

A guide to going south with British Antarctic Survey



**British
Antarctic Survey**

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH COUNCIL

POLAR SCIENCE
FOR A SUSTAINABLE PLANET

Director's foreword

Season 2026/27

Are you ready?

The anticipation of a new Antarctic season and the preparation period is one of the most exciting times of the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) year, whether you are a returner or about to go south for the first time. Even those of us working in Cambridge feel the buzz of excitement and wish we were going south with you.

In recent years I have mentioned how much Antarctica is changing in response to climate warming. Even though Antarctica is a continent at the end of the Earth and remote from most human activities it is being affected by global climate warming caused by our activities, mostly in the northern hemisphere. We have been able to measure the change through fieldwork and science projects. Now we can actually see and feel it ourselves in Antarctica.

For the past two years the amount of winter sea ice around the western side of the Antarctic Peninsula has decreased dramatically, so much so that in 2025 we were able to carry out a marine science project from RRS *Sir David Attenborough* around Rothera just before Midwinter.

In the late 1980s, when I first worked at BAS, Rothera winter temperatures were around -20°C and we were worried that the ship (RRS *James Clark Ross*) might not get to Rothera to deliver Christmas presents. Now the SDA can get to Rothera mid-winter. The temperature at Rothera recently was -2°C and the ground was like an ice rink, covered in thick ice, not heaps of snow. You can check out the records for Rothera on the BAS external website.

There is little sea ice in the region again this year. Although very worrying for our global climate, it does provide BAS with future opportunities to change the science that we undertake and the way we work in Antarctica.

Going to Antarctica is an amazing opportunity that may define the best moments of your life, so stay safe, be kind and give your very best. Then you will enjoy the great adventure that you are about to undertake in the most amazing place on the planet.

Good luck!



Professor Dame Jane Francis
Director, BAS



Checklist

This handbook contains a great deal of information, and you cannot be expected to absorb it all immediately. Please carry it with you when you go south as a source of reference. We have created a checklist of the most important things to remember before you leave home.

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Basic preparations



Health matters

Medical examination – Everyone who travels with BAS to the Antarctic must pass a strict medical examination. The purpose of the medical is to determine whether you are physically and mentally fit for the arduous nature of Antarctic service.

Covid-19 makes the need for travellers to have had a Covid vaccine booster very important. Antarctica is a medically austere environment.

It is important to make full declaration of any medical conditions and dental issues in advance of deployment, including any changes since your pre-deployment medical screening.

You are putting yourself and your colleagues at risk if you don't declare pre-existing conditions.

As the medicals are often completed many months before travelling south, it is vital that you report any subsequent medical problems to the BAS Medical Unit (BASMU) before departure, while in transit or while on BAS stations and the ship.

The final decision rests with the Senior Medical Officer at BASMU.

Please refer to the BASMU document 'Medical aspects of living and working in Antarctica' for more information (bas.ac.uk/for-staff/polar-predeployment-prep/intro-guidelines-and-forms/medical-guidelines-and-forms).

Dental check – You must ensure that you have a thorough dental check before leaving the UK and that a letter from your dentist confirming your dental fitness is supplied to BAS. Your own dentist should carry out this check.

Confidentiality – Medical records are retained by BASMU. BAS does its utmost to maintain the confidentiality of medical information. However, as there may be safety, welfare or operational implications, personnel additional to the medical staff may sometimes be involved.

Immunisation – Prior to departure from the UK, you must be well in date with the following immunisations, which may be freely available from your GP:

- Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (DTP or Revaxis Polio)
- Meningitis ACWY

- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)
- At least one Covid-19 vaccination
- Proven by NHS Covid Pass where possible

Please refer to BASMU document 'Immunisation Policy' for more information: bas.ac.uk/for-staff/polar-predeployment-prep/intro-guidelines-and-forms/medical-guidelines-and-forms.

Ensure that you have a record of your immunisations with you when you leave for the Antarctic. A BASMU doctor may wish to see this.

Passports and visas

Please ensure that your passport will be in date, and not beyond 10 years old, throughout your stay in Antarctica plus at least an extra six months after your planned date of return, including time for any subsequent travel.

This is vital. You cannot renew your passport once you have left the UK, nor can you travel on a passport with less than six months' life on it.

We have been advised that those travelling through South Africa must have at least two adjoining pages clear of all immigration stamps for use by South African authorities.

You are responsible for obtaining any necessary visas. UK citizens do not require visas for travel to South Africa, Chile, Uruguay or the Falkland Islands.

Citizens of other countries, and UK citizens travelling elsewhere, should check their visa requirements well in advance of travel.

Financial affairs

Supplementary material will be given at Pre-deployment Training.

We cannot provide financial advice. To prevent problems and minimise worries for yourself and your family, you should take every step to ensure that your financial arrangements are as well organised as possible. Individuals are responsible for their own tax affairs. While Finance can provide general guidance on the operation

of the tax and its potential implications, we are unable to provide advice on individual tax circumstances.

You should consider giving someone you trust Power of Attorney to enable them to act on your behalf and deal with all matters concerned with your affairs. You need to arrange this via a solicitor. You should inform your bank that you are going to be away.

You may also have to inform insurance companies, particularly with regard to life, health and home insurance policies. This is particularly important for those who will be wintering.

Voting

There are no arrangements for you to vote in general or local elections whilst you are in Antarctica. If you wish to retain your entitlement to a vote the only way to do so is by arranging a 'proxy' vote before you leave the UK. Please contact your District Council for more information.

IT

Ensure BAS accounts are set up before you depart, this is very hard to do once you're south! The BAS IT department can help with this.

Making a will

It is always prudent in terms of personal affairs to have a will in place. You are strongly advised to make a will if you haven't already done so.

Bad news whilst you are away

You should take the opportunity to discuss with your friends and family the possibility that there may be bad news from home whilst you are in the Antarctic.

Whilst we always consider requests to return home for compassionate reasons it will not always be possible within certain timeframes and should not be relied upon.

Packing for the Antarctic



What NOT to take to Antarctica

- Importation of PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) and pesticides is banned under the Antarctic Treaty. These materials may persist in the Antarctic environment and damage local wildlife
- Do not use polystyrene chips or similar packing for your equipment; these items are also banned under the Treaty system. Wrap fragile items in clothing or newspaper (not shredded)
- Do not bring environmentally-damaging supplies such as plastic confetti, glitter, or harsh glues
- Do not take equipment containing elemental mercury (such as thermometers)
- Do not bring any alcohol or illegal drugs to Antarctica, as this is strictly prohibited under BAS policies. For full details please see the BAS Alcohol & Drug Policy

Importing non-sterile soil and non-native species (such as plants, seeds, bulbs and invertebrates) is strictly banned under the Antarctic Treaty. If you require a non-native species for your scientific research or other work you will need to obtain a permit – contact the BAS Environment Office (environment@bas.ac.uk) for more details.

Non-native species can be introduced inadvertently to Antarctica on visitors' clothing and in their personal belongings. For example, seeds and spores can get trapped on outer clothing and mud can be imported on boots. To reduce the risk of non-native species introduction through BAS activities, the Environment Office has developed the BAS 'Biosecurity Regulations' (accessible via bas.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/BAS-Biosecurity-Regulations.pdf). Please consult this for further biosecurity information.

