

Expeditioner Handbook

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Welcome to the Australian Antarctic Program

Congratulations on becoming an Australian Antarctic Program (AAP) expeditioner.

You are part of a small group of people who are fortunate to have a unique experience in Antarctica, Macquarie Island, Heard Island and McDonald Islands or the Southern Ocean as your workplace and your home.

The success of every expedition depends on its people. You have been chosen as a leader in your field or as an expert in your trade. You have the personal qualities that align to our organisation. You will contribute positively to our remote communities, be respectful and keep safety as a priority at all times. We look forward to working with you.

As an expeditioner you will help Australia value, protect and understand Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, contributing to a sustainable future for Australia and the world.

What is the Expeditioner Handbook for?

Please read this Handbook carefully. It contains important information about your expedition and employment. It will help you prepare for and understand your responsibilities as an expeditioner.

It provides background on the AAP and what you can expect when living and working in Antarctica, on Macquarie Island, Heard Island and McDonald Islands or on the Southern Ocean – what we refer to as ‘going down south’. You may be living on station, on a ship, or in the deep field in a tent.

As the time of your departure from Australia gets closer, you will receive additional information specific to your voyage or flight and your role in the Program.

You should regularly review the Australian Antarctic Division [website](#) to ensure you are up-to-date on the latest news and information.

Detailed information and forms specifically for expeditioners is contained on the [Expeditioner Hub](#).

When you have your IT access activated (after commencing at the AAD) you will also be able to access the AAD Intranet ‘Blizz Line’ where you will find lots of useful information available to internal employees only.

Where are you going?

Australia has four permanent research stations; Casey, Davis and Mawson in the Australian Antarctic Territory (AAT) in the eastern part of the Antarctic continent, and Macquarie Island in the sub-Antarctic. There are also several summer-only facilities, such as Australia’s Wilkins Aerodrome, and deep field camps supporting scientific research throughout the AAT.

The AAT covers nearly 5.9 million square kilometres or about 42% of the Antarctic continent. Australia’s sovereignty over the AAT is based on discovery and a long historical association with this area of the continent. Australia has been active in Antarctic research and exploration for over

a century, making significant contributions to the world's understanding of the region and its role in the global climate system.

For more information about Australia in the Antarctic, including history and heritage, please refer to pages 28 – 30 in this Handbook. Information about the environment can be found on page 29.

Preparing to go south – personal considerations

Personal Information

The AAD requires a range of personal information to be disclosed before you head south. This includes clothing sizes, passport details, dietary requirements and next-of-kin details in case of an emergency.

Please enter your details into [‘Antarctic Applications Online’ \(AAO\)](#) on our website.

Passport

Your [passport](#) must be current with an expiry date at least 6 months after your scheduled return date. If you need to update it, please give yourself a minimum of 6-8 weeks to complete this step.

Separation from friends and family

Carefully read and consider the information contained in the [Antarctic Separation Guide](#). You may find it useful to read and discuss this with your loved ones to ensure everyone is fully prepared for your departure, the separation period while you are deployed and your return home.

The AAD offers a [Family and Friends Liaison Officer](#) on-call service to provide support during the period of separation and to answer questions family and friends might have.

Voting

Provisions are made for Australian citizens to vote in federal national elections when down south. While Australian citizens may have the opportunity to vote in state elections, some states do not currently have provision for Antarctic voters.

You should register as an Antarctic voter on the [AEC website](#) (search for ‘Antarctica’) to be kept informed and avoid penalties for not voting.

Will and Power of Attorney

You may wish to have a Will prepared or updated before departure. This ensures personal estates will be distributed in accordance with your wishes.

Some personal things can be challenging to do from Antarctica, so you may like to consider a Power of Attorney and/or Enduring Guardianship. 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.

myID and myGov

You may also want to ensure that you have set up myID and myGov access. MyID is a secure way to prove who are online and MyGov enables you to securely log in to government services in one place.

MyGov can be linked to Medicare, centrelink and Child Support, and a range of other government services.

You can now make a statutory declaration without a witness by using myID and myGov so these may be handy tools to set up prior to your departure.

Preparing to go south – financial considerations

Finances

If you are an AAD employee, your salary will be paid into a nominated Australian bank or credit union account. Pay periods are fortnightly, Thursday to Wednesday and are processed the Monday before. Any changes to your pay such as the addition of allowances or higher duties are dependent on timesheet submission and will be included in the following pay. Please be patient with any changes and wait at least 2 pay periods before getting in touch to query what may appear as a non-payment. There's more information on how to read your [pay advice](#) on the AAD intranet, Blizz Line.

Ensure you have internet banking access before you go south. You will not be able to receive SMS codes while away, so make sure you set up alternate verification methods.

Make sure your credit card is valid for the whole period of deployment. If you need to withdraw funds from bank accounts during your absence, seek advice via your financial institution about establishing a joint account or providing another person with access.

Carry some cash with you (eg. up to \$300) to buy small items on the ship and on station, and to have available on Return to Australia (RTA). Your Antarctic postmaster only accepts cash on behalf of Australia Post.

Please keep in mind that your Return to Australia (RTA) date may change due to operational requirements or transport changes. This has the potential to impact your official cessation date and may have a flow-on effect to your final pay. If you receive an overpayment in your final pay, please contact jobs@antarctica.gov.au

Services Australia Payments

If you are in receipt of any payments from Services Australia, please ensure you contact Services Australia directly before you depart to inform them of your deployment to Antarctica as these payments may be affected. For clarity, this includes, but is not limited to, Child Care Subsidy or Family Tax Benefit.

Services Australia contact details:

Monday to Friday 7 am to 10 pm; Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 5 pm

Online support at [Payments while outside Australia - Services Australia](#) or phone the hotline on 132307

When calling select:

- option 1 for myGov enquiries
- option 2 for a myGov linking code

Please advise Services Australia of:

- Name
- Payment type

- When you are due to depart Hobart (scheduled deployment date) and when you are tentatively scheduled to return (so Services Australia can determine the duration for payment period)

Superannuation

Superannuation will be paid in accordance with the Enterprise Agreement and into your nominated fund. Allowances that count towards your superannuation are based on eligibility requirements including the need to be in effect for greater than 12 months. If you have specific questions regarding your super or qualifying allowances, please contact sharedservicesupport@industry.gov.au

Insurance and Workers Compensation

The AAD accepts no liability for loss or damage to personnel effects. Obtaining insurance for personal effects is the expeditioners' responsibility.

Obtaining **insurance for personal effects** taken to Antarctica or the sub-Antarctic can be challenging. You may not be able to get cover for some items, while coverage for other items may be cost prohibitive. Please consider your insurance requirements well in advance of your expedition.

If you already have **private health insurance**, you should carefully consider your individual situation before suspending private health insurance while deployed. Check the product disclosure statement and seek professional advice. While some private health insurers may offer 'corporate plans' to employees of the department, this is not a formal arrangement, and expeditioners should get in touch with their own providers for information on their individual situation.

For expeditioners who are non-APS employees (ie expeditioners employed by a university, a charity, another national Antarctic program, etc.), you are solely responsible for communicating with your employer to establish what, if any, insurance arrangements they have in relation to ongoing post-return medical treatment.

Storage of vehicles and household goods while on expedition

The AAD will reimburse eligible expeditioners for storage of a vehicle and/or household goods (household goods only where a rental property is being relinquished) for the duration of pre-departure training and deployment, plus up to four weeks after return to Australia. Reimbursement is capped at \$10,000 per year (pro rata) conditions apply.

Expeditioners are responsible for obtaining 3 quotes, seeking AAD approval, arranging storage with an approved facility, maintaining and paying appropriate insurance/s, keeping vehicle registration current and paying storage costs upfront before claiming reimbursement.

Noting the AAD is not responsible for any damage incurred and cannot provide indemnity for items whilst in storage.

Further information on eligibility, requirements, and the application process are provided during onboarding. Contact Expeditioner Recruitment via jobs@antarctica.gov.au for questions regarding household effect or motor vehicle storage in Australia.

Reimbursements

Prior to your first pay and becoming an employee of DCCEEW, if you require reimbursement for travel expenses, please contact [Expeditioner Recruitment](#).

Once you have received your first pay, you will need to complete your own reimbursements for travel in the AAD's finance system [expense8](#).

Tax zones and offset/rebate for special areas (remote)

Also known as a rebate, a tax offset reduces the tax you pay on your taxable income. Claiming the tax offset at the end of financial year is optional.

