also contracted when required. If travelling on a contracted vessel, facilities vary from ship-to-ship. Prior to departure your Voyage Leader will advise what facilities are available on board.

## Living and working in Antarctica

### Station facilities and amenities

When you arrive on station you will receive an induction. The layout of each station varies, but each has scientific laboratories, power generators, workshops, a small medical facility, stores, and communications facilities. There is also living quarters with a kitchen, mess, recreation rooms, library and accommodation rooms.

### Living accommodation

Expeditioners generally live in single bedrooms. When the number of expeditioners at Casey and Davis is high through the summer, expeditioners may need to share rooms.

Every attempt will be made to accommodate expeditioners whose jobs require shift work or who have mandated periods of rest required by law (such as pilots). These expeditioners will be in rooms where they can expect minimal interruptions during the day.

Please be mindful of noise when moving around accommodation areas. Antarctic buildings have heavy, insulated doors and you always need to use two hands to ensure you close them quietly.

### Medical facilities

All stations are equipped with small, comprehensive medical facilities which are necessarily limited in capability. Medical facilities include a consulting and examination room, a small operating theatre, a dental facility, a stocked pharmacy and a small diagnostic laboratory.

The station doctor is assisted in emergencies by expeditioners, who have trained in Hobart to act as lay surgical assistants (LSAs). There are usually no other trained health care professionals on expedition.

AAD Polar Medicine experts and a network of medical specialists around Australia through the Centre for Antarctic, Remote and Maritime Medicine (CARMM) are available to provide 24/7 telemedicine advice and support if needed.

Given the unique Antarctic context and limited medical, diagnostic and treatment capabilities, it is critical the Polar Medicine Unit is made aware of any health issues or concerns you may have at the earliest opportunity.

### Food and hydroponics

Food on station is prepared by a qualified chef. Where required, we cater for special dietary requirements such as vegetarian, vegan, gluten and dairy intolerance.

Eggs and fresh vegetables are available for the first few months after resupply. Limited hydroponics produce is also grown at each station and training for those maintaining these facilities is provided.

The hydroponics facilities are a restricted area and you must be inducted by the hydroponics officers on station before entering.

### Water

Water is obtained at the continental stations either directly from melt lakes, by melting ice from the plateau or snow drifts, or by reverse osmosis. While there is a sufficient supply available for daily use such as washing and cooking, water is precious and its conservation is an essential feature of daily life.



On Macquarie Island, water is piped from a small dam near the station. The supply is plentiful, although in winter the pipes feeding the station can freeze for short periods, leading to water restrictions.

### Waste management

Waste is carefully managed on station. Indoor and outdoor station clean-ups are conducted regularly.

Rubbish collection is undertaken weekly and you will be rostered to do this duty during your stay. You are expected to sort your waste into various recyclable and non-recyclable categories. A limited amount of waste, such as perishable food, medical and solid human waste from the field, is incinerated on station. Any waste generated on field trips must be sorted and returned to station.

You will be informed of these protocols during your pre-departure training and again when you get to station.

### Laundry facilities

Each station has a laundry with washing machines and dryers, a drying room and ironing facilities. Environmentally sensitive washing detergents are provided. Please use the recommended amount of detergent, adding more will not get your clothes cleaner, it just puts more load into the waste water treatment plant.

### Clothing store

A clothing store at each station has a limited range of items to replace lost or damaged articles. Your issued clothing is expensive and is your primary defence against the cold, so take care of it. Wear trade-specific clothing for rough work to protect more fragile garments. Sewing machines and basic supplies are available at the stations so people can carry out minor repairs to their clothing.

### Laboratories and observatories

Each station has scientific laboratories and observatories. Working space in these buildings is allocated in consultation with appropriate Program Managers. This allocation will be granted before travelling to Antarctica, preferably at the project planning stage.

There are scientific observatories at each station which contain automatic monitoring equipment for various research programs. Some equipment is potentially hazardous so observe any safety notices or warnings.

### Fire

Fire is a serious hazard in Antarctica. Fire-fighting is complicated by the unique environment with limited water supplies, strong winds and an exceptionally dry climate. Fire risk is also heightened by the presence of flammable liquids and gases, and the fact some station buildings are not occupied all the time. Please remain conscious of fire risks and abide by the rules designed for fire protection.

### Land and sea travel in Antarctica

Antarctic travel is hazardous with limited marked routes and many dangers such as crevasses, tide cracks, ice cliffs and blizzards. To undertake field trips, you will need to fulfil the requirements of the field training system. During the summer months opportunities to get out in the field may be limited, due to the number of people on station.

Hägglunds, side-by-side vehicles and utes are used for transport on the continental stations. All vehicles should be used in accordance with requirements and always operated with caution. All

vehicles and equipment are station resources managed by the Station Leader with day-to-day management delegated to the Station Mechanical Supervisor. Although some vehicles are available at times for recreational use, work commitments always take precedence.

The use of quad bikes in Antarctica is being phased out and a replacement vehicle program is currently being implemented. In the interim, quads may only be used for a limited range of purposes. All quad bike use is subject to Station Leader approval. Quads are not permitted to be used for recreational purposes.

