



Thank you for your interest in a job with the Australian Antarctic Program.

The Australian Antarctic Program is led by the Australian Antarctic Division (AAD), a Division of the Department of the Environment and Energy, which operates from its headquarters in Kingston, Tasmania. This document will provide you with further information about the Australian Antarctic Program including an overview of the recruitment and selection process. At the end of the document there are also some **Frequently Asked Questions** (FAQs) where you will learn more about the conditions of employment and what it is like to live and work on an Antarctic station¹. The information in this document will help you to make a decision about whether to apply and we would encourage you to read it before commencing an application. We would also encourage you to spend some time looking at the [AAD website](http://www.aad.gov.au).

General Information

The AAD requires individuals with a wide range of qualifications, skills and experience to conduct and support science programs and maintain research stations in Antarctica. There are three year-round research stations on continental Antarctica – Casey, Davis and Mawson and one seasonal station, Wilkins Aerodrome. A fourth year-round station is situated on sub-Antarctic Macquarie Island.

Expeditioners have an important role in supporting the vital work of the Australian Antarctic Program and as such we place great importance in ensuring we select the right people. As well as being technically competent, we need people who can live and work together harmoniously in often harsh and inhospitable conditions. Unlike other jobs that you may have applied for, the AAD will not only assess your technical capability, we will also undertake a rigorous assessment of your personal qualities, medical and psychological suitability. Please refer to 'Personal Qualities Criteria' and 'Other Criteria' in individual job descriptions for more information.

Successful expeditions depend on expeditioners being content with their decision to leave their homes and families to live and work in Antarctica. Separation can be challenging for both you, and those who remain at home, and you should think carefully about what effect separation from your family and friends might have. We'd encourage you to talk with family and friends before deciding to apply for a job. We'd also suggest that you have a look at the [AAD Separation Guide](#) which is a useful resource.

If you are interested in participating in the Australian Antarctic Program but decide that now is not the right time, we would be interested in hearing from you in the future. If you would like to be advised when the next round of recruitment opens we would encourage you to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) once the current campaign closes.

¹ For the purposes of this document, Antarctica is inclusive of Macquarie Island.

Working Conditions – special considerations

When applying for a job, it's important to understand the environment in which you will be living and working. There are several conditions the AAD would like you to be aware of prior to applying for a job. There are various methodologies in place to control risks and hazards that exist at the work site, which you will learn about during training.

Due to the nature of the physical environment:

- You may need to work outside in:
 - cold and dry conditions (as low as -45 deg Celsius); or
 - cold and wet conditions.
- There is an increased risk of:
 - Exposure to both high and low solar ultraviolet radiation;
 - slip hazards in continental Antarctica;
 - muscular skeletal type injuries on Macquarie Island; and
 - Exposure to noise that may exceed recommended exposure limits (generated by aircraft and plant).

Remote and isolated community living comes with:

- Limited sophistication of medical support;
- Limited scope for medical evacuation - if at all possible evacuation is likely to be delayed and prolonged; and
- Stressors of close communal living.
- Limited external communications for ship, field and traverse based personnel.

The built environment may require you to engage in the following work and/or activities:

- Manual handling tasks, including handling dangerous goods;
- Working at heights;
- Asbestos removal*;
- Operation of heavy plant and industrial equipment;
- Travelling or operating mobile plant (vibration may be experienced);
- Work involving exposure to wood dust.
- Confined space work.
- Work on raw sewage treatment systems.
- Work involving the use of respiratory protection. Individuals involved in this work may be required to be clean shaven.

*You will be advised if your position will involve asbestos removal. In this case you will be required to undergo health monitoring. An initial baseline medical assessment will be conducted as part of the AAD's medical screening process. The AAD provides suitable risk control measures and training for all such activities including a requirement to use personal protective equipment (PPE) for certain tasks and activities.

Eligibility

Only Australian citizens, Australian residents with proof of eligibility to work in Australia, and New Zealand citizens are eligible to apply. Please note that jobs requiring a security clearance are only open to Australian citizens. If a security clearance is required, this is stated in the job description under 'Other Criteria'.

Conditions of Employment

An attractive set of employment conditions are available for expeditioner employees, including:

- Salary (stated on individual job pages) - payable during training and while in Antarctica;
- Antarctic Duty Allowances (totalling up to \$60,974 per annum) – payable while in Antarctica;
- Generous employer superannuation payments (15.4% at time of publication); and
- Accommodation, protective clothing, food and some sundry items (e.g. toiletries) while in Antarctica.

Normal PAYG taxation arrangements apply. The only taxation concession that may be available is a Special Zone A rebate for expeditioners spending more than 12 months in Antarctica.

