

LIFE AS AN EXPEDITIONER



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Conditions of Employment

The AAD generally meets the cost of:

- airfares to and from Hobart, and in some cases a pre-embarkation reunion travel entitlement may also apply;
- accommodation in Hobart, and transport between your accommodation and the AAD (usually by bus);
- a daily allowance when staying in Hobart for miscellaneous expenditure (currently \$20.60 per day);
- transportation to Hobart of 1 cubic metre (up to 250 kg) of personal goods for winter expeditioners or up to 50kg for summer expeditioners (exact number will vary depending on the airline), and then onwards to Antarctica or Macquarie Island, and on return to your home location; and
- storage of household goods and a motor vehicle (determined on a case by case basis).

When working in Antarctica, 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, there will be occasions where longer work hours are required, including some weekends.

More information about expeditioner employment conditions can be found in the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment's [Enterprise Agreement](#). Part 9 relates specifically to Expeditioners.

Working Conditions – Special Considerations

Due to the nature of the physical environment:

- You may need to work outside in cold and dry conditions (as low as -45°C); 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.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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 [here](#).

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.

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.

What will I eat?

Each station has its own chef. The food supplied is similar to that 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 endeavour to meet special dietary requirements where possible. Emphasis is placed on providing a balanced nutritional diet. You will also have plenty of opportunity to 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 participate in a range of recreational activities. You can read more [here](#).

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

Who will I be working with?

There is the diverse range of people on station. This may include Australian and international scientists, members of international Antarctic programs, media professionals and other expeditioners.

How cold is it?

At Casey, Davis and Mawson:

- 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 and -8°C. The record warmest temperature of +13.0°C is held by 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 by Davis station.

- Although more frequent in winter, you can expect low temperatures, fierce winds, dryness and frequent blizzards any time of year.

On Macquarie Island it 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 contact family and friends. You can find out more [here](#).

How might the time away affect my family and friends?

The [Separation Guide](#) provides information to help you prepare for, and manage the demands of a period of extended separation from family and friends.

What is internet access in Antarctica/Sub-Antarctica like?

There is limited internet available and it is not the same experience as broadband at home in Australia. Ability to utilise streaming services varies depending on the station and season and are restricted as to the amount of bandwidth they can use.

How can I find out more?

[Expeditioner Handbook](#)

[Separation Guide](#)

[Living and working in Antarctica](#)

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[Application Process](#)