Travel on Macquarie Island is by foot or small boat. A tractor and side-by-side vehicle are available for use within the station precinct for work purposes only.

Each station has a number of inflatable rubber boats (IRBs) and rigid inflatable boats (RIBs) with outboard motors. Only qualified expeditioners who hold a current Coxswain 1 (near coastal) certificate or higher, and a current Level 2 First Aid certificate, as well as having completed AAD-approved watercraft courses, are permitted to operate the boats.

## Station life

In Antarctica and the sub-Antarctic you will be undertaking a specific role, bringing particular skills, knowledge and experience. You will also be part of a wider multi-disciplinary team on station, undertaking complex and significant work. Each member of the community will play a distinct part and will be dependent on each other.

## Working hours

Antarctic expeditioners are regularly required to undertake additional hours beyond the public service average of 37 hours and 30 minutes per week. Due to the nature of the work we undertake, there is a business need to ensure that our stations are supported 24 hours-per-day, seven days-per-week (24/7). Operational requirements mean expeditioners will also be required to work reasonable additional hours (which will include weekend work), in accordance with section 62(1) of the Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) (FW Act) throughout their employment in AAD.

Expeditioners typically work Monday to Friday and up to 4 hours on Saturday morning. Beyond this, you may be required to undertake reasonable additional hours to support the achievement of our operational objectives and the community needs. This may relate to; callouts, powerhouse issues, resupply, fuel transfers, emergency response, community duties and training. AAD employees receive a range of allowances designed to compensate expeditioners for the unique working environment including the Allowance in Lieu of Overtime, a Common Duties Allowance and an Antarctic Allowance.

There may be a requirement for different expeditioners or work groups to undertake differing work hours based on specific station and operational requirements. The Station Leader will discuss this with the affected work group and/or expeditioners with a view to maintaining an appropriate, reasonable arrangement. The flexibility remains, with the approval of their Supervisor/Station Leader, for an expeditioner to be granted additional time off to enable them to manage fatigue or undertake travel off-station, where they have either worked a significant number of hours beyond the normal expectations outlined above, or as part of an opportunity that has been prearranged with the Station Leader.

Station Leaders and Supervisors are to appropriately manage working hours and time off, based on an expeditioner's or work group's specific circumstances and operational requirements. Hours to be undertaken are to be consistent with the AAD Fatigue Management Guide.

If you require further information regarding working hours, please discuss with your Station Supervisor or Station Leader. In the event that further clarification is required, your Station Leader will seek further guidance from the Station and Field Operations Manager, relevant Technical Supervisor(s), and/or the AAD People Partnership Team.

### Community duties

You will be required to assist in the running of the station community through a variety of tasks rostered by your Station Leader. One of these tasks is 'slushy'.

A 'slushy' is a general cleaning and kitchen hand. Duties include assisting in the preparation of meals, daily cleaning of communal areas such as the kitchen, mess bar, lounge areas and public toilets, removal of kitchen rubbish and any other duties as requested by the chef or Station Leader.

Station duties may include periodic cleaning, maintenance or tidying up. It's an opportunity for you to pitch in and help keep the station in clean, safe and comfortable repair. These duties are normally done on Saturdays, but this may vary.

Over summer there may be Station Support Officers at your station to assist with kitchen and housekeeping duties during busy periods. Depending on your role, you may still be required to pitch in and do your bit. This shared burden is important to building a sense of community.

Other general station duties include bulk re-fuelling, resupply, monitoring radio schedules, transferring stores and clearing snow from exits.

### Additional community roles

There are other important roles that contribute to community life. Some are voluntary, and others are paid an allowance. These roles include Station Environmental Officers, Hydroponics Coordinators, WHS Officers, lay surgical assistants, workplace contact officers and Postmaster.

For some of these positions, training is provided prior to departure from Australia. Your Station Leader will coordinate the filling of these positions.

### Recreational facilities

Each station has a library as well as a theatrette and audio-visual equipment. Stations have a small spa and sauna, a gymnasium, pool tables, table tennis and volleyball equipment, board games, darts and some communal band equipment (e.g. drum kit, bass, electric guitars and keyboard etc.).

Some outdoor sports equipment such as cross-country skis and boots may be available. Station equipment is clearly marked and ensure you take care of it. Safety inductions are required for some recreational facilities and equipment.

### Outdoor activities

Participation in outdoor recreational activities promotes health, fitness and wellbeing. You should not expect to be able to engage in the full range of outdoor recreational opportunities normally available in Australia. This applies in particular to adventure or 'extreme' activities where the consequences of mishap are potentially serious.

Prior to departure from Australia, all expeditioners should familiarise themselves with the Outdoor Recreation Policy the Expeditioner Hub page; <https://www.antarctica.gov.au/antarctic-operations/expeditioner-hub/>.

## Hobbies

Small tools (powered and unpowered) are available for general use in pursuit of a hobby. The use of small tools is subject to permission from the workshop supervisors who will need to ensure your safety is not compromised and the maintenance of the equipment is observed.