The Australian Tax Office (ATO) eligibility for this rebate is based on usual place of residence. To claim the tax offset your usual place of residence needs to be **both**:

- A remote or isolated area (on the Australian zone list)
 - Australian Antarctic Territory – Zone A (special area)
 - Macquarie Island - Zone A (special area)
- Your residence for **183 days or more during the income year** (ie. financial year 1 July – 30 June)

If your usual place of residence was in a zone for **less** than 183 days in the income year, you may still be able to claim the zone offset **if**:

- Your usual place of residence was in a zone for a continuous period of less than 5 years, and
 - you were **unable to claim** in the first year because it was **not your residence for 183 days or more**
 - the **total of the days** you lived there in the **first year and the current income year is 183 days or more**
 - the period you lived in a zone in the current income year includes the first day of the income year.

Some expeditioners may be eligible to claim the **special Zone A** in their tax return. For more information refer to the [Zones and overseas tax offsets](#) and [Special area – tax zone classifications](#) on the Australian Taxation Office website.

Should an accompanying letter be required for your tax return, please email ExpeditionerSupport@aad.gov.au.

Sales and tax-free purchases

Australian Border Force requires sales and tax-free purchases, using the Tourist Refund Scheme (TRS), to fit within cabin baggage size guidelines used by airlines. All duty-free and TRS purchases must be included within your Antarctic personal cabin baggage limits.

If you are travelling to Macquarie Island or Heard and McDonald Islands 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 (search for 'TRS').

Preparing to go south - health and medical considerations

You will complete a full medical examination before heading south. It is a requirement of your employment contract that you advise the Polar Medicine Unit (PMU) of any illness, injury or significant change in your medical condition, health or wellbeing prior to departure.

Vaccinations

You are required to be compliant with the current AAD [Infectious Disease Management Plan recommendations](#). You should be immunised and/or boosted against polio, [measles](#), diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough (pertussis), hepatitis A and B. Other vaccines such as chicken pox, human papilloma virus (HPV) and meningitis vaccines should be considered depending on medical advice. Healthcare providers and lay surgical assistants have additional requirements. Older and at-risk expeditioners should consider a shingles vaccine to minimise their risk during potential periods of relative immune suppression, such as over winter.

Evidence of compliance with AAD vaccination policy is required. It is a legislated requirement that vaccinations are recorded in the Australian Immunisation Register for Australian citizens.

If you require further vaccination/s while you are attending pre-departure training at the AAD, you can arrange this through PMU or your station doctor. If at your home location, you should consult with your local GP or healthcare provider.

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 time of the season indicate they are needed.

Injuries and Illness

You must report all injuries and illnesses at the time they occur. Medical support on station and ships is provided by the AAD at no cost to the expeditioner. This includes medical evacuations where deemed necessary and possible by the AAD.

Should you require ongoing medical treatment for a work-related injury or illness following your return, and you are an employee of the AAD (ie an Australian Public Service (APS) employee), you may be eligible to receive compensation under the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988. Enquiries should be directed to whs@aad.gov.au.

Dental

You should have a thorough dental examination and any necessary treatment well prior to departure. Evidence of dental examinations is required for all winterers and deep field expeditioners and strongly recommended for all other participants given limited dental care available in Antarctica and sub-Antarctic.

Station and Field Personal Care

Expeditioners travelling to the Antarctic and sub-Antarctic can claim reimbursement for the cost of personal hygiene products and care requirements eg. menstrual, sexual health, contraceptive products.

Prior to departure, expeditioners can purchase these items and fill out a reimbursement [form](#) up to a specified expense cap.

Once 'down south', limited supplies are available from the self-help area of the ship, or on station from 'woolies' or the station doctor. We recommend expeditioners pack extra supplies in case of operational delays and to ensure they have adequate supplies of their preferred products.

Pads and tampons are now in the field first aid kits and at field huts. Condoms are available in the medical self-help areas of the ship and station, and in field kits.

Menstrual Deferment

Some expeditioners may choose not to menstruate or to select when they menstruate by using various hormonal medications. See your GP prior to departure or your Station Doctor to discuss what may work for you.

Changes in Menstruation and Body Rhythms

There are many factors that may cause irregular or delayed menstruation when in Antarctica and the sub-Antarctic including;

- Travelling across time zones with frequent changes, especially on the ship
- Altered circadian rhythm due to the 24/7 daylight in summer, and loss of daylight in winter
- Stress related to physical work, long hours, fatigue, workplace or home issues

Management of Body Waste on Station and in the Field

Single Use Items:

- Pads, tampons, continence products and condoms must all go into burnable bins on stations and ships
- In the field in Antarctica these items can be added to poo bags or can be carried separately in ziplock bags and added to burnable bins on station

Reusable Items:

- Reusable items such as menstrual and continence underwear, cups, and urinary devices can be carried in ziplock bags in your field pack
- On station they can be cleaned in the bathroom and/or laundry. Some expeditioners like to add a drop of eucalyptus oil (supplied) to the device or their urine bottle

Will I have privacy to manage toileting/menstruation in the field?

Depending on the set-up in the field, you may or may not have access to a private toileting facility (eg. toilet tent) and this may result in different considerations for you around privacy. It's important not to wait to go to the toilet or manage menstruation because of shyness or embarrassment.

Safety comes first. Do not go to great lengths to find privacy in dangerous terrain like crevassed areas or in poor weather conditions. If travelling in a vehicle, you might duck behind a vehicle or ask your colleagues to turn their backs while you attend to your needs. In bad weather the back cab of Hagglunds (oversnow vehicle) can be used as a toilet shelter or a bothy bag (a group shelter carried when walking) is a good way to create privacy in the open.

Accessing Contraceptive and Hormonal Therapies

Prior to departure ask your GP for a 'regulation 24' prescription. This allows the pharmacy to dispense 12 months' worth of medication at once and will give you medication in date. If you can't see your regular GP, talk to your station doctor or one of the PMU doctors about providing you with a prescription.

Once on station, there is a limited selection compared with mainland Australia. Some products that are available on station include progesterone-only pill and injection, combined oral contraceptive pill

and HRT. LARCs (Long Acting Reversible Contraceptives eg Implanon TM MirenaTM) may or may not be available.

Pregnancy Concerns

Emergency contraception is available on all ships and stations. See the station/ship/field doctor to discuss options for you.

Sexual Health Concerns

Station and ship pharmacies carry a range of medications and treatments for sexual health concerns including STIs, genital infections, and urinary tract infections. Deep field camps and field huts contain a more limited range of medication to start treatment.

Herpes viruses (genital herpes and cold sores) may reactivate in Antarctica and the sub-Antarctic due to stress, immune dysfunction especially over winter, environmental conditions, and circadian rhythm changes.

Sexual Health is a core area of medical practice; doctors are trained and skilled in this area. As with all consults your information will be treated sensitively, respectfully, and confidentially.

Further information on Station and Field Personal Care is available in the Field Manual, from the Polar Medicine Unit or your Station Doctor.

Communications with the Polar Medicine Unit (PMU)

You may receive communications from PMU via email, SMS or 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 issue or changes in your health status prior to departure, contact the PMU on +61 3 6232 3304, or for urgent matters 24 hours a day call the PMU Hotline +61 3 6232 3293.

What to take with you

Cargo and Personal Effects

There is a range of information on [Cargo and Freight](#) on the AAD web page. Details about specific cargo allowances, packaging, labelling and consignment will be provided by your Station Leader or Project Leader.

Summer expeditioners have a 50kg allowance for Unaccompanied Personal Effects (UPE) and winter expeditioners 250kg. UPE consignments must not exceed 1m³ in volume. However, these allowances can vary depending on the length of stay and transport options available.

All cargo, including UPE, must be entered into the [AAD's electronic consignment system](#) (eCon) and delivered to the AAD's Kingston warehouse within the cargo delivery window.

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. Expeditioners must contact the [Supply Chain Operations Dangerous Goods team](#) about any Dangerous Goods they plan to transport. Some items that are used daily at home may be considered Dangerous Goods for the purposes of travel down south. These include

aerosol sprays, perfumes, nail polish and nail polish remover. Check the Dangerous goods page if you are unsure.

Dangerous Goods: must be packed and consigned independently to all other cargo

- This includes lithium batteries. Refer to '[AAD Safety Standard – Lithium Battery Management](#)'.
- Cargo requiring special handling such as fragile or overweight cargo, Dangerous Goods, or cargo of a critical nature must also be brought to the attention of Supply Chain Operations.

Issued clothing and equipment

You will be issued with an Antarctic clothing kit and equipment tailored for your expedition length, role and occupation, including trade-specific Personal Protection Equipment (PPE). Most of this kit is the property of the AAD and must be returned at the completion of your expedition.

Ensure your clothing sizes are entered into [Antarctic Applications Online](#) (AAO) so your Antarctic clothing kit can be prepared. You will need to book an appointment for fitting and collection of your kit at the AAD Expeditioner Clothing Store, located at head office in Kingston by emailing clothing@aad.gov.au.

Please do not use AAD-issued clothing prior to departure, unless it is required for training purposes. If you have used it, ensure it is thoroughly cleaned before you depart.