Individuals shall not import any of the following into South Georgia or Antarctica:

- Any living plant, animal or micro-organism
- Non-sterile soil or compost
- Any plant propagules (e.g. seeds, bulbs, cuttings) or invertebrate eggs (e.g. brine shrimp or sea monkey eggs)
- Untreated wood where bark remains attached
- Any perishable foods including fruit, vegetables, cheese, fish or meat

Please ensure any person that is likely to send gifts or packages to you while in South Georgia or Antarctica is also aware of these restrictions.

Image: Outdoor work clothing is provided by the Clothing Store at BAS Cambridge.

What to take to Antarctica

If you buy anything new to take south, such as a camera or outdoor equipment, you should carry the receipt with you. When you re-import the goods to the UK, the receipt will provide clear evidence that duty has been paid on the goods. There should be no problems re-importing equipment that is clearly well aged.

Antarctic and sub-Antarctic clothing

BAS issues appropriate outdoor and work clothing that is specifically designed for each location, activity and length of tour. A stock of specialist and back up clothing is maintained on each BAS station and vessel.

Clothing is issued from the Clothing Store in Cambridge. You should contact your Line Manager, Principle Investigator or the Clothing Store directly (clothing@bas.ac.uk) to arrange a fitting session well before you deploy to Antarctica.

All BAS-issue clothing remains the property of BAS and must be returned at the end of your Antarctic tour. A kitbag and its contents are tracked via the Bill of Lading (BoL) system and you are accountable for it.

BAS does not supply indoor clothing, so take your own. The ship and stations are warm inside. You will require items such as jeans, tracksuit bottoms, shorts, t-shirts, sweatshirts or similar, as well as nightwear, underwear, indoor socks and shoes (crocs are great!).

You may have some time in the Falkland Islands, Punta Arenas or Cape Town without your kitbag, so you should carry some of your own outdoor clothing such as outdoor shoes or boots, trousers, tops, insulated jacket and waterproof jacket for immediate use. Most stations have semi-formal meals or other events on Saturday nights, so you will need at least one set of reasonably smart clothes.

More information on issued clothing can be found in the clothing catalogue on the BAS Ice Flow (Intranet) or speak to your Station Leaders for more specific information.

Glasses

If you wear glasses, ensure that you take at least one spare pair with you. Leave a copy of your prescription with Human Resources so that replacements could be obtained in an emergency. Contact lenses have the advantage that they do not get steamed up or frozen. Note, those who have had laser eye surgery should take plenty of dry eye drops with them.



Images: Top: BAS issues appropriate outdoor and work clothing that is specifically designed for each location.

Bottom: Gentoo penguins coming ashore at Bird Island, South Georgia.

Packing for the Antarctic *continued*

As part of the clothing issue, BAS will pay an amount towards the purchase of prescription sunglasses if required, please contact the Clothing Store Manager for more information (clothing@bas.ac.uk).

Provision of contact lenses and supplies for them is your own responsibility.

Toiletries

We will supply all items necessary for your safety in the Antarctic. High-factor sun cream and lip salve are freely available on the ship and stations (although you will have to provide your own when you first arrive in the Falkland Islands/ Chile/Cape Town).

General toiletries are supplied on station – these include soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes, floss, razors and shaving foam (but not deodorant, shower gel or conditioner – please avoid aerosol products). On the ship, these items have to be purchased from the ship's Bond.

Personnel should purchase their requirement of sanitary products that they are comfortable with and use regularly. Costs up to £60 can be reclaimed via the expenses system. On station and onboard the SDA advice for using reusable sanitary products including menstrual cups and reusable pads is available – if needed please consult the Station Leader/SDA Purser.

Polar health and hygiene

You will receive information at Pre-Deployment Training about polar health and hygiene and BAS will provide some specific polar hygiene items in your kit bag. Further information can be found in the polar hygiene guide.

Medication

The ship and stations carry stocks of medicines, covering requirements from first aid to emergency treatment. The ship carries various anti-seasickness remedies although it is worth starting a course just prior to the voyage if you are so disposed. The field rations are nutritionally balanced but many people take vitamin supplements when in the field for longer periods.

The stations are well supplied, but do not have the range of medication available in the UK, and are equipped to deal with emergencies, not ongoing problems. If you are taking regular medication of any kind (including contraceptive pills) you will, as far as possible, need to take sufficient quantities for your tour.

Those who suffer from hay fever due to grass pollen occasionally have a strong response during Tussock Grass pollen season. We recommend that you take a reasonable supply of your own preferred anti-hay-fever medication on your trip south if you are being deployed to KEP, Bird Island or Signy.

If your tour is longer, or there are any problems with medication, contact BASMU as soon as possible, and well in advance of your departure date. If you have any concerns at all, please discuss your medication with BASMU well in advance, who will advise or assist in ensuring you have what is needed. To avoid potential problems at Customs, ensure that all medicines are carried in their original containers with labels intact. If you are taking any prescription medicines, or are carrying any controlled drugs, this must be declared on your medical questionnaire and at your medical and should also be advised to the doctor or ship's Master/ Station Leader when you join the BAS ship or station.

Electrical demand

Generating electricity on station is a very fuel-intensive process. We are trying to minimise electrical loads where possible. Please limit any personal electrical equipment you intend to bring to station to minimum. Check with station management or your Line Manager whether what you need is already provided on station. If you need to take a personal electrical equipment with you that is above 2.5kW, then you will need to fill out an [Antarctic Equipment Assessment Form](#) and return it to Pete Smith (petmit@bas.ac.uk) and Nopi Exizidou (pardou@bas.ac.uk) before going south.



Photography

Don't panic about the cold, most modern cameras work perfectly well in Antarctica, but be aware that in the winter, extreme low temperatures will dramatically reduce battery performance, so ensure that you have spares. The camera killer is condensation, so take a plastic bag – more at Pre-Deployment Training.

Don't underestimate the compact camera. It'll often capture those unforgettable moments simply because it's there in your pocket.

A good camera bag and a few cleaning cloths are a sound investment and think about UV filters on all your lenses, if only for protection.

In our world of digital imaging, the one thing people underestimate is just how much storage capacity you need, so take twice as much as you think.

A tip for digital SLR users: never change lenses with the power on – the powered sensor acts like a vacuum cleaner for dust!

One final point, the BAS image collection relies heavily on photos taken by everyone who goes south, so to find out more about submitting your pictures or to just get those questions answered, you can email Pete Bucktrout and Jamie Oliver at creativeservices@bas.ac.uk.



Music, films and books

All stations hold large collections of music, films and books (including e-books). Online access to music streaming platforms cannot be guaranteed, consider saving your music collection for offline listening. Remember to take rechargeable batteries (with a charger) for any portable equipment. Musical instruments are popular and concert nights are sometimes organised. Ask for packing advice if you wish to take musical instruments.

Skis and snowboards

There is a selection of skis available on the larger stations, but you may wish to take your own skis or snowboard. Recommendations vary between stations – you should consult your Station Leader as to local preferences before purchasing new equipment.