Where a station has an established hobby hut, only the tools in those huts may be used for hobbies. Be aware that wood taken south for craftwork and then returned to Australia will be subject to quarantine inspection and treatment if necessary.

## Amateur radio

If you wish to operate amateur radio in Antarctica, you will need to obtain permission from AAD ICT. You will need an Amateur Radio Licence, which must be obtained before leaving Australia, and you need to supply all your own equipment and spares. No station radio equipment is available for amateur radio communication purposes.

## Drones or Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV)

Regulations administered by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA), as well as AAD Standard Operating Procedures, and permit requirements apply to flying UAVs. Seek your Station Leader's approval and advice on any existing approvals, permits and conditions for recreational users before undertaking a flight. You will not be able to operate a UAV from a ship for recreational purposes.

## Photography

You will want to take advantage of the spectacular photographic opportunities presented in Antarctica and the sub-Antarctic!

The Media and Communications team has produced a helpful handout called 'Tips for Photography and Filming in Antarctica'. When photographing birds and animals, be sure to maintain the appropriate wildlife approach distances as outlined in the Environmental Code for Participants in the Australian Antarctic Program. Both of these resources are available on the Expeditioner Hub page; <https://www.antarctica.gov.au/antarctic-operations/expeditioner-hub/>.

Image Antarctica is the AAD's online image and vision collection, available within the AAD network: <http://image.antarctica.gov.au>. The images and vision are used to communicate the AAP's research externally to the media, scientific community and general public. Internally, images are also used as a primary source for researchers, and as a tool to support the AAD's operational planning.

Expeditioners can help promote the AAD's work by contributing images to Image Antarctica. By uploading your images via the Creative Commons 4.0 Attribution by CC license, you retain copyright over your images. For AAD Media, it allows us to use your images on social media and online, and remix or adapt your work. You will be credited whenever your images are used. Check you have the permission of the people in the images before adding them to Image Antarctica .

## Smoking

Smoking is actively discouraged. Tobacco or cigarette smoking is restricted to designated smoking areas. In the absence of a designated smoking area, smoking is prohibited.

Personal vaporisers (also known as electronic cigarettes, e-cigarettes or vape pens) are prohibited inside all AAD workplaces, vehicles, aeroplanes and ships.

## Couples on station

Relationships existing prior to, or commencing after, the start of an expedition are not uncommon in an Antarctic community. Couples should be sensitive to the potential impact of their behaviour on others who are separated from their loved ones.

## Communication and ICT on station

Adjusting from fast Australian internet to a limited satellite connection can be a challenging part of adapting to station life.

Communication opportunities will depend on your location. E-mail and phone are your main communication options, or messaging apps such as Messenger or WhatsApp, which should be installed prior to departure.

There are limited deliveries by Australia Post during the summer shipping season.

Family and friends should familiarise themselves with information on communicating with you down south: [www.antarctica.gov.au/antarctic-operations/family-and-friends](http://www.antarctica.gov.au/antarctic-operations/family-and-friends).

## Digital Expeditioner

An AAD-issued Samsung phone will be issued to some expeditioners as a safety on station. It should be carried at all times during working hours and when travelling outside of the living quarters.

The device runs a unique piece of safety software called Team Awareness Kit (TAK). TAK provides expeditioners with enhanced situational awareness through a common operating picture display. This gives expeditioners a detailed picture of daily station activities, highlighting hazards and no-go zones as well as the location of vehicles and expeditioners in real time.

Importantly, it has a number of inbuilt safety features, such as a personnel duress function, a digital muster system and integration into the station operations room.

## Internet

Internet is provided over a limited bandwidth satellite link (~8Mbps at each station), so it is not the same experience as broadband back home. Even outside of work hours the network is still a government resource and so there are some restrictions on what websites are available.

Cloud services like Dropbox and Google Drive are blocked and inaccessible on station, as they are a security threat on a government network. ICT staff can assist if you need to send or share files. Streaming music or video services, and video calling, e.g. Spotify, Netflix, Skype and so on are restricted in the amount of bandwidth they can use ('shaped'), so that other services aren't impacted. Adult content may be blocked.

## Email

AAD email has a 35MB limit. Personal email services such as Gmail and Hotmail can be used via the web.

## Phone calls

Landline phone calls are generally a reliable method of communication as they are given a high priority over the satellite link. Each room has a landline phone for private conversation.

Outbound calls are free for expeditioners, so it is much more economical for you to call family than the other way around. Calls to Antarctic numbers from Australia (country code +672) from

commercial phone companies can cost dollars per minute and are not included in most unlimited call plans.

### Mobile phones

Your work or personal mobile phone can be used on station. They must be network unlocked – check how to do this with your provider. This is an internal mobile phone system and will utilise an AAD station extension number.

Your normal Australian mobile number will not be available for calls or text on this service. The mobile network is provided on a 'best-effort' basis, and is first and foremost for the provision of building monitoring alarms. If required, ICT will limit access to the mobile network to building management personnel only.

The winter trades team will be issued with a device for Building Management Control Systems (BMCS) messages.

There is a limited texting service available on station. It's more common for people to use a messaging service like Messenger or WhatsApp for text messages.