Sunglasses, prescription sunglasses and safety glasses

Eye protection is a critical part of your clothing kit. Non-prescription sunglasses are provided to all expeditioners. For expeditioners who wear prescription glasses please ensure you have a spare pair with you as you won't be able to replace these during your deployment.

AAD employees

- AAD employees travelling to Antarctica, the sub-Antarctic or participating in voyages of more than 14 days are entitled to one pair of [prescription sunglasses](#) OR one pair of prescription safety glasses or goggles (if applicable).
- Prescription sunglasses can be arranged by the AAD Clothing Store and must be ordered at least 6 weeks before departure. If there is less than 6 weeks before departure, or if our standard sunglass frames do not fit adequately, you may arrange your own prescription sunglasses.
- If you are leaving in less than 6 weeks, and require prescription safety glasses or goggles, you must arrange these yourself. The AAD will reimburse the cost, subject to expense caps. You can put through your reimbursement of expenses through the AAD's finance system [expense8](#) please ensure you upload receipts when processing claim.

Non-AAD expeditioners

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

Indoor clothing

You will need to bring your own clothing to wear indoors. Buildings in Antarctica and the sub-Antarctic are heated to around 19 degrees. Ensure you pack some casual clothing such as jeans, shorts, tracksuits, T-shirts and jumpers. You may also want to pack gym gear plus clothing for fancy

dress/special occasions. Take sneakers, slippers or 'ugg' boots to wear indoors. Outdoor boots are not permitted inside.

Toiletries

Basic toiletries such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, shampoo and conditioner, menstrual products, shaving cream and razor blades are provided on station. We suggest taking your own supplies especially if you prefer to use your own brands or specific products.

Make sure products are low phosphate and biodegradable. Do not take aerosols or products containing plastic microbeads. The listing of 'polyethylene', 'HDPE' (high-density polyethylene) or 'PEHD' in the product ingredients indicates that plastic microbeads are present.

Please be aware that for transport south, many toiletries are considered to be [Dangerous Goods](#) and must be declared to Supply Chain Operations prior to packing.

Expeditioners travelling to Antarctica and the sub-Antarctic can claim reimbursement for the cost of personal hygiene products such as menstrual, sexual health and contraception products. Approval is done by the Polar Medicine Unit (PMU) through [expense8](#).

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. There are emergency supplies of menstrual products in first aid kits and at field huts.

When travelling south you should pack enough personal hygiene products in your cabin baggage to cover delays in your luggage arriving on station.

Linen

Bath towels and linen for king single beds are provided on the ship and stations. Some expeditioners prefer to take their own.

For your room

This will be your home and personal space for your time down south. Many expeditioners like to take some items to personalise their room, such as photos, posters and plastic plants (you can't take real ones!). Things that remind you of home and bring you joy. Have a chat with previous expeditioners about what is good to take. You are unable to put holes or hooks into the walls of your room so it can be useful to also take removeable adhesives.

Outdoor recreational clothing and equipment

You may bring your own outdoor recreational clothing and equipment eg windproof jacket, daypack and walking boots. Talk to your Station Leader and Field Training Officer (FTO) to ensure it meets appropriate standards.

If your own recreational clothing and equipment could be confused with returnable AAD kit, please complete the [Equipment Declaration form](#) on the Expeditioner Hub webpage.

Hobby materials

Facilities are available for a wide range of hobbies on station but you must take your own materials. Examples include musical instruments, needlework, art and craft supplies, and dressed timber for woodwork. Timber with any bark on it is prohibited for biosecurity reasons. More information can be found in the [Hobbies](#) section.

Batteries

Cold temperatures quickly deplete battery power. Take enough batteries for all electrical appliances including cameras and laptop computers. AAD does not provide batteries for personal electronic items. Rechargeable batteries are useless in the field unless a generator or solar panel is available.

Packing your gear

Ensure all clothing, footwear, personal effects and equipment are clean. This includes new items in original packaging. Clean items should be packed into new cardboard boxes or clean/new plastic containers, then sealed.

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

If heading to Macquarie Island pack your things in waterproof containers or bags as they will be taken ashore on small watercraft.

Cleaning your gear

Help prevent accidental import of non-native species and disease to the fragile Antarctic and sub-Antarctic environment.

Before you leave, you must clean personal clothing and equipment to ensure it is free from food, soil, insects, seeds etc. Pay attention to velcro fastenings, boot linings, day pack webbing, clothing seams and pockets. Vacuum pockets, warm wash and dry clothing items.

Vacuum inside boots and scrub 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 disinfectant (active ingredient: sodium hypochlorite or “colour safe” hydrogen peroxide).

If you require a vacuum or cleaning supplies prior to departure, visit Shipping & Cargo to use the equipment available.

What not to take

You are prohibited from taking the following items:

- Non-native species – such as soil, insects and seeds
- Polystyrene beads, chips or packaging – wrap fragile items in clothing or paper instead
- Personal supplies of food – unless commercially packaged and sealed
- Excess packaging or items that will quickly end up as waste
- Illicit drugs
- Prescription medication that has not been disclosed to the Polar Medicine Unit
- Firearms
- Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) or pesticides – these are banned under the Antarctic Treaty’s Environmental Protocol

Your ‘no take’ list may be longer if visiting Heard Island and McDonald Islands. For further information please contact EIA@aad.gov.au

Working at the Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) at Kingston

AAD's head office is in Kingston, Tasmania, approx. 15 minutes drive south of the capital, Hobart. Prior to departure most expeditioners will be required to spend some time at head office.

When you arrive at Kingston you will undertake an annual Induction (see below). You will be issued with a security pass to access the site and provided ICT log-in details to access the AAD network. From this point onwards, please check your AAD email regularly as it's an important communication tool in your onboarding period.

There is a workspace called the 'Expeditioner Hub' next to the reception area at Kingston, which is specifically for expeditioners. The Hub has ICT work stations, as well as a friendly Expeditioner Support person to assist with any questions or issues you may have.

If you are an expeditioner at Kingston and not training or undertaking preparatory work, you may be expected to help 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 work on any given day, you should let your Supervisor know by 9:30am on the day of absence.

If not employed by the AAD, please get in touch with your Supervisor/Line Manager to get information on your pre-departure schedule.

Induction

An annual Induction is mandatory for all Expeditioners including Returnee's and is held on Mondays from 9:00-1:00pm. Induction is managed by Expeditioner Support and covers crucial onboarding steps and provides information from a range of AAD areas including, Expeditioner Capability and Training, and, Supply Planning and Cargo.

Your Hiring Leader or Technical Supervisor will greet you at reception on the day of your Induction. You may start with a group of other new expeditioners and could have other role specific induction requirements.

Training

The Expeditioner Capability and Training (ECT) Section manages expeditioners' pre-departure training schedules. Your start date at the AAD will be dependent on how much pre-departure training you are required to complete; this is determined by your role and length of time on Station or Voyage.

You will be provided a summary of your training schedule such as field, community and role-specific training when you arrive at the AAD for your Induction.

Some training programs extend for several weeks or months prior to departure and you will need to travel to Hobart to undertake the relevant courses. The AAD also has several online training modules which you must complete before being ticketed to fly or sail south. You will be advised on this directly.

Expeditioners should note the following;

- Your participation in the AAP is dependent on your successful completion of training
- Attendance at ship and air pre-departure briefings is MANDATORY – ‘no attend no go’
- Attendance at training is compulsory unless recognition of prior learning is granted
- You must provide Expeditioner Training with certified copies of all relevant certificates and licenses when requested

The [Expeditioner Summit](#) is a mandatory, pre-departure program for all expeditioners, new and return. It is held in Hobart over several days prior to deployment for all expeditioners staying longer than 14 days or participating in a voyage.

Its core purpose is to build a safe, cohesive expedition cohort and equip people with what they need to live and work effectively, while also providing essential pre-departure training and a shared understanding of the Australian Antarctic Program.

The Summit:

- **Induction to the program** — Establishes a consistent baseline of AAD/AAP knowledge, processes and expectations
- **Role- and cohort-specific knowledge** — Provides targeted, relevant content (e.g., station vs ship; science vs operations; first-timers vs returnees)
- **Safety and mandatory face-to-face training** — Covers critical safety requirements and practical competencies
- **Community and culture** — Builds shared expectations, behaviours and connections to support effective, respectful teamwork in remote, high-risk environments

Mentoring

The Expeditioner Mentoring Program is a voluntary program to help you achieve your work and personal goals. It is open to all station-based expeditioners. The program is part of our work towards fostering a safe, effective team where everyone feels respected and valued.

If you decide to participate, we will ask for some information about you, your goals and what you are looking for in a mentor. We will then look to match you with a mentor who has experience as an Antarctic expeditioner. Mentors come from a wide range of backgrounds and can offer guidance and support.

If you have spent one or more seasons on a station you can sign up as a mentor and support a mentee at another station. We will provide you with training and ongoing support.