Appropriate protective equipment should always be used when skiing or snowboarding, and all skis must have releasable bindings and be set up by a qualified person before use. All downhill snow sports while deployed with BAS require a helmet. These are available on station but you may wish to take your own. Please consult the Operations Group if you intend to hand carry your skis.

Images: Top: A decent camera is certainly recommended and most cope well with the cold.

Bottom: Halley VI Research Station.



For more information, please visit: bas.ac.uk

Packing for the Antarctic *continued*

Other items

The Antarctic is hard on watches. You should take at least two watches – inexpensive digital watches are quite adequate. Spare straps and batteries are also useful. A watch with an alarm is recommended. You may consider taking items such as binoculars, a hair dryer, alarm clock, etc. but avoid power-hungry items as generator capacity on the stations is limited.

Unaccompanied personal belongings

P-Boxes (applies to wintering staff only)

Winterers may consign personal belongings as manifested cargo (that is, cargo officially declared to Customs) on a BAS vessel, for delivery to their wintering station. This cargo will not be available until the ship arrives at your station, which may be some time after your own arrival. It is not accessible whilst onboard ship.

Space on stations is extremely limited – you should therefore give careful thought to your requirements and not pack more equipment than is completely necessary.

All wintering personnel will be issued by Supply Chain Logistics (SCL), a box 75 x 38 x 41 cm in which to pack breakable items and a soft kitbag for clothing. These containers will remain the property of BAS and will be retained when your possessions reach Cambridge at the end of your tour. In addition you may consign a bag containing skis and/or a snowboard.

Personal boxes must NOT contain any perishables, fireworks, aerosols, batteries etc. and liquids such as shower gel or shampoo should be securely sealed in leak-proof packaging. As a guide, any material that has an orange warning label on the original packaging is hazardous and may not be transported.

As the cargo is shipped through the tropics, heat-sensitive material should not be shipped, but rather hand-carried south. Ensure all packed boxes comply with BAS biosecurity requirements (see page 8).

Cargo packing dates vary according to vessel itineraries; Supply Chain Logistics (SCL)

(sclservices@bas.ac.uk) will make contact to advise routings and precise dates.

You should deliver your personal possessions to the BAS SCL warehouse by the date advised by Supply Chain Logistics. **All boxes must be accompanied by a full list of contents and be clearly labelled with your name and station. An electronic copy of the contents will also be required.**

Unmanifested cargo will not be accepted onboard ship.

Scientific cargo

All scientific cargo must be delivered to the SCL warehouse by the published packing date unless specific arrangements have been made in advance with Supply Chain Logistics. All cargo must comply with BAS biosecurity regulations (see page 8).

All cargo must be accompanied by a cargo packing note giving a full description of cargo, including hazard information and stowage conditions if appropriate.

Cargo will not be accessible onboard ship unless it has been exceptionally designated as 'Wanted on Voyage' and approved as such by Operations Supply Chain Logistics in advance.

Scientific cargo is only transported by air to Rothera or Halley on an exceptional basis, and must first be approved by the Operations Teams. You should contact the Operations Manager by the middle of July for authority if you think you might have an exceptional justification to ship cargo by air.

Further details concerning cargo movements are included in the Supply Chain Logistics Shipping Guide and individual station Visitors' Guides.

Northbound cargo

Your Station Leader, or if at Rothera, the Station Logistics Manager, will supply you with more information regarding northbound cargo for return from Antarctica. Essentially the same procedures apply as for southbound cargo. Your possessions should fit into one of the supplied cargo containers as described above.

Travelling to and from Antarctica



How do I get there?

Most people travelling to Antarctica will transit through the Falkland Islands, Punta Arenas, Montevideo or Cape Town (Halley only). These are known as the Gateway Destinations.

BAS organises transport from BAS Cambridge to the departure airport. If you do not wish to use this transport you will need to make your own arrangements to get to the airport; you may then reclaim reasonable expenses incurred depending on your funding arrangements. Please note we cannot refund internal UK flight costs. If you intend to hire a car or drive your own car to the airport you **MUST** contact the POST team before you plan or make your journey to ensure you have completed the UKRI Permit to Drive.

BAS will arrange all of your travel from the UK airport onwards, as well as any accommodation and transfers required during your journey.

What information can I expect to receive from BAS?

Approximately two weeks before your planned departure date you will receive your travel details and confirmations from the Polar Operations Support Team.

This will either be a commercial flight departing from London Heathrow, or an MOD flight departing from RAF Brize Norton, depending on your Gateway Destination.

Alongside information given at PDT, this email will contain important information about any extra travel forms to fill in or requirements that must be met. Please read this email thoroughly, if not all requirements are met then you may have issues whilst travelling.

What facilities are available at the Gateway Destinations?

You will be met at the airport and transferred to your accommodation by one of our in-country agents.

If you are accommodated at any Gateway Destination onboard ship, all your meals will be provided onboard.

Current Gateway information will also be sent out with your travel details two weeks before you depart.

Gateway Destination: The Falkland Islands

The BAS office in Stanley will arrange and pay for your transfers and accommodation in The Falkland Islands.

Your accommodation will be booked on a B&B basis.

Images: Top: RRS Sir David Attenborough during sea trials.

Bottom: The Dash 7 aircraft landing on the blue-ice runway at Sky-Blu Field Station.

 For more information, please visit: bas.ac.uk

Travelling to and from Antarctica *continued*

Reimbursement for lunches and dinners will be based on actual costs. You must keep receipts in order to make a claim. For information on T&S rates please visit: gov.uk/guidance/expenses-rates-for-employees-travelling-outside-the-uk.

Gateway Destination: Punta Arenas

The BAS-appointed agent, Shackleton's Way, will arrange and pay for your transfers and accommodation in Punta Arenas; this is provided on a B&B basis.

Reimbursement for lunches and dinners will be based on actual costs. You must keep receipts in order to make a claim. For information on T&S rates please visit: gov.uk/guidance/expenses-rates-for-employees-travelling-outside-the-uk.

Gateway Destination: Montevideo

The BAS-appointed agent in Montevideo will arrange and pay for your transfers and accommodation if required, provided on a B&B basis. You may be accommodated on RRS *Sir David Attenborough*, where all meals are included.

Gateway Destination: Cape Town

The BAS-appointed agent in Cape Town will arrange and pay for your transfers and accommodation in Cape Town. This will be provided on a full board basis wherever possible.

How will I travel onwards from the Gateway Destination?

You can normally expect at least one night's accommodation at your Gateway Destination before departing for Antarctica. However, due to the unpredictable nature of the weather in Antarctica, last-minute changes can occur.

Those travelling to/from Rothera can be routed either by air or sea. Those travelling to Halley will travel by air. All other BAS personnel will normally travel to/from their Antarctic destination by sea.

If you are travelling by ship on any leg of your journey you will be required to complete a Personal Survival Techniques (SST/STCW'95)

course prior to your departure. You **MUST** carry the original certificate with you onboard.

Travelling home from Antarctica

Your northbound travel arrangements will be distributed by the station/ship at the end of your stay in Antarctica.