If you have any services (for example banking or myGov) where a code is sent to your mobile phone via SMS, this will not work. Speak to your bank or other organisation to organise an alternative.

### Taking your own computer

Prepare your personal computer by ensuring all software and drivers are updated, and you have antivirus installed. Take portable hard drives to back up your personal files such as music, photos and videos. Consider taking spare parts such as laptop batteries and power cables. Online gaming is not allowed over the satellite link.

### Social media

Social media is a great avenue for you to communicate with family and friends while you are in Antarctica, but remember that social media carries risks.

As public service employees, you have obligations for how you conduct yourself online. When using social media, you should assess the risks and consider:

- Are you behaving with integrity, respect and accountability?
- Have you made it clear that you are posting as a private individual?
- Is your post appropriate and would you be willing to defend it to a Supervisor?
- Are you respecting the privacy of your colleagues and do they agree to any posts about them?
- Does your post display only safe and appropriate practices?
- Have you considered whether what you are doing may harm the reputation of one of your colleagues, the AAD and/or the Government?

Always give people credit for their photos and vision and ensure you have permission to publish their material. All media comments and interviews must be cleared beforehand with AAD Media and Communications.

There are specific protocols around the use of social media in emergency situations. If in doubt about any social media use check with your Station Leader.

## Expeditioner wellbeing

Being an expeditioner can be a rewarding but sometimes challenging experience. Just like your physical health, it is important that you look after your psychological health and general wellbeing, and that of your loved ones at home while in Antarctica.

Living and working in isolated and remote environments, being separated from family and friends and not having the same level of access to normal support networks can cause some additional demands for expeditioners. A range of resources supporting expeditioners to maintain positive mental health and wellbeing are available, regardless of employer.

### Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Independent counselling and support through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to all expeditioners and their immediate families during the period of their deployment and for up to six months after return to Australia.

Further information on this service is available on the Expeditioner Hub page; <https://www.antarctica.gov.au/antarctic-operations/expeditioner-hub/>.

The station or voyage doctor is also a key resource for support and information on any mental health concerns.

### Workplace Contact Officers

A Workplace Contact Officer (WCO) is a trained AAD staff member who provides support and information to employees and managers about issues that may arise in the workplace, including the processes available to them.

WCOs can help if you experience or witness unacceptable behaviour, are the subject of a complaint, or need to talk about a private and confidential matter. They can also help by providing information and support, referral to the appropriate departmental area for advice or support, and clarification on policies and complaint procedures.

You can arrange a confidential discussion with any WCO across the Department. Search for WCO on the AAD's intranet: [blizzline.antarctica.gov.au](http://blizzline.antarctica.gov.au).

### Liaison and support

The Expeditioner Liaison is the main point of contact at the AAD for family members and friends of expeditioners, providing assistance and appropriate resources in preparation for Antarctic separation.

You should read and take into consideration the information contained in the Antarctic Separation guide, which is available on the Expeditioner Hub page; <https://www.antarctica.gov.au/antarctic-operations/expeditioner-hub/>.

The Expeditioner Liaison maintains a contact list of one primary contact and up to two other secondary contacts for each expeditioner. In the event of an emergency in Antarctica, your primary contact will be notified and kept informed.

### Clubs and Associations

The Antarctic Family & Friends Association is a valuable support and social group for families and friends of expeditioners. There are branches in all states and members meet regularly.

The ANARE Club provides a means for past expeditioners to keep in touch with each other. Membership forms are available at: [www.anareclub.org.au](http://www.anareclub.org.au).



## Workplace behaviour

All expeditioners have a shared obligation for creating a respectful, safe and inclusive workplace free from harassment and bullying. Inappropriate behaviour can have a negative impact on the mental health, wellbeing and performance of those directly affected. It can also have a negative impact on cohesion, morale and productivity on station, during a voyage or in the field.

Bullying and harassing behaviours will not be tolerated.

Australian Antarctic Program participants – regardless of affiliation – are required to comply with the Antarctic Service Code of Personal Behaviour. Australian Antarctic Program participants who are APS employees are also required to comply with the APS Code of Conduct.

## Integrity

The Department has a dedicated Integrity Unit. If you have concerns about the behaviour of an expeditioner or staff member, including being witness to or the subject of bullying or harassment, you are encouraged to contact the Integrity Unit by calling 1800 434 010 or by emailing [integrity.inbox@dcceew.gov.au](mailto:integrity.inbox@dcceew.gov.au).

Allegations of suspected wrongdoing are managed sensitively and confidentially.

## Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual conduct. It is unlawful and is a form of workplace bullying and harassment. For expeditioners who live, work and socialise in the work environment this means sexual harassment is prohibited at all times, including while on station, on a flight or voyage and when in the field.

Sexual harassment in the workplace can take various forms and may involve:

- unwelcome sexual advances;
- unwelcome touching, hugging or kissing;
- sexually suggestive comments or jokes;
- unwanted and/or persistent invitations for sex or a relationship;
- insults based upon gender;
- sexually explicit emails or SMS messages;
- inappropriate staring or leering of a sexual nature;
- unwelcome requests for sexual favours;
- conduct of a sexual nature including making statements of a sexual nature either orally or in writing that offends, humiliates or intimidates.