Contact ExpeditionerMentoring@aad.gov.au if you would like to be involved.

Pre-departure leave

Pre-Departure Leave is an opportunity for expeditioners to have up to 5 days leave with their families prior to a period of Antarctic service.

We know that spending time away from family, friends and loved ones can be one of the more challenging aspects of Antarctic deployment. To help support expeditioners before they head south, eligible employees may access:

- Up to **five weekdays of pre-departure leave** (subject to operational requirements); and

- **One return airfare** to their nominated home port only, for reunion purposes.
- If preferred, expeditioners can choose to use this entitlement to enable **one family member, friend or loved one to visit them in Hobart before deployment** instead.

Who is eligible?

You may be eligible for this entitlement if you are undertaking Antarctic Duty and have completed the following period of continuous service with the AAD immediately prior to deployment:

- **Three to six months on Antarctic Duty** – eligible after **two months** of continuous service.
- **More than six months on Antarctic Duty** – eligible after **one month** of continuous service.

A few things to keep in mind

- This entitlement cannot be exchanged for cash.
- If the cost of your preferred travel arrangements exceeds the return best fare of the day available to the Department, the additional cost will need to be covered by you.
- Where the entitlement is used for someone to visit you in Hobart, reimbursement will be limited to the amount the Department would have paid for the approved travel arrangement.
- Airport transfer costs, including taxi fares, are not covered under this entitlement.

How to apply

For more information about the entitlement, application process and to access the relevant form, please visit **Blizz Line**.

Winter Personal Development Allowance

The AAD provides wintering expeditioners with financial assistance and organisational support to undertake training courses and activities while they are wintering in Antarctica.

The training must fall under one of the following categories:

- Meet a specific AAD need for skills and capabilities; and/or
- Enhance the expeditioner's own professional/technical capability, which would be of benefit to the AAD; and/or
- Increase personal wellbeing on station while also providing an incentive for longer-term engagement of wintering expeditioners.

The financial assistance is only available to AAD-employed expeditioners. The Bureau of Meteorology has a similar arrangement for their employees.

More information can be found on Blizz Line – the AAD intranet at [Training and Development](#).

Transport to Hobart

AAD-employed expeditioners will be provided with flights and accommodation in order to commence work and complete training in Hobart before going south, subject to their place of residence.

The AAD will only provide reimbursements where prior approval is granted for travel, for example a berth on the Spirit of Tasmania. The value covered will be up to a maximum of the equivalent flight from your nominated home base to Hobart.

During pre-departure training, an Expeditioner bus is usually provided to transport participants between their Hobart accommodation and the AAD in Kingston. If the Expeditioner bus is unavailable, an alternative transport arrangement can be provided. For training conducted at other locations, transport will be organised by the Expeditioner Training Team. Staff parking is also available at the AAD Kingston site.

Expeditioners who are not employed by the AAD will need to make their own travel bookings and pre/post-departure accommodation arrangements.

Cab Charges

AAD-employed expeditioners are only eligible for cab charges when an expeditioner bus is unavailable or in exceptional circumstances.

To request a cab charge, expeditioners should refer to the table below to determine their eligibility. Eligible expeditioners should then contact the relevant area to make the necessary arrangements.

Cab charge will not be provided for:	Cab charge may be approved for the following circumstances:	Cab charge will be issued automatically for:
Finishing training early at the AAD.	Travel in another state between the airport and residence upon Return to Australia (RtA). Please provide supporting justification to Expeditioner Recruitment	Travel from Hobart Airport to AAD-provided accommodation on commencement of deployment. An additional cab charge may be provided for travel to the AAD on the first day, where required.
Travel to and from the airport for pre-departure leave.	Travel to and from a storage facility. Please provide justification to Expeditioner Recruitment.	Where the expeditioner bus is not operating and attendance at the AAD is required.
Travel to the AAD if residing within a one-hour drive of the AAD.	Medical appointments located more than 100 km from your residence or accommodation. Please contact the Polar Medical Unit.	Travel from the wharf/airport to AAD provided accommodation upon return to Australia (RtA), where bus transport is not available.
Non-AAD expeditioners	Travel to or from the AAD outside the hours of 8:00 am to 5:00 pm due to work, training or appointment	Travel from accommodation to Hobart Airport upon return to Australia (RtA).

	requirements. Please provide justification to Expeditioner Support.	
Medical appointments within 100km of your residence or accommodation.	Transport for Tasmania-based expeditioners between Hobart Airport or the wharf and their residence upon return to Australia (RtA). Please provide justification to Expeditioner Recruitment.	
Travel to and from the airport for leave without pay.	Travel to the CBC for pre-deployment or post-deployment work when AAD-provided accommodation is located outside Hobart. Please provide justification to Expeditioner Recruitment.	

For requests outside the circumstances listed above, please contact the relevant area for approval.

If you are issued a manual cab charge, it must not be transferred to, or used by, another person. Any unused cab charges must be returned to Expeditioner Recruitment.

Please note that if a cab charge is used for an unintended or unauthorised purpose, you may be invoiced for the associated costs.

Accommodation and living allowances

Where possible, the AAD provides self-contained, shared accommodation for expeditioner employees from outside southern Tasmania. These employees will also receive a miscellaneous expenditure allowance, which covers the cost of things like laundry and pantry staples as needed for your time in Hobart. Further information about this allowance is available in the Enterprise Agreement.

Expeditioners who choose to arrange their own accommodation in Hobart will instead be eligible for reimbursement of accommodation costs up to a maximum of \$60 per night, in addition to the Antarctic Expeditioner Expense Allowance. To claim reimbursement, employees must retain receipts for their accommodation and submit a claim through Expense8.

While you are staying in AAD arranged accommodation, the contract provisions contain strict requirements that you must adhere to. If you choose to bring your own car to Tasmania, best efforts will be made to secure accommodation with free car parking facilities.

If a family member wishes to visit and share your AAD arranged accommodation, this is acceptable for short periods only. Long-term visitors sharing AAD arranged accommodation are not permitted. If sharing a 2br apartment with another expeditioner, before you make any arrangement to invite a visitor to share your room (eg for the weekend), you must obtain the prior agreement of the person you are sharing with and notify jobs@antarctica.gov.au.

When you have visitors staying, you must also notify the accommodation provider and arrange to pay any additional fees they may wish to charge. Failure to do so may result in your accommodation arrangement being terminated. Accommodation providers will not tolerate breaches of this contract.

If you wish to have more than one person staying with you, then you need to organise and pay for your own separate accommodation. Pets are not permitted at any time.

For further information on accommodation contact the Expeditioner Recruitment Team on (03) 62323398

Bike and shower facilities

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

Antarctic Cafe

The Gigglemug's Antarctic Cafe is located at the Kingston head office, downstairs from the reception area. It sells coffee, light meals and snacks from 7am-3pm and is open to the public.

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 these change regularly due to operational reasons.

You will receive specific transport information relating to your voyage or flight approximately 10 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 on 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 on the ship or plane. All personal alcohol must be consigned as cargo on the ship.

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

Aviation

The AAD 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 C-17A Globemaster III.

The A319 moves approximately 400 passengers each summer season and transports a limited amount of high priority, lightweight cargo. The C-17A 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 small 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 scientific research and resupply vessel is the icebreaker RSV *Nuyina*. Expeditioners may have their own cabins or be required to share, depending on how many people are on the voyage.

The ship has laundry facilities, communal computers, books and magazines, board games, AV equipment, gym, sauna and a shop. Sheets, doonas, towels and soap are supplied on board. 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.

Station facilities and amenities

The layout of each station varies, but each has scientific laboratories, power generators, workshops, a small medical facility, stores and communications facilities. There are living quarters with a kitchen, mess, recreation rooms, library, laundry and accommodation.

Accommodation

Expeditioners generally live in single bedrooms. When the number of expeditioners at Casey and Davis is high during summer, expeditioners may need to share for a short period.

Every attempt will be made to accommodate expeditioners who undertake shift work hours or have mandated periods of rest required by law (such as pilots). These expeditioners will be allocated rooms where they can expect minimal disruptions 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 limited in capability. They include a consulting and examination room, small operating theatre, 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 healthcare professionals on station.

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

Given the unique Antarctic context and limited medical, diagnostic and treatment capabilities, it is critical that PMU is made aware of any health issues or concerns at the earliest opportunity.

Food and hydroponics

Food on station is prepared by a qualified chef. 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 maintaining these facilities is provided to the wintering team.

Hydroponics facilities are restricted. You must be inducted by a Hydroponics Officer before entering.

Water

At our continental stations water is obtained directly from melt lakes, by melting ice from the plateau or snow drifts, or by reverse osmosis. Water is precious and conservation is essential; while there is normally sufficient supply for daily use, such as washing and cooking, it is a frequent occurrence that water restrictions will be in place governing shower and laundry usage.