The AAD generally meets the cost of:

- airfares to and from Tasmania (a pre-embarkation reunion travel entitlement may also apply);
- accommodation while in Tasmania;
- a daily allowance for miscellaneous expenditure (currently \$20.05 per day);
- transport between your accommodation in Hobart and the AAD at Kingston (usually by bus);
- transportation of 1 cubic metre (up to 250 kg) for winter expeditioners or up to 50kg for summer expeditioners of personal goods to Hobart and then onwards to Antarctica or Macquarie Island, and on return, to your home location; and
- in some cases, storage of household goods and a motor vehicle.

When working on one of our stations, expeditioners can normally expect to work:

- Monday to Friday – a minimum 8 hours per day (excluding lunch);
- Saturday morning – 4 hours in primary role (e.g. carpenter, mechanic etc.); and
- Saturday afternoon – typically requires all expeditioners to undertake community duties.

Sunday is usually a rest day. However, expeditioners should also recognise that there will be occasions where longer work hours are required, including on some weekends.

You can read more about expeditioner employment conditions in the Department of Environment and Energy's [Enterprise Agreement](#). Part 9 relates specifically to Expeditioners.

How to Apply

If you would like to apply for a job with the Australian Antarctic Program, you must complete the online application form. Each job page includes a link to the online application form.

This document contains critical information about living and working in Antarctica and **must** be read in conjunction with the relevant job description prior to you logging into the online application system and commencing your application.

The online application system will only let you submit a complete application. To ensure your application is complete, you will need to:

- Answer all questions in your online application. Please provide enough detail so we can determine whether you have the required qualifications, skills and experience for the role. If a question is Not Applicable, please ensure that you type this into the response section. If you do not do this and you leave the response section blank, you will be unable to submit your application.
- Attach copies of licences and certificates or further information where required (note high risk licences may need to be attach multiple times).

- Attach a current resume or CV.

****Ensure that you click submit when you have completed your application.**

Do not use statements such as 'see CV', 'refer to previous application' or 'Mawson 2016/17 season' when completing your application questions. These responses will not be assessed.

The online application system may time-out. To avoid losing the answers to your question, it is recommended that you prepare your answers in a word document and copy and paste these into the online application system. It is important that you provide us with a current telephone contact number that we can reach you during normal business hours (i.e. 8:30am - 5:00pm eastern daylight saving time). If you are not contactable via phone during these hours, please provide an email address that you regularly access.

Note: In completing your online application, you will be asked some Diversity questions. Although optional, your completion of these questions will provide useful information to ensure that our recruitment processes continue to be appropriately targeted.

Selection Criteria

Job descriptions outline the technical requirements for each role under 'Technical Criteria'. **You must meet all essential requirements and attach all supporting documentation (copies of licences, qualifications etc.) to your online application.** Some jobs also list 'highly desirable' and/or 'desirable' requirements. Having some or all of these requirements may make you more competitive for a job. If you don't have them (or only have a few), but you meet the essential requirements, we'd still encourage you to submit an application.

Some jobs also ask you to attach 'additional' licences. These are not used in the selection process but if you are offered a job its useful information for us to have. You may be required to attach the same licence multiple times (such as high risk work licences).

'Personal Qualities Criteria' and 'Other Criteria' (e.g. security clearances) are assessed at a later stage in the recruitment process.

The Selection Process

The following is a brief explanation of the expeditioner selection process to assist applicants to understand how their application(s) will be assessed. It is intended as a guide only.

Stage 1 - Registration and shortlisting

- On submission of your online application(s), an automatic acknowledgment email will be sent to the email address you provided. You should receive this within a couple of minutes of submitting your application. **If you believe you have submitted your application but haven't received an acknowledgement email, please contact the Recruitment team via telephone on 1800 030 755 or email recruitment@aad.gov.au.**
- Technical experts assess each application against the advertised technical requirements of the job. Only those applicants considered to best meet these requirements will be shortlisted for further consideration. Performance reports will be considered for past participants in the Australian Antarctic Program.
- Some applicants may be contacted by telephone during this stage to discuss technical aspects of their application.
- For those who are shortlisted for further consideration, a Confidential Checklist of Medical History is assessed by the AAD Polar Medicine Unit to identify any medical conditions which may preclude selection. Polar Medicine Unit will contact applicants directly if they have any questions about your medical history.

- Applicants who have not been shortlisted will be advised via email once shortlisting has been completed.
- This stage is usually completed 1-2 months after the closing date for applications.