Dangerous goods on aircraft

Flying dangerous goods presents a significant risk to the safety of the aircraft and its occupants. As such, BAS complies with international regulations for the carriage of dangerous goods by air. By virtue of what we do and where we operate, BAS needs to fly certain dangerous goods to support its activities. BAS is exempted from some of these international regulations as long as it can safeguard its aircraft. As such, you **must** declare dangerous goods to the pilot before flight.

Lithium-ion batteries

Many of the items that we use today such as mobile phones, laptops, tablets, and other equipment contain lithium batteries; these are known as Portable Electronic Devices (PEDs). However, lithium batteries present a significant danger if they are damaged or malfunction in flight. The thermal runaway process that can occur produces fire and highly-toxic smoke, and is much more difficult to extinguish than conventional material fires.

BAS can transport low-powered (nominally <100Wh) lithium-ion batteries and the equipment that uses them by air but with restrictions, particularly if they are damaged or have malfunctioned. You must not bring damaged lithium batteries or damaged PEDs onboard the aircraft without having discussed this with the aircraft crew in advance, as doing so poses an unacceptable risk to other passengers, the crew and yourself. If you do have damaged devices or batteries, BAS will endeavour to find a suitable method of transport where possible so you do not permanently lose them.

Further guidance on what can be taken onboard BAS aircraft will be provided at Pre-Deployment Training and before you travel.



Image: Routes taken by RRS Sir David Attenborough, BAS aircraft and commercial travel to the Polar Regions.

i For more information, please visit: bas.ac.uk

Living in Antarctica



Living on a ship

You may travel on RRS *Sir David Attenborough* (SDA) either in transit to or from a station, or as part of a science cruise. Shortly after joining the ship, you will be given a briefing on the ship's layout, safety, security and emergency procedures and the plans for the coming work period.

Please read the Information booklet that is in your cabin as soon as you join the ship. This will tell you everything you need to know about safety and the ship's routine.

The Master has overall authority onboard. Any of the ship's crew will be pleased to explain the operation of the ship and the routines. It is possible to visit the Bridge and Engine Room in small groups after first obtaining permission. Otherwise, you must not enter restricted areas. All non-crew members onboard are designated as Special Purpose Personnel (SPP). This means legally you are a mariner, with a job to do on the ship. Therefore whilst in transit, (unless you are currently working on scientific data collection/

support – see Science Cruises) you may be required to provide galley and general assistance.

Someone is always sleeping, so please keep noise to a minimum in accommodation spaces at all times.

Staff should expect to share cabins. You will be expected to keep your own cabin, working and living areas clean and tidy.

Seasickness remedies are available from the ship's doctor. Ask whether any have side effects, e.g. drowsiness, in which case you may be limited in what you do while taking them.

The SDA has a gym and sauna for general use and carries a selection of books and games to pass the time. There is also table football and a dart board. If you are travelling for more than a few days, you are advised to take some leisure items with you, especially your own choice of reading. If you have an electronic book like a Kindle, iPad or laptop, download your books, movies or music before you leave home.

Image: RRS *Sir David Attenborough* in ice, Antarctic Peninsula.

 For more information, please visit: bas.ac.uk

People can get dehydrated on ships; you should drink plenty of water and may wish to take a skin moisturising cream. Soft drinks are available from the ship's bar. The ship's Bond (shop) sells souvenirs using a cashless system. You will not require money whilst onboard.

Science cruises

Science cruises typically last two-to-six weeks. Scientific work on ship during the cruise frequently continues 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week, with personnel working 12-hour shifts. A Principal Scientist (PS) for the cruise will assume responsibility for cruise personnel. He or she will nominate watch leaders for each shift who will co-ordinate requests between the science and ship operations teams.

All personnel must have completed a Personal Survival Techniques (STCW 95/STCW 2010) course to sail on the SDA. You are required to send a copy of the certificate to BAS.

The original certificate must be taken with you to the ship.

BAS Cambridge staff will need to organise this training for themselves, and the Polar Ops Support Team will organise for all AEP staff.

Safety shoes and a helmet must always be worn whilst working on deck. Additional personal protective equipment (PPE) must be worn as appropriate. For health and safety reasons, flip-flops are only permitted for use within cabins.

Ship laboratories are usually shared by different projects. It is important for everyone to be considerate of other users and work in a tidy manner. All laboratory regulations and guidelines apply as they do in the UK. However there are extra risks in ship laboratories and the ship-specific Laboratory Code of Practice and Cruise Risk Assessments should be thoroughly read before undertaking any laboratory work onboard. The Code of Practice and the Risk Assessments for the cruise are available in the ship's laboratories.

Internet

The bandwidth on the SDA is limited, you should not expect to surf the web as you might at home. Ensure you download any necessary updates to computers or personal devices before coming onboard. Do not expect to be able to download large files once onboard. WhatsApp can be accessed onboard the vessel.



Images: Top: Working in a dual-occupancy cabin onboard RRS Sir David Attenborough.

Bottom: RRS Sir David Attenborough getting put through its paces in rough weather.

 For more information, please visit: bas.ac.uk

Living in Antarctica *continued*

Living on stations

Each station has a Station Leader (SL) who is present each summer and has overall authority on the station. Stations occupied during winter have Winter Station Leaders (WSLs).

Accommodation and work routines vary between the BAS stations. When you first arrive on station you will be given an introduction and tour of the facilities. Incoming personnel are provided with training before they are allowed to undertake field activities or use boats or vehicles. This training builds on that received over the preceding summer, including at the Antarctic Pre-Deployment Training Course and/or Winter Teams Training Week.

Most station staff work a routine five or six-day week, with some on structured shifts. However, some teams may work different hours as projects or operations require. There are times, for example when discharging cargo, when personnel may be required to work shifts to ensure efficient operations. However, it is intended that there should be adequate time in each week for personnel to undertake recreational and social activities. It is important that everyone is aware that their leisure hours may not coincide with those of personnel working on other projects. Do not get upset if others are playing whilst you are working.

Staff should expect to share accommodation on stations. If you want to eat vegetarian/vegan but not all the time, ask the chefs if this will be possible. At Rothera and Halley meals are normally provided by professional chefs, but at other stations all personnel take turns to cook.

Vegetarian and vegan food is available on all stations. There are communal tasks to be undertaken at all BAS stations. The tasks differ from station to station, however you will be expected to take part in domestic duties on a rota basis. These tasks include washing up, dealing with waste and general cleaning (especially at the weekly 'scrub-out'). You may also be required to assist in other duties such as station maintenance, cargo handling, staffing of

field huts, acting as night watch and assisting with flying operations. BAS has always believed that everybody who lives on a station should take equal responsibility for its daily maintenance.

In addition, staff can be co-opted into some science support work at some point in their tour. This could include depot work, field flying support, boating/fieldwork support, as well as direct science support tasks.

Each station runs its own bar facilities with a limited supply of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks. The particular system will be explained to you on arrival, but all operate on some variation of either the 'tick sheet' or pre-supply systems, with payment deducted from your personal account. An electronic point-of-sale system is on trial so you should bring a contactless payment card in case your duty station has adopted the terminals. Staff wishing to consume alcohol must comply with the BAS Policy on Alcohol and Drugs and any local station protocols. You must not take personal supplies of alcohol onto stations or the ship.