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

Waste management

Waste is carefully managed on station, with indoor and outdoor clean-ups regularly conducted. Rubbish collection is undertaken weekly and you will be rostered to do this duty during your stay.

Your waste must be sorted 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.

Laundry facilities

Each station has a laundry with washing machines and dryers, a drying room and ironing facilities. Environmentally sensitive washing detergents are provided – only use the recommended amount.

Clothing store

Each station has a clothing store with a limited range of items to replace lost or damaged articles. Your issued Antarctic clothing kit is expensive and is your primary defence against the cold, so take care of it. To protect your more fragile garments, wear trade-specific clothing for rough work.

Sewing machines and basic supplies are available at the stations so people can carry out minor repairs to their clothing.

Recreational facilities

Each station has a library, theatrette, AV equipment and some communal band instruments (eg. drum kit, bass, electric guitars and keyboard). There's a range of recreational equipment including a spa and sauna, gym, pool tables, table tennis, volleyball equipment, board games and darts.

Station library collections provide you with hardcopy recreational reading. You are also encouraged to bring your own eReader. Before departure, you can obtain free library membership via the public library in your state or council area to access online resources and loan ebooks, read daily newspapers and magazines.

Some outdoor sports equipment such as cross-country skis and boots may also be available. Safety inductions are required for some recreational facilities and equipment.

Station equipment is clearly marked, please ensure you take care of it so it lasts and others can use it.

Laboratories and observatories

Each station has scientific laboratories and observatories. Working space in these buildings is allocated in consultation with Program Managers. This usually occurs before expeditioners travel south at the project planning stage.

The scientific observatories 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. Firefighting 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 that some station buildings are not occupied all the time. Please remain conscious of fire risks and abide by any fire prevention rules.

Station life

In Antarctica and the sub-Antarctic you will be undertaking a specific role with 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 plays a distinct part in a successful expedition and will be dependent on each other.

Working hours

Antarctic expeditioners are regularly required to undertake additional hours beyond the public service average of 37.5 hours per week. Due to the nature of work, there is a business need to ensure 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 (including weekend work), in accordance with section 62(1) of the Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) (FW Act) throughout their employment with the AAD. An allowance in lieu of overtime is paid to AAD expeditioners.

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 a Common Duties Allowance and an Antarctic Allowance, noted in the [Enterprise Agreement](#).

There may be a requirement for expeditioners to undertake differing work hours based on specific station and operational requirements. The Station Leader will discuss this with the affected work area and expeditioners with a view to maintaining an appropriate arrangement. Hours of work will be managed consistent with the 'AAD Fatigue Management Standard'. With the approval of the Station Leader or Supervisor, expeditioners may be given additional time off to help manage fatigue or undertake travel off-station when they have worked a significant number of hours beyond the normal expectations outlined above.

Employees working in Antarctica, or on a voyage departing from or terminating in Hobart, will observe Hobart Public Holidays. There may be occasions when expeditioners will be required to work on Public Holiday days for operational reasons. In this case the station/field/voyage leader will work with expeditioners to identify another day that can be substituted as the Public Holiday.

If you require more information regarding working hours or conditions, please discuss this with your Station Leader or Supervisor. In the event further clarification is required contact Expeditioner Support, your Technical Supervisor or the DCCEEW People Assist team

Allowances for expeditioners

The Antarctic Duty Provisions section (Page 80) of the [Enterprise Agreement](#) details the conditions and allowances applicable to expeditioners.

Please note: Allowances and overtime claims are dependant on submission of timesheets, so will be included in the following pay (pays are processed in advance of timesheet completion). So please be patient and allow for a couple of pay runs before following up any missed payments.

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 and respectful of the potential impact of their behaviour on others who are separated from their loved ones.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

AAD supports a culture and environment focused on health and wellbeing of staff and expeditioners. A psychologically safe and inclusive workplace is one where alcohol is consumed responsibly, at appropriate times and in accordance with current health guidelines. Illicit drugs are never used.

The [AAP Drug and Alcohol Policy and Procedure](#), are available on the Expeditioner Hub web page. It outlines the guidelines for use, purchase and consumption of alcohol. is available on the Expeditioner Hub web page. It outlines the guidelines for use, purchase and consumption of alcohol.

Alcohol on station:

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 the Station Leaders or Field Leader

Drug testing:

Mandatory drug testing for personnel undertaking Safety Sensitive Aviation Activities (SSAA) is conducted as part of the pre-departure medical examination in accordance with the Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) Aviation Drug and Alcohol Management Plan (DAMP). This includes personnel whose duties involve operating, supporting, managing, supervising, or interfacing with aircraft operations, including aeroplanes, helicopters and drones/RPA's.

Additional drug and alcohol testing may be conducted while on expedition in accordance with the AAD Aviation DAMP, AAD DAMP, the AAD Drug and Alcohol Policy, and applicable legislative requirements.

Personnel undertaking SSAA are required to comply with all applicable drug and alcohol management requirements, including:

- participating in drug and alcohol testing programs, including pre-departure, random, reasonable suspicion, post-incident and return-to-duty testing;
- complying with fitness-for-duty requirements;

- reporting the use of medications or substances that may impair the safe performance of their duties; and
- complying with applicable aviation safety policies, procedures and directions.

If you are unsure whether your role is classified as SSAA, you must seek clarification from Expeditioner Recruitment or Aviation prior to deployment. Personnel should not assume that their role is exempt from SSAA requirements simply because it is not directly involved in flying an aircraft.

Further information is available in the AAD Aviation Drug and Alcohol Management Plan (DAMP) and associated aviation safety policies.

<https://blizzline.antarctica.gov.au/antarctic-operations/operations-manual/vol5-aviation-sops/drug-and-alcohol-policies-including-damp/>

Smoking and Vaping

Smoking is strongly discouraged given well-known health impacts and potential operational risks. Tobacco or cigarette smoking is restricted to designated smoking areas. In the absence of a designated smoking area, smoking is prohibited.

Use of e-cigarettes or vaping products is prohibited inside all AAD workplaces, vehicles, planes and ships. The health impacts and risks of vaping are of increasing concern.

Purchase or supply of tobacco or vaping products is not available within the AAP. These are regulated items of supply under Australian law. It is recommended you discuss your health risks, support and cessation strategies with your health advisers and/or the Polar Medicine Unit.

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, public toilets, removal of kitchen rubbish and any other duties as requested by the chef or Station Leader.

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

Other general station duties include refuelling, resupply, monitoring radio schedules, transferring stores and clearing snow.

Additional community roles

There are other important roles that contribute to community life. These include Fire Chief, Environmental Officers, Hydroponics Coordinators, WHS Officers, Lay Surgical Assistants and Postmaster. Some are voluntary roles while others are paid an allowance in line with the [Enterprise Agreement](#) (EA).

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

Outdoor activities

Participation in outdoor recreational activities promotes health, fitness and wellbeing. However, the range of activities available on station is limited due to the nature of the environment. Adventure or 'extreme' activities, where consequences are potentially serious, are not permitted.

Prior to departure from Australia, all expeditioners should familiarise themselves with the [Outdoor Recreation Policy](#) on the Expeditioner Hub web page.

Land and sea travel in Antarctica

Antarctic travel is hazardous with limited marked routes and has many dangers such as crevasses, tide cracks, ice cliffs and blizzards. To undertake field trips, you need to fulfil the requirements of the field training system. During the summer months with large numbers of people on station, opportunities to get out in the field may be limited. These are known as 'rec trips' (recreational).

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. The use of vehicles is 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 take precedence.

The use of quad bikes in Antarctica is being phased out and a replacement vehicle program is being implemented. In the interim, quads may only be used for a limited range of work purposes. Quad bikes 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, a current Level 2 First Aid certificate and have completed AAD-approved watercraft training, are permitted to operate the boats.

Hobbies

Small tools (powered and unpowered) are available for expeditioners to use for hobbies. The use of these tools is subject to permission from the workshop supervisors, who need to ensure your safety and the maintenance of equipment.

Where a station has an established hobby hut, only the tools in those huts may be used for this purpose. Expeditioners are permitted to take small pieces of craft wood or timber to Antarctica. There are specific Biosecurity requirements for craft wood and timber that must be met before it is consigned and stored as part of UPE. If craft wood or timber does not meet these requirements, it will be returned to the expeditioner. Be aware that wood taken south for craftwork and then returned to mainland 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 mainland Australia, and supply your own equipment and spares. No station radio equipment is available for amateur radio purposes.

Drones or Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV)

The use of drones and UAVs in Antarctica is regulated by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA), AAD Standard Operating Procedures (refer to Volume 5C) and environmental permit requirements. Talk to your Station Leader for approval, advice, permits and conditions for recreational users before departure for Antarctica. You will need CASA Operator Accreditation, and your drone will need to be registered with CASA. You cannot operate a drone from a ship or at Macquarie Island for recreational purposes.