Sexual harassment can happen to anyone. The AAP is committed to addressing incidents of alleged harassment, providing support and resources, and sharing information on what to do if you or someone on your team experiences sexual harassment.

## If you experience sexual harassment

If you feel comfortable doing so, you are encouraged to discuss your experience with your Station, Voyage or Field Leader, Antarctic Medical Practitioner or a trusted individual who can provide emotional support and assist you in accessing AAD resources. This is particularly important if you are in a remote or isolated setting (such as deep field) with limited access to external resources and support.

If you require medical care or support, you should contact the Antarctic Medical Practitioner (AMP) on station or on the voyage. You can contact the Polar Medicine Unit (PMU) 24/7 hotline on 03 6232 3293.

Resources that are available to you as an AAP participant, regardless of your affiliated agency, include the Integrity Hotline (1800 434 010 during business hours or email [integrity.inbox@dceew.gov.au](mailto:integrity.inbox@dceew.gov.au)), Workplace Contact Officers and the Employee Assistance Program (see the Liaison and Support section in this Handbook).

### If you witness sexual harassment

All AAP participants are obligated and expected to share in the responsibility of creating a safe environment and to act when they witness behaviour that is inappropriate.

Active bystanders are people who take the responsibility to act when they see or hear something that makes them uncomfortable. You can act to diffuse the situation while staying safe. Some ideas include checking in with the individual, telling the Station, Voyage or Field Leader or other member of the leadership team what's happening, recruiting help from others, or diffusing the situation by distracting those involved. If you are uncertain if there is a problem, check in with the people involved to see if they are okay or need help.

If you witness suspected inappropriate behaviour of any form, you can also access the Integrity Hotline (1800 998 880 during business hours) and Workplace Contact Officers for assistance.

### If someone discloses they have been or are being sexually harassed

Disclosing possible harassment can make people feel vulnerable. Create a safe environment for the person to talk, ensure they are emotionally and are physically safe and support them to seek medical attention if required.

Be an active listener, do not interrogate or make any assumptions, and ask the person what they need. Reassure the person you are supporting that you are not there to judge, and provide them with all possible options to assist with reporting the incident in a safe way.

Treat the conversation confidentially and do not discuss with others unless you have immediate concerns for the wellbeing of the individual.

## Performance reviews

If you are on station (including field camps), or participating in marine science voyages for a period of six weeks or more, you will be involved in regular performance appraisals through the Expeditioner Performance Review (EPR).

- EPRs use Personal Qualities (PQs) as the basis for assessment.
- If you apply for participation in future expeditions, your performance reports will be used in selection processes.
- EPRs are retained at Head Office for seven years.

## Discipline and responsibility

After leaving Australia, you will be reporting to the Voyage Leader on board the ship, to the Flight Representative on the plane, to the Station Leader at stations, or to the Field Leader at field camps.

- Questions of a technical or scientific nature concerning projects are referred to the supervising authorities in Australia through the Station Leader or Field Leader.

- Other key contact people include the Station and Field Operations Manager, the Environment Manager, the Work Health and Safety Manager and the Expeditioner Services team.
- In all matters of program administration, allocation of duties, control of equipment at stations and general personal conduct, you will report to and be required to comply with all lawful and reasonable directions from the relevant supervisor.
- Station Leaders, Voyage Leaders and some others are appointed as Inspectors under the *Antarctic Marine Living Resources Conservation Act 1981* and the *Antarctic Treaty (Environment Protection) Act 1980* and as Special Constables under the *Criminal Procedures Ordinance 1993*. This provides them with powers to enforce the laws in the Australian Antarctic Territory (AAT) including powers to stop, search and arrest in certain circumstances.
- On Macquarie Island, the Station Leader is a sworn Justice of the Peace for the State of Tasmania. The Ranger-in-Charge is directly responsible for day-to-day management of the reserve. The Station Leader and the Ranger-in-Charge work co-operatively to manage human activities in the reserve.

## Health in Antarctica

Medical care on station and on the ship is generally provided by one AMP (Antarctic Medical Practitioner), known generally as the station or ship's doctor. Medical facilities and medical care are necessarily limited. Doctors receive basic training in emergency dental care but there are no dentists available on ships or stations. Evacuation during winter may not be possible.

If you are a wintering expeditioner, you will be required to see the station doctor once a month for a simple health check and certain basic health and well-being measurements. There is also a mid-winter medical check to ensure continued good health. You will have blood samples taken at the end of summer for repeat blood donor screening tests and your general fitness for the ensuing winter will be confirmed by the station doctor. Other tests may be included depending on clinical and occupational need (e.g. Vitamin D).

Midwinter or summer swims require additional screening and completion of a signed consent form, as well as attending a briefing by the station doctor prior to the activity.

As an expeditioner, you will form part of the Antarctic emergency blood donor pool and require repeat blood sampling to ensure a viable, screened, emergency blood supply for our isolated Antarctic communities. Certain at-risk behaviours, including recent tattooing and body piercing, can impact eligibility to donate blood in an emergency.