Other purchases (such as postcards etc.) can also be made through your personal account or contactless payment card. You will not require money on station.

All stations operate a policy of no smoking within station buildings, including vaping. You must only smoke at designated smoking areas.

The ship and stations supply UK-standard 230V 50Hz AC power through standard British three-pin sockets and are equipped with ample computers for personal or work-related use. All stations operate an energy conservation plan to reduce fuel use.

All your electrical equipment must be PAT tested before you use it on station. This can be done on arrival but it will save you time if you get it tested in Cambridge beforehand. The electrician will endeavour to get your equipment back to you as soon as possible but please don't expect an immediate turnaround. If you need to use anything straight away, get it tested before you arrive.



There are washing machines and dryers at the stations. Washing powder is provided. Ensure you wash on eco mode and only run full loads. Combine loads with others if you urgently need only a few items washed

Morale and behaviour of staff

Maintaining morale depends on all team members being considerate, friendly and productive. It is recognised that working and living closely together can be challenging at times but it is important to always interact and behave responsibly, respectfully and professionally. Before deploying you will have been provided with *A UK Polar Community Guide to Inclusive Behaviours* and asked to sign the Code of Conduct outlining expectations. Whilst the majority of staff and visitors have a fantastic experience there can sometimes be conflict or unwelcome behaviour. We encourage everyone to speak up at the earliest opportunity via either line management, HR, the EDI Manager or other contacts provided so that support can be provided and appropriate action taken.

Recreation

There are many opportunities to learn and take part in recreational activities in Antarctica, particularly for those people staying on BAS stations. However, it is important that you understand that BAS has a 24-hours-a-day duty of care towards you whilst you are living in Antarctica. This applies whether you are a member of the BAS staff, a contractor or a visitor from another research centre. Therefore, it is necessary for BAS to take the same approach to recreational activities as it does to the work programme. You will not have the same freedom to go and do whatever you like in your 'time off' as you would in the UK.

We have established sets of regulations and undertaken risk assessments for recreational activities and those wishing to take part must follow these. Most of these are common sense and are no different to the precautions that you would take in the UK. If in any doubt, you should consult your Station Leader who will ensure that you have the advice, information and safety equipment that you require.

If you are passionate about a hobby, consider packing the necessary equipment for it. There is no 'entertainment manager' on the stations – recreational inspiration and organisation, while supported by the Station Leader, comes from within the community.

Images: Top: King Edward Point Research Station, South Georgia, with the abandoned Grytviken whaling station in the foreground.

Bottom: Weather balloon being launched from Rothera Research Station.

 For more information, please visit: bas.ac.uk

Living in Antarctica *continued*

Living in the field

This section is primarily aimed at those personnel who will be living and working off station for extended periods. BAS employs field safety specialists (Field Guides) to ensure that off station activities are carried out safely and efficiently.

The majority of fieldwork is undertaken using tents but small field huts are used at some locations. It may be necessary to share with a member of the opposite sex and if this is likely to cause problems it should be raised in advance.

Food comes in the form of expedition-style rations and these provide around 3,500 kilocalories per person, per day. We can cater for dietary requirements in the field, but it is not always easy. If you are going into the field and have dietary requirements please make it known to Field Operations as soon as possible.

Input into the field is usually by Twin Otter aircraft, but may be by ship for northern peninsula or island projects.

Poor weather can result in several days being spent in the tent, known as 'lie up'. Books, games and media storage devices with speakers/headphones help to pass the time. Charging will generally be using a solar panel or a small generator. Some projects may only be provided with a solar panel for charging comms equipment, so power requirements should be considered in advance of deployment.

Fieldwork advice

- Plans can change at short notice due to weather or operational constraints. The more flexible your approach, the more you will achieve
- Be prepared to use any time of day to get the project completed. Don't waste good weather
- Your Field Guide may rule that travel or work is unsafe at any time. The safety of personnel and equipment will take precedence over project completion

- You may not get on with your work colleagues all of the time. Patience and tolerance are just some of the essential qualities required for living and working in the Antarctic

Communication in the field

Field parties have a daily radio sched back to base using HF (high frequency) radio. Iridium satellite phones are used as a backup to HF radio and for data transfer. HF is the preferred method of communication.

All field parties have internet access via low earth orbit satellite. This allows you to connect personal devices to Wi-Fi and browse the internet and make calls. You can expect to have similar internet speeds to those you have at home, though the hardware may not be switched on all the time and there may be limits on the amount of data available.

Time differences

During the Antarctic summer, Halley and Rothera are three hours behind GMT (as are the Falkland Islands). KEP and Signy are two hours behind and Bird Island is on GMT. Other conventions apply in winter months.

Communications

Post

Each station is able to receive and send normal post during the southern summer. Please note that the opportunities for doing so are infrequent and if you are going to Antarctica for a short time you may get home before the post arrives. Ship's personnel may send post when the ship is in port.

Stations use either British Antarctic Territory or South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands stamps, which are available on station. Post is taken out on the first available ship or aircraft and dispatched, normally through the Falkland Islands. Postal rates for letters, postcards and parcels are available on station.



Anyone with an interest in stamp collecting will have the opportunity to buy the wide selection of stamps and first day covers available at the stations and from the places through which you transit.

Your contacts will be sent ship itineraries and contact addresses to enable them to send mail for personnel onboard or for transfer to stations. All letters and small packages should be sent via airmail. However, the route may be tortuous and post may be delivered out of sequence. Parcels will normally be treated as surface mail and may take many weeks to arrive. If you are deploying to Halley, your post should be sent to BAS Cambridge to be forwarded under BAS arrangements.



Family and Friends Liaison

BAS has a 24-hour responsibility for personnel in the Antarctic. Your contacts can call Human Resources at any time. Outside office hours there is always a member of Human Resources on call via BAS Reception (01223 221400). Both personnel in the Antarctic and their contacts will be dealt with sympathetically and confidentially at all times.

Your contacts' details are taken from your personal details form. Please ensure that you complete all the information that is requested on this form and remember to tell Human Resources if any details change.

Personal accounts

Supplementary material will be given at Pre-Deployment Training.

There are no banking facilities available on the ship or at the stations. Instead, each site has a point-of-sale (POS) till system for any expenditure incurred during your deployment. Please ensure you bring a debit or credit card that will remain valid for the duration of your deployment, as this will be required for any purchases you make.

Images: Top: BAS Twin Otter aircraft at a remote Antarctic field depot.

Bottom: Signy Research Station, Signy Island.

 For more information, please visit: bas.ac.uk

Health and safety and medical issues

Safety Together

physical safety mental health social wellbeing

Your health and safety

Safety Together. Putting people and prevention at the heart of our safety culture.

Your safety is our first priority. We are committed to providing you with a safe and healthy stay in Antarctica. We are working to make sure we have the right work conditions and environment to foster a safe culture and build resilience as we know that our working conditions directly impact our mental health, and when this is not good it can lead to human error and accidents. We do this with continual learning, a focus on prevention and constant improvements for all aspects of the way we work.