Photography

Take your photographic gear as there are endless opportunities to snap a good picture. It's a good idea to take a long lens, tripod, spare batteries and plenty of SD cards.

The Media and Communications team has produced a helpful guide for photographers '[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](#).

[Image Antarctica](#) is the AAD's online image and vision collection, available on Blizz Line. Images and vision uploaded to Image Antarctica are used to communicate the AAP's research externally; to media, on social 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 contribute images to Image Antarctica. By uploading your images via the Creative Commons 4.0 Attribution by CC license, you retain copyright over your images. Check you have the permission of the people in the images before adding them to Image Antarctica. You will be credited whenever your images are used.

Communication and ICT on station

Adjusting from fast internet to a limited satellite connection can be a challenging part of adapting to station life. Communication opportunities will depend on your location.

Email and phone will be your main communication options, or messaging apps such as Messenger, Signal or WhatsApp, which should be installed prior to departure.

Mail can be sent over the summer period to expeditioners through Australia Post or other couriers. Mail is consolidated for each station at AAD's head office then sent on available ships or planes, subject to payloads and weather conditions. Mail articles are limited to envelopes, postcards and small parcels and packages with a maximum weight of 1kg, and a maximum size of a standard shoe box. More information on [sending mail](#) can be found on the website.

Expeditioner Phone (EP)

A Samsung Expeditioner Phone (EP) will be issued to some expeditioners, depending on their job roles, at Induction in Kingston. Support and training on use of the EP will be provided before departure.

The EP 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 insight 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.

Expeditioners headed to Casey station can collect an EP from the ICT Helpdesk in Kingston. EP's need to be configured in Kingston on the AAD network. Self-setup guides are available from the Expeditioner Hub and the ICT Helpdesk. Further information on [Expeditioner Phones](#) can be found on Blizz Line.

Internet – access, files and streaming

Internet is provided over a limited bandwidth satellite link. This network is a government resource, so there are restrictions on some website access.

Adult content will be blocked and online gaming is not allowed over the satellite links. Certain cloud services and applications such as Dropbox/Google Drive and TikTok 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 such as Spotify, Netflix and Skype, are restricted in the amount of bandwidth they can use, so other services aren't impacted.

Email

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

Phone calls

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

Outbound calls are free for expeditioners, so it is much more economical for you to call family than the other way around. Calls to Antarctica (country code +672) from outside of Antarctica are expensive and are not included in most unlimited call plans.

Mobile phones

Your normal Australian mobile number will not be available for calls or texts down south.

If you use any online services such as banking or [myGov](#), where an SMS verification code or two-factor identification step is sent to your mobile phone, this will not work on station. Make sure you organise and setup alternatives before departure.

However, using the internal mobile phone system, your work or personal mobile device can be used on station with an AAD station extension number. The phone must be network unlocked – check how to do this with your provider.

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

The mobile network is provided where possible but is first and foremost for the provision of building monitoring alarms. If required, ICT will limit access to the mobile network. The winter trades team will be issued with a device for Building Management Control Systems (BMCS) messages.

Taking your own computer

Prepare your personal computer by ensuring all software and drives are up-to-date, and you have antivirus installed. Take portable hard drives to back up personal files such as music, photos and videos. Consider taking spare parts such as laptop batteries and power cables.

Social media

It's ok to share your Antarctic experience through social media. In fact, we encourage it!

We know that seeing people have positive experiences living and working in Antarctica often inspires other people to apply to join the Australian Antarctic Program and we love that.

Remember though, that as an expeditioner you are now a member of the Australian Public Service (APS). Being a member of the APS means there are rules about how you behave at work, in the Antarctic community and online.

You don't need 'permission' or 'clearance' to post to your own social media channels, but there are rules you'll need to abide by, similar to any other workplace.

As APS employees, expeditioners are required to comply with the [Antarctic Service Code of Personal Behaviour](#), the [APS Code of Conduct](#) and [APS Values and our Department's Social Media Policy](#). All of these documents outline behaviour requirements that apply equally to how you conduct yourself publicly online.

Read the documents for more information, but for quick reference:

- Keep your language nice – don't criticise your colleagues or your employer, don't use four letter words and be respectful in the way you talk about everyone.
- Keep your friends – make sure you get permission from others before posting images or content about them.
- Keep reputation in mind – don't post anything that could damage public confidence in the professionalism or impartiality of the APS. Don't post anything that could bring into question your own or others' ability to conduct themselves safely and professionally.
- Keep your privates private – Don't post a pic of yourself or anyone else nude, half nude or even thinking about being nude 😊
- Does the imagery display content that would be distressing to some viewers like animals suffering from injuries or diseases?

Talk to your station leader before posting if you are unsure whether your content is appropriate. If you're still unsure, get in contact with the media and comms team: media@aad.gov.au

Also keep in mind that the Australian Antarctic Program has a massive social media following. If you see something that you think will work well on our socials, let us know! We'll always ask permission before using any content of yours and always credit you as well.

The Australian Antarctic Program also generates a significant amount of media attention, due to the unique and interesting nature of what we do. So keep in mind, all media interviews must be approved by the media and comms team, even if a journalist or media representative contacts you directly.

And finally, specific protocols exist for social media use in emergency situations or incidents. Check with your Station Leader before posting anything. This is to prevent disinformation spreading, and not to worry friends and family back home unnecessarily.

Expeditioner wellbeing

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

Living and working in isolated and remote environments, being separated from family and friends, and not having access to normal support networks can be a stressor for expeditioners. A range of resources are available to support all AAP expeditioners.

Employee Assistance Program

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides independent counselling and support to expeditioners, and their immediate families, during the period of their deployment and for up to 6 months after return from Antarctica.

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

Further information on the [EAP](#) is available on the Expeditioner Hub web page.

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.

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 provide a referral to the appropriate Departmental area, and clarification on policies and complaint procedures.

You can arrange a confidential discussion with any WCO across the Department.

Polar Medicine Unit

The Polar Medicine Unit doctor on station, in the field or on a voyage is also a key source of support and resources for the physical and mental wellbeing of expeditioners.

Family and Friends Liaison Officer

The [Family and Friends Liaison Officer](#) supports family members and friends of expeditioners. The service provides resources and assists in preparation for, during, and after an Antarctic separation.

The Family and Friends Liaison Officer 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.

You should read and take into consideration the information contained in the [Antarctic Separation Guide](#), which is available on the Expeditioner Hub web page.

Clubs and Associations

All Australian Antarctic expeditioners can join the [Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition \(ANARE\) Club](#). The Club provides a means for past expeditioners to share their experiences and keep in touch with each other, as well as holding a variety of annual events.

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 mental health, wellbeing and performance. It can also have a negative impact on cohesion, morale and productivity on station, on a voyage or in the field.

Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated.

Expeditioners, regardless of affiliation, are required to comply with the [Antarctic Service Code of Personal Behaviour](#). Expeditioners who are APS employees are also required to comply with the [APS Code of Conduct](#) and [APS Values](#).

Integrity

The Department has a dedicated [Professional and Ethical Standards Branch \(PES\)](#). If you have concerns about behaviours like bullying, harassment, misuse of resources and anything else that falls below expectations and undermines a positive workplace experience, you are encouraged to contact PES by calling 1800 434 010 or by emailing integrity.inbox@dcceew.gov.au.

All reports to PES are carefully considered and managed sensitively and confidentially. Any next steps will be communicated directly with the person who referred the matter. It's important to note that not all reports to PES will be assessed as requiring further investigation.

Referrers are made aware of proposed next actions, prior to any action being taken. Anonymous reporting is also available to staff via the DCCEEW website [here](#).

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual conduct. It is unlawful and is a form of workplace bullying and harassment. 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 verbally 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, you are encouraged to discuss your experience with the Station, Voyage or Field Leader, Antarctic Medical Practitioner or a trusted person who can support and assist you in

accessing AAD resources. This is particularly important if you are in a remote setting such as deep field camps, with limited access to external resources.

If you require medical care or support, you should contact the Antarctic Medical Practitioner (AMP) on station, in the field or on a voyage. You can also contact the Polar Medicine Unit (PMU) 24/7 hotline on +61 3 6232 3293.

If you witness sexual harassment

All AAP expeditioners are responsible for creating a safe environment and are expected to act when they witness behaviour that is inappropriate. If you witness suspected inappropriate behaviour of any form, you can also access the Integrity Unit and Workplace Contact Officers for assistance.

If someone discloses sexual harassment

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

Expeditioner Performance Reviews

If you are on station, in the field, or participating in marine science voyages for a period of 6 weeks or more, you will be involved in regular performance appraisals through the [Expeditioner Performance Review](#) (EPR) scheme.