Stage 2 - Assessment

- Applicants who are shortlisted will generally be required to attend a face-to-face technical interview. This is a more in-depth interview to assess your technical skills and experience relevant to the job. These interviews are often conducted in conjunction with Selection Centres (see below). Separate arrangements will be advised for those applicants not required to attend Selection Centres.
- Shortlisted applicants who have not had recent Antarctic employment with the AAD, or have not attended a Selection Centre within the last three years, will be required to attend a Selection Centre to assess their personal qualities. Antarctic Medical Practitioners and Watercraft Operators do not attend Selection Centres; personal qualities for these positions are assessed through a separate process. Performance reports will be consulted to assess the Personal Qualities for returning expeditioners
- **It is expected that Selection Centres will be held in Hobart, Brisbane and Adelaide during March and April 2020.**
- Applicants who are unsuccessful at either the technical interview, or Selection Centre will be advised via email.
- Applicants found suitable at the technical interview and Selection Centre will then be required to complete a medical examination, psychological (adaptability) assessment and other pre-employment checks. It should be noted that being asked to complete these assessments is **not** a guarantee of getting a job.
- This assessment stage may take several weeks to complete.

Stage 3 – Offer of Employment

- Once approved by the Delegate, those applicants selected for a job will receive an offer of employment.
- Applicants who were considered suitable but did not receive an offer due to not being as competitive as other applicants, may be identified as a Reserve. Applicants identified as a Reserve will be advised of their status in writing and may receive an offer of employment at a later date should a job become available.
- Applicants who have not been considered suitable for a job or reserve, will be advised via email.

The full selection process can take up to 8 months to complete, but we aim to provide successful applicants with as much notice as possible to ensure they have enough time to prepare for their employment with us. Reserve applicants who are given an offer of employment at a later date, may receive only minimal notice before commencement of employment. If we do not attract enough suitable applicants, the AAD may re-advertise or canvass interest from former successful applicants.

Employment decisions in the Australian Public Service (APS) are based on merit and require an assessment of the relative suitability of the applicants for the advertised duties. This is a competitive selection process with assessments based on an applicant's technical qualifications, skills and experience, alongside the broader personal qualities required of an expeditioner and other selection criteria.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How long will it take me to complete my online application?

This depends on the job you are applying for. We recommend that you have a look at the requirements well in advance of the close date. This will allow you to think about your responses and ensure that you have access to all documentation that you need to attach to your application (e.g. copies of licences, qualifications, current resume).

How long will the selection process take?

From the date applications close, it can take between 6-8 months for successful applicants to receive an offer of employment. There are a number of stages to the selection process that you will move through progressively. If at any stage you are found unsuccessful, you will be advised by the AAD. You should consider that your application is progressing unless you hear otherwise.

You can read more about the different stages of the selection process above.

What happens at the Selection Centre?

During the Selection Centre you will participate in a range of activities, including small and large group discussions, designed to assess whether you have the personal qualities required of an expeditioner. It is conducted over a 24 hour period which includes an overnight stay. It's important that you be yourself and get involved in the activities – there is no preparation required.

My skills and experience don't match any of the advertised jobs, is there anything else I can apply for?

All the jobs currently available are advertised on the [Jobs in Antarctica](#) website. The Recruitment team receives numerous enquiries each season from hopeful expeditioners, this is why we created the [Other Opportunities](#) page. Still nothing for you? There are many other organisations that operate in Antarctica, such as the other government organisations, universities across Australia and internationally, and various companies from transport to tourism.

The AAD will only assesses applications submitted via the online application system. Unfortunately, the Recruitment team cannot provide guidance or advice on suitability for a position - applicants enquiring about other opportunities or suitability for a position will be referred to the relevant information on our website.

The AAD does not offer any volunteering opportunities.

The job I want to apply for isn't open, when can I apply?

Please visit the [Jobs in Antarctica](#) website after 23 January 2020 to register your interest. The AAD will send you an email when we advertise for that position next.

Do you employ nurses or other medical professions?

Each station has at least one Antarctic Medical Practitioner. This role is undertaken by a qualified and registered medical practitioners only. There are no employment opportunities for nurses, paramedics, psychologists or other health professions.

Do you accept White Card equivalents?

The AAD only accepts White Cards issued after May 2009. Please ensure you have a current White Card prior to completing your application, and not just a blue or red construction induction card.

Do I have to be an Australian citizen?

The AAD accepts applications from Australian citizens, Australian residents with work rights in Australia, and New Zealand citizens. Please note that jobs requiring a security clearance are only open to Australian citizens. If a security clearance is required, this is stated in the job description under 'Other Criteria'.

Am I too old?

There is no age restriction but applicants must pass a comprehensive medical assessment.

How long will I be employed for?

Employment length varies for each expeditioner. It will generally be between 4 and 15 months, and depend on the season duration (i.e. summer or winter), your training requirements, and the station that you are going to. You will be asked to indicate whether you would like to be considered for a summer or winter job (or both) when you apply. Please note this does not bind you to this duration – you can change your preference at any time.