We want people to feel empowered to speak up and take action to protect themselves and their colleagues when something is unsafe or if you require support for your mental health, and encourage positive behaviour for a healthier and safer workplace.

What do we need from you?

BAS needs you to take a positive and proactive attitude to your and your colleagues' health, safety and wellbeing. We need you to understand your responsibilities and how to work professionally and to your best ability at all times. To act in a manner that ensures the continued health and safety of yourself and others.

BAS has a 24/7 duty of care when you are deployed south, as a result safety goes beyond the normal workplace limits and includes all recreational activities. Key messages to take south with you:

- Be an effective team member
- Be self-disciplined, work within accepted limits and procedures
- Be adaptable to changing circumstances
- Be vigilant for your own safety and wellbeing and that of others, speak up if concerned
- Be mindful, recognise your own abilities and limitations

- Take responsibility for your personal health, e.g. wear sun cream, take regular exercise and use the recreational opportunities available, drink responsibly and never whilst on duty
- Report all injuries and near misses to the BAS reporting system, and anything you feel is unsafe to your supervisor or Station Leader
- Look after your colleagues, be a buddy and keep a look out for them. Mental health and safety is especially essential in Antarctica

A few key terms and definitions in BAS Safety Management

Risk Assessment

A management tool and method of identifying hazards, quantifying risks, planning control measures and setting actions for improvement to reduce the likelihood and severity of harm to people or infrastructure.

Safe Operating Procedures (SOP)

A formally-documented step-by-step guide to ensure more complex work activities are carried out safely and efficiently.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Assessment

A risk assessment to control substances which are hazardous to health, to reduce risk of harm to as low as reasonably practicable. Typical controls are substituting the substance for something less hazardous, isolating the hazard, using fume cupboards, practicing good hygiene, training, instructions and then PPE.

Maximo Incident Reporting System

The BAS online incident reporting tool. All staff, collaborators and visitors are required to report injuries, near misses, unsafe conditions, loss of control events and environmental incidents. You will find the BAS Maximo Incident Reporting system on the BAS Ice Flow (Intranet) or you can report using an observation card (speak to your Station Leader for guidance).

Health & Safety online

You will find current BAS-wide health and safety information on the BAS Intranet (Ice Flow) and

the Maximo procedures database. You can ask to update information or make suggestions via the Maximo change request module.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE is equipment you wear to protect your eyes, head, ears, hands, body, feet and respiratory system from harm. It serves as the last line of defence when engineering or administrative controls are insufficient to reduce or eliminate risks. For BAS, this also includes polar clothing.

Training

All personnel travelling south require training in order to work safely. You **MUST** attend the appropriate Antarctic Pre-Deployment Training Course and first-aid training.

Job-specific training may take place as soon as your contract starts, prior to PDT and after. You may also be required to undertake further training, onboard ship or at the station.

Training is an ongoing process, even for those with extensive polar experience. Repeating courses or undertaking refresher training is all part of the training schedule to ensure all persons are kept up-to-date and maintain skills.

Medical cover

In order to provide a high standard of medical care for people in the Antarctic, BASMU deploy doctors and military medical staff to Antarctica. Where BASMU staff are not deployed on station some team members train to an advanced first aid standard. RRS SDA, Rothera, KEP and Halley all have small surgeries from which medical support is provided. A military medic will be serving at Signy for the 2025/26 season.

All stations have extensive first aid/medical supplies and are supported through 24/7 cover via telemedicine link.

The medical service in the Antarctic is limited by the availability of staff and facilities. The doctors undergo extensive special training before deployment, but there are no specialist hospital facilities or Intensive Care Units, and only limited surgical facilities. Circumstances may arise where conditions cannot be treated on station.

Evacuation will be undertaken where possible, but this will be dependent upon the time of year, weather and logistic capability.

Personal health

Antarctica is, in general, a clean, healthy environment. However, the prevailing conditions do expose personnel to a number of hazards with which they may not be familiar. These can lead to medical problems, but are avoidable if proper precautions are taken. They include:

- Hypothermia
- Non-freezing cold injury
- Sunburn and snow blindness
- Dehydration
- Carbon monoxide poisoning

Information on the above, and other conditions, will be available in the BASMU first aid manual.

Wellbeing support

During your deployment, it is completely normal to find adapting to station or ship life challenging, or to experience lows. It is important to share concerns and look out for each other. In addition to more experienced colleagues on station, we offer specific welfare support via the Health & Wellbeing Manager (Cambridge-based) or Mental Health First Aiders based on stations, the ship and in Cambridge. These services are completely confidential; they are trained to listen, aim to understand the concern from your perspective and signpost you to further support. They do not give advice, impose opinions, or tell you what to do. Staff also have access to counselling and 24/7 in-the-moment support through our Employee Assistance Programme, PAM Assist.

Gemma Douglas (Health & Wellbeing Manager)
gemas@bas.ac.uk or 07709 72995.

PAM Assist: download app; Helpline (0800 882 4102); web portal (pam-assist.co.uk), use organisational code UKRI.

A full list of Welfare Support Services can be found on the station or the ship's intranet.

For emergencies contact your Station Leader, Master or BAS HR-on-call via British Antarctic Survey Reception on 01223 221400.

Environmental Code of Conduct

BAS works in accordance with the Environmental Protocol, the UK Antarctic Act and equivalent Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands legislation, setting environmental policy and working with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office to lead on Antarctic environmental affairs. The Protocol requires all activities to be planned and conducted to limit adverse environmental impacts. BAS is committed to environmental stewardship of the Polar Regions.

Environmental Strategy objectives

- To lead on Antarctic environmental affairs by shaping Antarctic environmental policy
- To continually improve our environmental performance
- To conserve biodiversity, science, and heritage values
- To exceed compliance and drive best practice

Before departure:

- Ensure any cargo you are consigning for shipment is biosecure, i.e. free of soil, plant material, and invertebrates. Biosecurity kitbags are held by each BAS science group and there are three biosecurity stations across BAS Cambridge. Supply Chain Logistics reserves the right to reject any cargo put forward for consignment that is not biosecure
- Attend the Pre-Deployment Environmental Briefings
- Ensure your clothes, footwear, and other personal belongings are biosecure before leaving. Clothing, equipment and luggage may be inspected upon arrival
- Take only environmentally benign toiletries – no microplastics in scrubs or toothpastes, no harsh chemicals, and avoid aerosols. Do not allow any harsh substances, including chemicals or oils, to enter drainage systems, including toilets or sinks, as they will harm sewage treatment plant microbes where they exist and directly harm the nearshore environment where sewage treatment is minimal

- Remove as much packaging as possible prior to departure e.g. cardboard on toiletries
- Do not bring/use non-essential personal electrical equipment, if you need to bring any equipment that is above 2.5W you must fill out the [Antarctic Station Electrical Equipment Assessment form](#). Where practicable, use rechargeable batteries
- Inform all persons likely to send gifts or packages to you of all restrictions as outlined in this code

Do not pack any prohibited and restricted items (including but not limited to)