EPRs use the AAD's Personal Qualities (PQs) as a basis for an assessment. Your performance reports will be used in selection processes for future expeditions and are kept on record for seven years.

Discipline and responsibility

After leaving mainland Australia, your manager will be the Voyage Leader on board the ship, the Flight Representative on the plane, the Station Leader at stations, or the Field Leader at field camps. Other key contact people include the Station and Field Operations Manager, the Environment Manager, the Assistant Direct – Operational Safety and the Expeditioner Services team. Technical or scientific queries about projects are referred to Supervisors in Australia.

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 your Station Leader.

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 cooperatively to manage human activities in the reserve.

Health in Antarctica

Medical care on station, in the field and on a ship is generally provided by one Antarctic Medical 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 wintering, you will be required to see the station doctor once a month for a health check and certain basic health and wellbeing measurements. You will have blood samples taken at the end of summer for blood donor screening tests and general fitness for the winter will be confirmed by the station doctor. There is also a mid-winter medical check. Other tests may be included depending on clinical and occupational needs and requirements (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 the isolated Antarctic community. Certain at-risk behaviours including recent tattooing and body piercing, can impact eligibility to donate blood in an emergency.

At various times, 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 for 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 during planning, preparation and conduct of your expedition, and contact PMU for advice.

Pregnancy is difficult to manage, posing significant individual health risks, in the austere Antarctic medical environment and requires transfer to appropriate medical and obstetric care at the earliest opportunity to ensure your wellbeing and the success of the AAP as a whole. 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 prior to heading south.

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 and Occupational Health, and in particular, COVID-19, Respiratory and Infectious disease responses while on expedition.

Medical records

Information on all medical consultations that occur for and on expeditions is stored in the electronic Australian Antarctic Health Record 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 from expeditioners, and where additional consent has been given, will not be published in any form that permits identification of individual subjects.

Any research has been approved by the relevant Australian Antarctic Program approved 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 Assistant Director – Operational Safety or delegate. Drug and alcohol screening results for aviation and other safety sensitive workers will be communicated as outlined in the current AAD Aviation Drug and Alcohol Management Plan (DAMP) and the AAP Drug and Alcohol Policy and Procedures.

Infectious (eg COVID-19, influenza etc) 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 of skin and the front of the eye. Some work areas have additional sources of occupational UV exposure (e.g. some scientific or operational equipment and welding). Be vigilant and apply appropriate personal protective measures ensuring sufficient and frequent application and avoid sun exposure where possible. Ensure you have access to appropriate PPE and if you require prescription sunglasses fill in the [order form](#) on the Expeditioner Hub webpage.

On expedition and particularly 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 station doctor 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 suppression of the body's immune system due to isolation and stress. It is important you maintain your health with exercise and your gut health with adequate dietary fibre and water. Certain viruses can reactivate more frequently if your immune system is suppressed including herpes viruses (e.g. cold sores, genital herpes and shingles). If you are prone to reactivation discuss with your health advisers or PMU during the pre-departure period to ensure optimal preventive management. While on expedition present early to the doctor if you are concerned.

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

Avian Influenza is currently an increased threat due to global spread of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). Avian Influenza can be spread from Antarctic and sub-Antarctic birds (eg Penguins and Skuas) and seals, and contaminated environments where there has been reported infections or suspected unusual animal mortality. The AAD has implemented enhanced occupational exposure measures and response plans to prevent human infection, which may impact your personal protective behaviours and requirements. You will be briefed on this risk and others during your pre-departure period.

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 your attitude, words and personal behaviours impact and influence those around you.

As a member of the team on station, you need 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. To ensure your safety, 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. Honest human error is seen as a learning opportunity for all of us, so please report all incidents.

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.

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:

- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Risk assessments, including 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 Take 5s (a personal risk assessment tool)
- Training and inductions

If you are unsure of 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.

Health and Safety Representatives

As a designated work group under the Work Health and Safety Act (2011), the AAD has several elected Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs). The primary purpose of the HSR role is to represent members of the work group in health and safety matters. Contact details of AAD HSRs are available onsite and on [Blizz Line](#).

Station Work Health, Environmental Officer and Safety Officers

The Station Work Health, Environmental Officer and Safety Officer (WHSO) position are a secondary role on station. An expression of interest process is managed by the Station Leader prior to departure. WHSO's and environmental officers play an important role on Station working closely with Expeditioners, Station Leaders, the Work Health and Safety team and elected HSRs on environment, health and safety matters.

Australia and the Antarctic

Past and present

Tasmanian Aboriginal people were the most southerly people on the planet during the last ice age. The name of Australia's icebreaker RSV *Nuyina* 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). Modern day Antarctic scientists 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 declaring Macquarie Island a wildlife sanctuary in 1933. He also campaigned for recognition of Antarctica's scientific value and its need for protection.

In 1947, the Australian Government founded 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.

Female expeditioners visited Macquarie Island for the first time in 1957. The first Australian 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. The first female to winter at Macquarie Island was the medical officer in 1976, and the Davis Station medical officer on the Antarctic continent in 1981. Today women are a central part of our Program and the community on station.

Australia's activities in Antarctica are now conducted under the umbrella of the Australian Antarctic Program (AAP). The AAP conducts world-class science of critical national importance and global significance, and it delivers on Australian Antarctic policy and operational priorities.

Australia's Antarctic national interests and the actions to protect them, including activities delivered by the AAP, are set out in the whole of government [Australian Antarctic Strategy and 20 Year Action Plan](#).

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 Environmental 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, including that all activities must be assessed for their environmental impact and authorised before they can proceed. The Protocol also provides for the definition of, and a framework for the protection of, particular areas in Antarctica (ASPAs, ASMAs, HSMs), as well as information exchange and a system of inspection.

Science program

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

The research addresses critical issues including climate change, human impacts in the region, conservation of Antarctic and Southern Ocean wildlife and sustainable management of Southern Ocean fisheries. It also informs management plans and policy decisions to ensure the protection and sustainable use of these environments. Antarctic science is highly collaborative, bringing together researchers from across Australia and the world.

Our stations – Australian Antarctic Program

Australia maintains four permanent research stations; Casey, Davis and Mawson in the AAT and Macquarie Island in the sub-Antarctic. There are also several summer-only facilities, such as Australia's Wilkins Aerodrome.

Casey

Casey is located on the Bailey Peninsula and is the closest to mainland Australia of our permanent Antarctic stations. Depending on weather conditions, ships take 7 to 10 days to reach Casey from Hobart and it takes about 4.5 hours to fly to nearby Wilkins Aerodrome. Wilkins is 70 km south-east of Casey on the East Antarctic ice sheet and supports inter and intra-continental aviation.

Offshore from Casey station lies the rocky Windmill Island group. The Islands are home to tens of thousands of birds including Adélie penguins, giant petrels, skuas and snow petrels. Casey is also the site of large moss beds, forming one of the most significant vegetated areas in East Antarctica.

Casey has up to 400 expeditioners transiting through the station over summer, while around 28 stay over winter. In addition, people stay to prepare Wilkins Aerodrome runway for the next summer.

Davis

Davis is located in the Vestfold Hills about 20 km from the edge of the continental ice sheet. Depending on weather and sea-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 km² of low-lying hills, deeply indented by sea inlets and studded with hundreds of lakes and tarns of varying salinity.

Davis has a summer population of up to 120 expeditioners and around 25 people 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. Mawson was the first continental station Australia established and is the longest continuously operating station south of the Antarctic Circle, and as such is listed on the Australian [Commonwealth Heritage List](#). 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 seabirds including a small colony of Southern Giant Petrels. Spectacular inland mountain ranges are home to breeding snow petrels.

Macquarie Island

Sub-Antarctic Macquarie Island is located in the Southern Ocean, about half way between Tasmania 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 most 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.

Heard Island and McDonald Islands

Sub-Antarctic Heard Island and McDonald Islands (HIMI) are located in the Southern Indian Ocean, about 4,000 kilometres south-west of mainland Australia. The islands are among the most isolated places on Earth, and can only be reached by ship, typically taking several weeks to access, depending on weather and sea conditions.

The Australian External Territory of Heard Island and McDonald Islands is part of the HIMI Marine Reserve. The islands and territorial waters, which includes the ocean out to 12 nautical miles, were granted World Heritage status in 1997 for their outstanding natural values, including rare examples of active volcanism, pristine sub-Antarctic ecosystems, and globally significant ecosystem. They provide critical habitat for large populations of seabirds and marine mammals.

There are no permanent facilities or residents on the islands, and scientific research is conducted during occasional summer expeditions. This research helps to improve understanding of the region’s environment and supports the management of this extraordinary natural area.

Protecting the environment

Protecting the Antarctic environment is everyone’s responsibility.

Antarctica is protected under the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty and all Australian Antarctic activities are subject to Australian environmental laws. These regulations ensure that activities in Antarctica are conducted in a way that minimises environmental impact and preserves the region’s unique ecosystems.