Medical research may be carried out by doctors on station. If you agree to participate, you may be asked to give blood, saliva or urine samples, participate in special diets, questionnaires or interviews, or be subject to other measurements. All human research is monitored and approved by the Tasmanian Health and Medical Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC).

The station doctor also arranges ongoing training exercises for those lay surgical assistants who have received training in anaesthetic and operating theatre assistance prior to departure, as well as first aid refresher training for all expeditioners.

## Your health responsibilities

Carefully consider the health risks of activities undertaken during planning, preparation and conduct of all activities. Contact PMU for advice.

Pregnancy is difficult to manage in the austere Antarctic medical environment and requires transfer to appropriate medical and obstetric care at the earliest opportunity. If you have concerns about contraception and pregnancy matters, it is important that you discuss them with your local medical advisers, Antarctic medical practitioner or the PMU.

Careful attention to hand hygiene (hand washing) is every expeditioner's responsibility. Social distancing and wearing masks where advised are an important contribution to Public Health, and in particular, COVID-19 responses while on expedition.

## Medical records

Information on all medical consultations that occur on expeditions is stored in the electronic Australian Antarctic Health Record to enable comprehensive clinical care, and in the Australian Antarctic Health Register. Access to this is restricted to medically qualified health care providers, investigators and research associates responsible to them.

Research based on information collected routinely to enable healthcare, and where additional consent has been given, in the above record and register will not be published in any form that permits identification of individual subjects.

This research has been approved by the relevant Australian Antarctic Program Human Research Ethics Committee, compliant with the National Health and Medical Research Council Guidelines for Epidemiological Research and with Commonwealth Privacy principles.

Certain occupational health measures conducted in pre-employment screening and as part of ongoing occupational medicine surveillance (e.g. the results of hearing tests and specific occupational exposure measures) may be accessed by the AAD Work Health and Safety Manager or delegate. Drug and alcohol screening results for aviation safety sensitive workers will be communicated as required by the current AAD Drug and Alcohol Management Plan.

Infectious (eg COVID-19) and other certain disease results may require mandatory reporting as reportable diseases under various Australian Commonwealth and State or Territory Health Acts. Antarctic gateways, logistics and operational requirements may require disclosure of certain individual health risks to facilitate your participation, transport or healthcare.

## Sun exposure

There is significant potential for sunburn and snow blindness due to excess sun exposure. Some work areas have additional sources of occupational UV exposure (e.g. some scientific equipment and welding). Be vigilant and apply appropriate personal protective measures ensuring sufficient and frequent application and avoid sun exposure where possible.

On expedition and especially over winter, the lack of UV radiation exposure can lead to vitamin D deficiency in some people. If you are at increased risk of Vitamin D deficiency, you should supplement with Vitamin D which is available on station in monthly doses via your station doctor.

## Body cycles

The 24-hour summer daylight and 24-hour winter darkness may disrupt body cycles and normal sleep routines. This can be exacerbated by heavy workloads and impact fatigue management. Discuss your optimal sleep routine with your Supervisors and doctors to ensure sufficient rest and fatigue management.

## Immune system

Studies of previous Australian Antarctic expeditioners and others isolated in extreme environments like space missions have shown a relative suppression of the body's immune system due to the isolation and stress. It is important that you maintain your health with exercise, your gut health with adequate dietary fibre and water where possible. Certain viruses can reactivate more frequently whilst your immune system is suppressed including herpes viruses (e.g. cold sores, shingles etc). Whilst on expedition present early to your doctor if you are concerned and have regular health checks. Discuss these issues with your GP or station doctor/PMU during the pre-departure period.

Importantly on Return to Australia (RTA) after a winter or long expedition, you may be at increased risk of infections particularly with a COVID-19 type pandemic. Ensure you are briefed by your station doctor and prepared with appropriate PPE and measures to minimise your risk. Also consult with your GP on return also if concerned.

## Wildlife and human health

Wildlife carry a number of parasites and infectious diseases which can infect humans including ticks, fleas, mites, lice, worms, viruses and bacteria. Be aware of the occurrence of diseases and parasites in the fauna, undertake the required risk assessments, perform routine hygiene practices and take personal protective measures when working with fauna.

Wildlife disease in Antarctic animals is a very unusual occurrence. It is important for human health that you report any outbreak, or suspicion of an outbreak, of wildlife disease as soon as you observe it. If you notice unusual behaviour or a high number of dead and dying animals, do not approach. Observe from a safe distance, record and photograph what you have observed and report the observation to your Station Leader. Do not investigate further unless explicitly directed to do so.

It is important to review and follow the guidance provided in any Safety and Environment Alert issued prior to or during your time on station.

## Work safe, home safe – Safety in the AAP

The AAD is committed to providing a safe place of work, safe systems of work and a culture supportive of one another's safety and wellbeing.

### Safety culture

You have an important part to play in fostering a safety culture on station. Remember that your attitude, your words and your personal behaviours impact and influence others around you.