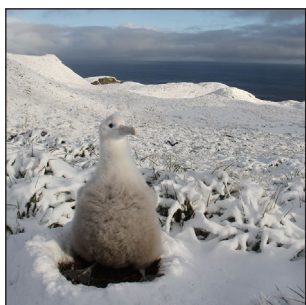
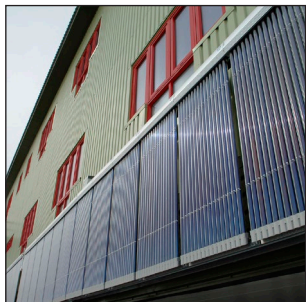
- Polystyrene chips, plastic confetti, or similar packaging
- Environmentally-damaging supplies such as glitter and harsh glues
- Elemental mercury
- Any living plant, animal, micro-organism, or soil
- Untreated wood
- Perishable foods including fruit, vegetables, cheese, fish, or meat
- Personal drones

Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and permits

Activities are only conducted in Antarctica and South Georgia after an EIA has been undertaken to assess the possible environmental impacts. Some activities may also require a permit before they are allowed to proceed. Project/science leads must ensure all members of their team are aware of the agreed mitigations in the EIA and conditions of any permits.

In Antarctica/South Georgia

- Follow the requirements of any EIA or conditions of any permit for your projects
- Do not enter protected areas unless you have a permit. Prior to entry you must familiarise yourself (and your team) with the management plan and pay particular attention to the conditions of your permit and the mitigations in your EIA



- Do not flush anything (other than pee, poo, and small amounts of loo roll) down the toilets
- Minimise the waste you produce and ensure waste is segregated and disposed of properly. You will be given further direction on arrival
- Do not litter; including tea bags, cigarette ends, or food scraps either on land or overboard
- Do not pollute lakes or water courses (this includes urinating!)
- Eradicate and report any non-native species found such as rats or flies
- Biosecure equipment and clothing when travelling between biologically-distinct regions or between different colonies of wildlife to prevent transfer of non-native species and disease
- Use the bootwash facilities provided on stations and ships
- Do not remove, destroy or damage Historic Sites or Monuments or the artefacts within or around them
- Do not build cairns
- Do not paint or engrave names or graffiti on rocks, buildings, or other structures
- Secure your equipment, stores, and wastes to prevent damage/loss to the environment from high winds
- Chin straps on hard hats/helmets must be worn where loss to the environment could occur; including in or around the marine environment or on terrain where any potential losses may not be recoverable
- Manage fuels and hazardous chemicals to prevent leaks or spills, ensure containers are in good condition and free from rust. Avoid refuelling in strong winds, utilise drip trays or plant nappies and ensure spill absorbents are close to hand
- If involved in refuelling, follow established procedures and never leave refuelling unattended
- Remove everything you take into the field unless authorised not to by the Environment Office
- Open burning or dumping of waste is prohibited. All waste (except sewage/some food waste) is removed from Antarctica and South Georgia

Minimise disturbance to wildlife and vegetation

- Do not feed, handle, or disturb birds or seals, or approach too closely for photographs (stay at least 5m from wildlife). Walk slowly around them and stay quiet

Images: Top: Solar panels on New Bransfield House at Rothera Research Station, Antarctica.

Bottom: A wandering albatross chick waits on its nest on Bird Island, South Georgia.

 For more information, please visit: bas.ac.uk

Environmental Code of Conduct *continued*

- Do not use vehicles, boats, or aircraft in any way that will disturb wildlife
- No 'recreational' sampling. Do not collect samples of biological or geological origin (including plants, eggs, bones, antlers, rocks, meteorites, fossils) unless you have been granted a permit to do so for scientific purposes
- When walking, use established routes where possible
- Do not walk or drive over extensive areas of moss or lichen
- Prevent light pollution – switch off external lights and close blinds

Minimise resource use

Energy production requires the use of fuel with related carbon emissions and other environmental impacts.

Fresh water production, hot water generation, and waste water treatment are a significant use of energy. To reduce this:

Switch off all energy-using devices when not in use including lighting, computers, and other equipment

- Switch off all heaters when not in use and use the radiator valves to control the temperature of the room you are in. A recommended bedroom temperature is 18°C while a recommended living room temperature is 20°C. Make sure the radiators and radiator valves are not blocked or covered by furniture or clothes
- Remember to turn down the radiator valve when leaving the room or off completely when opening the window
- Only take brief showers (3 to 4 minutes)
- Don't leave taps running
- Only wash full loads of clothing and use tumble dryers only when necessary, i.e. when no drying space is available

- Please report any leaks you see, no matter how small
- Walk! Avoid unnecessary journeys in vehicles (ski-doo's and gators)

Incident reporting

- Report all environmental incidents ASAP (and within 24 hours) either to management or on Maximo
- Example incidents include but are not limited to: finding of non-native species, oil/chemical spills, bird strikes, deviation from EIA, wildlife incidents, or losses of equipment

Additional resources

- Guide to Going South
- [Waste Management Handbook](#) (LND-AL-GUI-ENV-1486 or SEA-SD-ECO-GEN-01)
- [BAS Biosecurity Regulations](#) (LND-AL-REG-ENV-1525 or SEA-SD-ECO-ANX-02)
- [Environmental Incidents What to Report](#) (LND-AL-GUI-ENV-1500)
- [Antarctic wildlife](#) – information you need to know
- Wildlife Interaction Manual (LND-AL-GUI-ENV-1494 or SEA-SD-ECO-ANX-04)
- Environment Office [Ice Flow pages](#)

For more information please contact the BAS Environment Office at environment@bas.ac.uk.

Communications and media

BAS knows that media and social media have a big impact on how people see science, and the Communications Team are there to help everyone handle media and social media interactions. If any journalists or influencers reach out to you directly, then please point them to the BAS Press Office.

If you need to do any media interviews, whether it's TV, radio, print or online, the Press Office will help you prepare and give you the necessary info. You can reach them at press@bas.ac.uk.

BAS also has an education programme, and we're keen to work with you to support schools or educational activities. It's a good idea to get in touch with the Communications Team at schools@bas.ac.uk. Communications Officer Heather Adland is the main contact for that. We sometimes get asked for volunteers too, so when that happens, we will do a shout out via the Station Leaders.

Sharing your stories, experiences and images

We know that when you are south there are lots of opportunities to keep in touch with friends and family and wider networks and communities with your experiences. We love this type of content and would really appreciate it if you could share some of your blogs, pics and experiences with us. If you do send us any pics, you own the copyright, but we would like a rights agreement with you to allow us to share, and credit you, in our comms activity.

Sponsorship and endorsement

One thing to be careful about is sponsorship and product endorsement. As a taxpayer-funded organisation, we are bound by Government rules and must comply with Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. So, always talk to your Line Manager and the Communications Team before going ahead with any sponsorships or offering PR opportunities, e.g. like being asked to take a picture of yourself wearing or using a product supplied for free by a third party.

Social media – be aware!

Lastly, if you're using personal social media accounts to share your work experiences, remember some important principles. Don't share confidential, sensitive, or privileged information about BAS or its projects. Always comply with policies and guidelines – especially around health and safety and animal handling, and if the media contact you about a social media post, contact the BAS Press Office for guidance. If in doubt, please ask us.