The length of your employment will include a period of pre-departure training. This training is mandatory and can take between 2 weeks and 3 months to complete. If you are successful, the AAD will advise you of your training requirements.

Note: Expeditioners employed in winter jobs will complete both a winter and summer season in Antarctica.

Summer expeditioners usually start work in September or October and be employed for between 4 and 6 months. Summer expeditioners can expect to depart for Antarctica in October and return in March or April the following year.

Winter expeditioners can start as early as July, or as late as January the next year depending on which station you are going to. If you are employed at Casey or Davis stations you can expect to depart for Antarctica in October or November returning approximately 12 months later – start dates (for training in Hobart) can be as early as July. If you are employed at Mawson or Macquarie Island stations, you will generally depart Hobart in March or April and return around the same time the following year. Start dates for expeditioners employed at either of these two stations may be as early as November.

Shorter winter job employment opportunities (e.g. 6 – 8 months in Antarctica over the winter months) may arise.

What does the training program involve?

You will complete a mandatory training program before travelling to Antarctica. This training will equip you to do your job effectively in Antarctica and prepare you for living and working as a positive and proactive member of the community.

How do I get to Antarctica?

Expeditioners travel via ship or plane. The mode of transport will depend on the station you are going to and AAD operational requirements.

Access to stations is possible only in summer. It is not possible to return to Australia during the winter months.

What are the living quarters like?

Buildings are comfortable and functional for living and working. They are insulated and strengthened to withstand low temperatures and fierce winds. You can read more about station amenities on the [Living & Working](#) page of the AAD website.

In most circumstances expeditioners will have their own bedroom and shared bathroom facilities. There may be occasions when people are required to share (e.g. field huts). When travelling via ship, you should expect to share a cabin with other expeditioners.

What clothes and personal items do I have to take?

The AAD provides all specialised Antarctic and sub-Antarctic clothing. You will receive your clothing kit soon after arrival at the AAD's head office.

The living quarters and working buildings are a comfortable temperature. You will only need to bring everyday casual clothing and shoes for indoors. You may wish to pack something more formal for special occasions. The AAD provides personal items such as toiletries and health care products. Expeditioners may choose to take some preferred toiletry items with them.

What will I eat?

Each station has its own Chef. The food supplied is similar in variety to that obtained in Australia. Fresh vegetables are available for the first few weeks after the ship's departure. Limited hydroponic produce may also be grown on station. We will endeavour to meet any special dietary requirements wherever possible. Emphasis is placed on providing a balanced nutritional diet. You will also have plenty of opportunity help out in the kitchen.

Will I have the opportunity to “explore” Antarctica?

While work will take priority, opportunities for recreational trips may arise.

What do I do after work?

Expeditioners can participate in a range of recreational activities during their time in Antarctica and each station is well-equipped to keep everyone active. . You can read more about recreational activities on the [AAD website](#).

Expeditioners perform their own 'housework' and help out with station duties. Station duties include assisting in the kitchen, garbage clearance, and general cleaning.

Who will I be working with?

One of the many things that attracts people to the Australian Antarctic Program is the diverse range of people that you may have the opportunity to live and work with. This may include Australian and international scientists, members of international Antarctic programs, media professionals and of course other [Jobs in Antarctica](#) employees.

How cold is it really?

At the continental Antarctic stations:

- In the peak of summer (January) average temperatures range between -3°C and +3°C, but are much cooler in the summer margins of October and April, ranging between -16°C to -8°C. The record warmest temperature of +13.0°C is held at Davis Station.
- In winter (April to October) average temperatures range between -20°C and -10°C. The record coldest temperature of -41.8°C is held at Davis station.
- Although more frequent in winter, you can expect low temperatures, fierce winds, dryness and frequent blizzards any time of year.

The climate at Macquarie Island is wet and windy year round. Average temperatures range between +2°C and +9°C. The record minimum temperature is -9.4°C and maximum is +14.4°C.

How can I contact home?

There are good telephone and internet connections for expeditioners to use to contact family and friends. While it should not be relied upon, expeditioners may have the opportunity to connect with family and friends via video calls. The [family and friends](#) page on the AAD website provides information for prospective expeditioners and their family and friends on staying in contact while you are in Antarctica.

How might the time away affect my family and friends?

The AAD's Separation Guide provides information to help you prepare for, and manage the demands of a period of extended separation from family and friends. It is available by telephoning the Expeditioner Liaison and Training Coordinator on free call 1800 030 680 or you can access it [here](#).

How can I find out more?

We'd encourage you to have a look at the [Expeditioner Handbook](#) and the AAD website to learn more about the Australian Antarctic Program and what it's like to [live and work](#) in Antarctica.