As a member of the team on station, we need you to look out for your fellow expeditioners and demonstrate specific safety related behaviours as described in [AAD's Safety Behaviour Framework](#).

### Stop and think before you act

This might be your first time going south, or your first time at a new station. Even if you have a lot of Antarctic experience you will come across new things or situations. The most important thing you can do to ensure your safety is to stop and think before you act. If you are unsure, ask questions of those around you or your supervisor.

Take the time to think about the task you're about to undertake. Think about the hazards that may hurt you or others. If you can't do the job safely, don't start the job until you can do it safely. If you can't see a solution, speak to your supervisor.

If during the course of a job or activity you think it has become unsafe, you must stop until you can proceed safely. You are explicitly authorised to stop any job or activity that you think is unsafe.

### Hazards – your personal responsibilities

When you encounter a hazard that poses a risk to yourself or others, you have a duty to either fix or make safe the hazard if you are able, and if it is safe to do so. If you can't fix it or make it safe, then you must report it. If it's serious, speak to your supervisor immediately.

### Interventions – an act of personal courage

If you see or hear of someone doing something unsafe, you must have the courage to intervene. Express your concern clearly and directly to the individuals involved. This can be hard. But we need our expeditioners to speak up and actively look out for the safety and welfare of others. If you can't intervene, you must still act by speaking to your Supervisor as soon as possible.

### Reporting incidents

Incidents, injuries and near misses must be reported to your Supervisor as soon as is practicable.

You must also record the event in AAD's safety data software called SIRUS. Environmental hazards or incidents are reported in the system called IHIS. Honest human error is seen as a learning opportunity for all of us, so please report all incidents.

### Safety systems

Many expeditioners have gone before you. Collectively they have contributed to our understanding of the risks that you may encounter in the AAP. This work has been translated into a range of tools that form the documented elements of [AAD's Safety Management System](#).

The key elements of the AAD Safety Management System are:

- Training and inductions;

- Risk assessments, including Take 5 (a personal risk assessment tool) and Job Hazard Analysis (known as a JHA, a job planning tool used by a work team when you need to deviate from Standard Operating Procedures or where a non-routine task is undertaken); and
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

The AAD Safety Management System is described in greater detail in the [AAD Safety Management System Manual](#).

If you are unsure about what you're doing, about any potential hazard or about any aspect of the AAD's safety management expectations, speak to your supervisor or your Station Leader. Work safe so everyone can go home safe.



## Protecting the environment

Environmental protection is everyone's responsibility. Antarctica is protected under the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty and Australian law.

All AAD activities are governed by the AAD Environmental Policy and the Environmental Code for Participants in the Australian Antarctic Program. This Code is available on the Expeditioner Hub page; <https://www.antarctica.gov.au/antarctic-operations/expeditioner-hub/>.

The Station Leader is responsible for environmental management on stations, assisted by the Station Environment Officer, working with the Environmental Manager at Head Office at Kingston.

## Your responsibilities

Environmental protection begins before you leave home.

Do your research and ensure you are familiar with animal approach guidelines and any protected areas in the vicinity of your destination. Raise any environmental issues with your Station, Voyage or Field Leader, no matter how trivial it might seem.

## Authorisations and permits

Some activities are regulated to protect the environment and require authorisations and/or permits. These must be obtained in advance of undertaking the activity and can only be given under certain circumstances. You must ensure you understand and comply with all the conditions of your authorisation and/or permit.

## Heritage and Antarctic materials

The AAD is legally obliged to identify, assess, monitor and protect all Antarctic heritage which includes buildings, objects and artefacts.

Always seek advice before disturbing or removing any potentially historical artefact or any biological or geological specimen. Do not collect or remove material, either as 'rubbish' or to preserve it!

Taking souvenirs of any plant or animal material, rock or artefacts from Antarctica or the sub-Antarctic is prohibited unless the activity is approved through a permit.

## Policies and legislative responsibilities

As an expeditioner, you will be subject to and must comply with a range of Commonwealth and state government legislation and AAD policies. The laws of the AAT are:

- Commonwealth laws expressly applying to the Territory
- Ordinances made specifically for the AAT
- Australian Capital Territory laws other than criminal laws in so far as they are applicable to the AAT
- Criminal laws of the Jervis Bay Territory in so far as they are applicable to the AAT.

Standards and laws that apply in Australia such as Work, Health and Safety (WHS) and privacy legislation also apply in Antarctica and the sub-Antarctic.

- All information, data, records etc. collected or generated on behalf of the AAD is deemed to be 'official information' belonging to the AAD and the Australian Government and you must not use or disclose it without official approval.
- You will be required to maintain records in accordance with the AAD Records Management Policy.
- Respect AAD security arrangements and restrictions wherever you work and obey any lawful instructions outlined by your supervisor or other authorised member of staff.
- Any suspected indications of fraud will be investigated by the AAD's Security Advisor in conjunction with other agencies as appropriate and could lead to administrative or disciplinary action. Prosecution may ensue if the matter is serious.
- All relevant government and AAD policies, guidelines and standard operating procedures will apply to all personnel, for example the Antarctic Service Code of Personal Behaviour, AAD ICT policies and procedures, AAD Operations Manual and the Protective Security Policy Framework.