Additionally, expeditioners activities are governed by the AAD’s Environmental Policy and the Environmental Code for Participants in the Australian Antarctic Program. This Code is available on the Expeditioner Hub web page.

The Station Leader is responsible for environmental management on stations, assisted by the Station Environment Officer. The Environmental Management Unit provides guidance and oversight, consulting with relevant departments at Head Office in Kingston to ensure that all activities align with environmental best practices and compliance requirements.

Your responsibilities as an expeditioner

You have a crucial role in protecting the unique environment of the Antarctic and sub-Antarctic.

It is against the law to take or remove any part of the Antarctic or sub-Antarctic environment for souvenir purposes. This includes the collection of rocks or feathers. You must have a permit for any activity.

Do your bit to protect Antarctic wildlife and ensure you are familiar with wildlife approach guidelines. Know the location of vegetation around stations, as well as protected areas and any access restrictions which may exist

Be aware of and avoid walking over sensitive areas, including fragile vegetation (moss and lichen) or soils.

Know the location of protected areas and any access restrictions which may exist.

Raise any environmental issues with your Station, Voyage or Field Leader, no matter how trivial it might seem.

Authorisations and permits

All activities (including the collection and removal of any items) 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.

Activities on Macquarie Island are subject to separate environmental requirements of the Tasmanian Government.

For more information contact the Antarctic and Environmental Regulation Section (eia@aad.gov.au).

Heritage and Antarctic materials

The AAD is legally obligated to protect all Antarctic heritage (both officially and unofficially recognised) which can include objects, buildings and even broader landscapes.

Always seek advice before touching or disturbing materials with potential historical value, or any biological or geological specimen. Do not collect or remove material, either as 'rubbish' or to preserve it!

The AAD manages two Commonwealth and National Heritage listed properties at Mawson Station and Mawson's Huts Historic Site at Commonwealth Bay. There are Heritage Management Plans for each site, made as legislative instruments under the EPBC Act by the Minister, ensuring the conservation and management of their heritage values.

Any activities that may impact the heritage values of a site, must be done in accordance with these Heritage Management Plans and may require referral for approval by the Minister or delegate. For more information contact the Policy and Strategy Branch of the AAD.

Policies and legislative responsibilities

The Australian Antarctic Territory (AAT) is a sovereign part of Australia. 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, and expressed to extent to the AAT
-

- Ordinances made specifically for the AAT
- Australian Capital Territory laws other than criminal laws as they are applicable to the AAT
- Criminal laws of the Jervis Bay Territory 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 are required to maintain records in accordance with the AAD Records Management Policy
- Respect AAD (DCCEEW) 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 (DCCEEW) 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

Return to Australia

Towards the end of your deployment the Expeditioner Recruitment and Support team will be in touch to help arrange your return. Expeditioners who have been on contract for more than six weeks will undergo a debrief period when they Return to Australia. This supports wellbeing and enables a staged transition from station/voyage life to home.

Debrief periods may vary depending on the time away and how you return to Australia. For more information on what to expect visit Blizz Line and the [Expeditioner Services](#) page.

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. It's important to note that you cannot bring home souvenirs such as rocks, soil, or other organic materials, whether it is in your UPE, in accompanied baggage (checked or cabin), or carried on your person. This is prohibited unless it is specifically part of your work and covered by the appropriate collection approvals and import permits. Removing such items without proper authorisation is an offence under the Antarctic Treaty (environmental Protection) Act 1980. Similar restrictions apply at Macquarie Island, which is a World Heritage Nature Reserve managed by Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife.

Appendix 1: Expeditioner Checklist

As your departure draws closer, you will receive more information specific to your expedition. This checklist is a handy guide to ensure you've completed some necessary tasks before you leave.



- ☐ I have completed my home administration including my will, power of attorney, banking and voting registration
- ☐ My loved ones know what support is available to them and how to contact me while I am away
- ☐ I have entered my personal details in Antarctic Applications Online (AAO)
- ☐ I have a current passport and any necessary visas
- ☐ I understand some of my Antarctic clothing kit will need to be returned at the end of my expedition
- ☐ I have organised my cargo and personal baggage
- ☐ I understand my baggage and mail may be inspected by Australian Boarder Force, the DAFF Biosecurity Officer, and/or the AAD at the time of departure and on return to Australia
- ☐ I will not take any prohibited items to Antarctica
- ☐ I have read and understand the Antarctic Service Code of Personal Behaviour
- ☐ I have arranged and understand all necessary permits and authorisations
- ☐ I understand and will comply with all my legislative responsibilities eg environmental, work, health & safety, privacy & security legislation
- ☐ I have read and understand the Environmental Code for Participants in the AAP
- ☐ I have read and understand the information on health and my work health and safety responsibilities
- ☐ I have taken steps to ensure optimal health and wellbeing while down south and will advise PMU of any changes or concerns
- ☐ I am familiar and will comply with the AAD drug and alcohol policies
- ☐ I understand some recreational activities are not permitted
- ☐ I have attended all the required predeparture briefings and training
- ☐ I have prepared my ICT equipment including updating software
- ☐ If applicable, I have arranged private health and worker's compensation insurance
- ☐ I am aware that I will be required to participate in the Expeditioner Performance Review (EPR)
- ☐ I am familiar with the RTA process



@ausantarctic | antarctica.gov.au

Appendix 2: Useful contacts

AAD area	Focus	Phone	Email
Cargo	Cargo, dangerous goods, eCon support and mail	03 6232 3372	supplyplanning@aad.gov.au
Clothing Store	Antarctic clothing kit	03 6232 3220	clothing@aad.gov.au
Employee Assistance Program	Counselling support available through Telus Health 24/7	1300 360 364	
Environment	Waste management, wildlife, incident reporting, biosecurity	03 6232 3352	AADEnvironment@aad.gov.au
Environmental Regulation	Authorisations and permits		EIA@aad.gov.au
Expeditioner Mentoring	Mentor program for expeditioners		ExpeditionerMentoring@aad.gov.au
Expeditioner Support			Expeditionersupport@aad.gov.au
Expeditioner Recruitment	Onboarding, travel and accommodation support for expeditioners	1800 030 755	jobs@antarctica.gov.au
Expeditioner Recruitment	Expeditioner recruitment support	1800 030 755	jobs@antarctica.gov.au
Expeditioner Training	Expeditioner training unit		ExpeditionerTraining@aad.gov.au
Family and Friends Liaison (FFLO)	Support for family and friends of expeditioners	1800 030 680 or international +61 3 6232 3283	fflo@aad.gov.au
HR Help	General people enquiries DCCEEW	1800 571 214	hrhelp@dcceew.gov.au
ICT Service Desk	AAD ICT help desk	1800 325 219	AADServiceDesk@dcceew.gov.au
Integrity	Complaints or enquiries about integrity-related matters	1800 434 010	integrity.inbox@dcceew.gov.au
Media	Outreach, media and communications	03 6232 3253	media@aad.gov.au
Pay and Conditions	Pay information and employment conditions		Sharedservicesupport@industry.gov.au
People Partnering	AAD specialist advice and workforce planning		peoplepartnerships@aad.gov.au
Polar Medicine Unit (PMU)	Antarctic medical screening and support	+61 3 6232 3304	polarmedscreening@aad.gov.au

Polar Medicine Unit Hotline – 24 hrs	URGENT medical queries	+61 3 6232 3293	
Psychology and Wellbeing	Organisational psychology and wellbeing		maree.riley@aad.gov.au
Security/reception	Front desk at Kingston Head Office	03 6232 3209	AADreception@aad.gov.au
Science Planning and Coordination	Science project support	03 6232 3530	planning@aad.gov.au
Transport Information Line	Plane and ship schedules	1800 030 744 or international +61 3 6232 3269	

Handy links

Websites - external

[Jobs in Antarctica](#)

[AAD website](#)

[DCCEEW website](#)

Internal sites – Intranet (accessible once you have commenced employment)

[Blizz Line – AAD Intranet](#)

[DCCEEW Intranet](#)

Appendix 3: Common abbreviations

AAD	Australian Antarctic Division
AAO	Antarctic Applications Online (https://aao.aad.gov.au)
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 (https://blizzline.aad.gov.au)
CARMM	Centre for Antarctic, Remote and Maritime Medicine
CBC	Cargo and Biosecurity Centre
DCCEEW	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
DSL	Deputy Station Leader
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
OMC	Operations Management Centre
OSG	Operations Support Group
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
SP&C	Science Planning and Coordination
SSP	Ship Specific Procedure
UPE	Unaccompanied Personal Effects (cargo)
VL	Voyage Leader
DVL	Deputy Voyage Leader
WHS	Work, Health & Safety
WCO	Workplace Contact Officer
WOV	Wanted on voyage (cargo)