## Expeditioner checklist

This handbook contains quite a bit of information and we do not expect you to absorb it all at once. As your departure draws closer, you will receive more information specific to your expedition.

This checklist is a handy guide to check that you've completed some necessary tasks in the last weeks and days before you leave.

- I have signed and returned required forms e.g. *Conditions for Participation in the AAP*.
- I have entered required information into Antarctic Applications Online (AAO) on the web (e.g. clothing sizes, next-of-kin, passport details).
- I have attended to all my personal considerations before departure (e.g. power of attorney, will, banking, registering as an Antarctic voter etc.)
- My family and friends know how to contact me while I am away.
- I have a current passport that doesn't expire until at least 6 months after my expected return date, and any necessary visas.
- I understand the *Antarctic Service Code of Personal Behaviour*.
- I am familiar with the AAD Drug and Alcohol Policy.
- I acknowledge that attending pre-departure briefings is compulsory.
- I have organised my personal baggage and cleaned my gear before packing it.
- I understand some items are prohibited in Antarctica.
- I understand internet access is limited in Antarctica and I have downloaded or made a copy of any personal files I may want to access such as documents, music, photos and videos.
- I understand cargo requirements that relate to me (e.g. baggage allowance, labelling, how to eCon cargo etc.)
- I understand that my baggage may be inspected by the Australian Customs Service, the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service and/or the AAD at the time of departure and on return to Australia. Mail and unaccompanied baggage may also be inspected.
- I am familiar with the transport requirements that relate to me.
- I have read and understand all the information on health and my work, health and safety (WHS) responsibilities.
- If applicable, I have arranged private health and worker's compensation insurance.
- I understand what recreational pursuits I may pursue and what is not permitted.

I understand the Antarctic Service Conditions described in this Handbook.

I am aware that I will participate in the Expeditioner Performance Review (EPR) process.

I have read and understood the *Environmental Code for Participants in the AAP*.

I am aware of my policies and legislative responsibilities as described in this Handbook.

## Appendix 1: Useful contacts

AAD reception	03 6232 3209	
Cargo	03 6232 3190	<a href="mailto:opscargo@aad.gov.au">opscargo@aad.gov.au</a>
Clothing Store	03 6232 3220	<a href="mailto:clothing@aad.gov.au">clothing@aad.gov.au</a>
Expeditioner Liaison	1800 030 680 or international +61 3 6232 3283	
Expeditioner Services	1800 030 755	<a href="mailto:expeditioner.services@aad.gov.au">expeditioner.services@aad.gov.au</a>
Expeditioner Training Unit	1800 030 680	<a href="mailto:ExpeditionerTraining@aad.gov.au">ExpeditionerTraining@aad.gov.au</a>
ICT Service Desk	1800 325 219	<a href="mailto:AADServiceDesk@dceew.gov.au">AADServiceDesk@dceew.gov.au</a>
Media	03 6232 3253	<a href="mailto:media@aad.gov.au">media@aad.gov.au</a>
Polar Medicine Unit (PMU)	03 6232 3569	<a href="mailto:polarmedscreening@aad.gov.au">polarmedscreening@aad.gov.au</a>
PMU Hotline – 24 hrs	03 6232 3293	
Recruitment	1800 030 755	<a href="mailto:jobs@antarctica.gov.au">jobs@antarctica.gov.au</a>
Transport Information Line	1800 030 744 or international +61 3 6232 3269	
Warehouse	03 6232 3372	<a href="mailto:warehouse@aad.gov.au">warehouse@aad.gov.au</a>

## Appendix 2: Common abbreviations

AAD	Australian Antarctic Division
AAO	Antarctic Applications Online ( <a href="https://aao.aad.gov.au">https://aao.aad.gov.au</a> )
AAT	Australian Antarctic Territory
AAP	Australian Antarctic Program
AGSO	Aircraft Ground Support Officer
AMP	Antarctic Medical Practitioner
ANARE	Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions
Blizz Line	the AAD intranet, only available inside the AAD network ( <a href="https://blizzline.aad.gov.au">https://blizzline.aad.gov.au</a> )
CARMM	Centre for Antarctic, Remote and Maritime Medicine
DCCEEW	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
Econ	Electronic consignment system (cargo)
EPR	Expeditioner Performance Review
FL	Field Leader
FTO	Field Training Officer
HIMI	Heard Island and McDonald Islands
ICT	Information Communications Technology
IMT	Incident Management Team
IRB	Inflatable Rubber Boat
LQ	Living Quarters
Macca	Macquarie Island
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PMU	Polar Medicine Unit
RIB	Rigid Inflatable Boat
RTA	Return to Australia
SAB	Special Antarctic Blend diesel
SAR	Search and Rescue
SCTO	Station Communications Technical Officer
SL	Station Leader
SLA	Ski landing area / Service level agreement
UPE	Unaccompanied Personal Effects (cargo)
VL	Voyage Leader
WHS	Work, Health & Safety
WCO	Workplace Contact Officer
WOV	Wanted on voyage (cargo)