Top 10 compliance principles

1. **Confidential work-related information** – ensure that no information is made available that could provide a person with unauthorised access to BAS/UKRI-NERC
2. **Privileged information or confidential material** – posting of this type of content is not acceptable. For example, scientific conclusions that have not yet been peer-reviewed, details of operational activities/incidents, medical evacuations, content captured using BAS equipment
3. **Sensitive corporate/operational/commercial information** – posting of this type of content is not acceptable. For example, images of people working with animals that could be misinterpreted as being unethical, major infrastructure projects that could be misinterpreted as being environmentally damaging. If you are not sure, check with BAS Communications Team
4. **Local policies/guidance** – always comply with UKRI-NERC and BAS policies, as well as national and international legislation
5. **Major science or modernisation projects** – are frequently the subject of a collaborative media campaigns that have key communication milestones and messages. Do not post images of these types of projects without first checking with the BAS Communications Team

Communications and media *continued*

6. **BAS's computing facilities/photographic equipment** – must not be used to distribute material which might reasonably cause offence or which would be considered socially unacceptable or embarrassing to others
 7. **Speaking on behalf of the organisation** – unless authorised to do so, staff must not give the impression that they are speaking on behalf of the organisation in personal blogs/social media posts. You should make it clear that your views are personal. Phrases such as "I am a member of staff of... but I am expressing my own personal views" should be used
 8. **Complaints** – complaining about your employer or colleagues through blogs, websites or social media is not an appropriate way to comment on organisational policy (if you have a grievance or complaint you should contact your Line Manager or HR)
 9. **Media** – if media/influencers contact you about a post get in touch with the BAS Press Office immediately. We will provide you with guidance, support and, if appropriate, give you authorisation to respond
 10. **Accuracy** – Check the accuracy and sensitivity of your social media posts
- holder in a caption if you post a photo/video taken by others
3. **Music** – avoid breaching copyright law by using royalty-free music or obtaining a license. There are plenty of online sites where you can obtain royalty-free music
 4. **Scientific results** – avoid scientific statements that pre-empt peer review. Where appropriate report scientific activities in terms of what was done, and what the aims were, but avoid speculation about likely conclusions
 5. **Working with animals** – be sensible, do not post images showing people posing too close to animals, or apparently causing distress to animals
 6. **Safety** – we seek to promote BAS as a safe operator wherever we are working. Please avoid images that imply, or could be perceived as implying, unsafe practices (e.g. foreshortened images that appear to show people without appropriate protection close to cliffs)

Top six best practice tips to remember

1. **Manage your privacy settings** – without these, more than your family and friends can see your personal social media posts. Journalists and 'news aggregator' sites regularly trawl official and personal social media posts (especially X/Twitter) looking for stories
2. **Photo and video content** – great photos can add enormously to your story, but remember you must obtain permission to use images of people appearing in photos or video before posting. Credit the copyright

Human Resources policies



BAS, NERC and UKRI have a series of policies that apply to the conduct of its staff. Whilst they are aimed directly at UKRI employees, they may also be taken to apply in spirit to contractors and visitors. Any person in serious breach of regulations will be removed from the Antarctic at the first opportunity, regardless of their affiliation, and the particulars handed on to their own employers for consideration.

These policies are detailed in UKRI Policy Notices on the BAS and UKRI intranet pages and are available on the ship and at the stations or from Human Resources in Cambridge. Before leaving, make sure you familiarise yourself with the following policies:

- BAS Alcohol and Drugs Policy
- UKRI Health Promotion Policy
- UKRI and BAS Code of Conduct Policy
- UKRI Grievance, Harassment and Bullying Policy
- UKRI EDI Policy
- UKRI Managing Performance and Conduct Policy

Station Leaders and Masters are sworn in as magistrates for British Antarctic Territory (BAT). They also have ultimate responsibility and authority for all activities within their facility and associated areas. All personnel should be aware that whilst they are territorially outside the UK, UK law applies unless a specific alternative BAT statute is in force. Personnel may be prosecuted for any breach of the law as if they were in the UK and either extradited or referred to a higher court for trial.



Images: Top: A meeting on the wharf at King Edward Point Research Station.

Bottom: Emperor penguin and chick on sea ice by the Brunt Ice Shelf.

 For more information, please visit: bas.ac.uk

Further information

The **BAS public website** offers a wide range of information on BAS activities and science. BAS staff both at Cambridge and on the ship and stations have access to Ice Flow (the BAS Intranet), which holds much practical guidance and links to the websites of BAS groups, services and resources.

Public site: bas.ac.uk

Ice Flow: bas.ac.uk/iceflow

Details about the BAS science strategy 'Polar Science for a Sustainable Planet' can be found on the BAS website (bas.ac.uk/sciencestrategy).

BAS publications: bas.ac.uk/data/our-data/our-publications

The **BAS Library** forms part of the joint NERC Library Service, which includes the British Geological Survey. The focus of the BAS collection is primarily scientific but includes general polar interest material. As well as the physical library at Cambridge, there are small collections on ship/stations, as well as e-journals and online resources. Information on access can be found in the library section of Ice Flow. Email enquiries and requests to baslib@bas.ac.uk, and search the joint library catalogue at: <https://ukrinerc.on.worldcat.org/discovery>.

The **BAS Archives Service** preserves and makes accessible records created by BAS from the 1940s to the present day relating to our scientific, logistic and administrative activities. These support the scientific research needs of the organisation and contain information valuable to carrying out our current activities. The Archives database is not currently available online, but can be accessed in the Archives Office, rooms 206-207. Archives staff can also provide information from the database remotely. Enquiries can be sent to: basarchives@bas.ac.uk. The Archives Service is also responsible for records management within BAS, including implementing the UKRI Records Management Policy, with the aim of ensuring effective storage, retrieval and disposal of both electronic and

physical business records. The Archive Manager is the BAS Freedom of Information Officer and BAS Data Protection Lead.

The **Polar Data Centre** (PDC) is the UK National Antarctic Data Centre and is responsible for the long-term management of UK polar data and making it available for reuse. Additionally, the PDC can support scientists in ensuring the secure transport of data from the Antarctic to backed-up storage at BAS Cambridge. By making data FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable), the PDC helps UK polar scientists comply with NERC data policy and Antarctic Treaty data obligations. Please contact us using PDCServiceDesk@bas.ac.uk.

BAS also holds collections of rocks, fossils, plants and zoological specimens. Please contact us if you are collecting new specimens that need long-term management.

Data and collections: bas.ac.uk/data/our-data

The **Mapping and Geographic Information Centre** (MAGIC) provides maps and other geospatial and remote sensing information to BAS staff and others working south with BAS.

Maps of the areas you will travel to are provided at Pre-Deployment Training. Details about published maps and online GIS resources are available at: <https://www.bas.ac.uk/polar-capabilities/mapping>.

Specific maps and geospatial data for fieldwork deployment and travel are coordinated through the Field Operations planning process.

Geospatial and remote-sensing support for science projects can be requested through the MAGIC Helpdesk (for BAS staff), and magic@bas.ac.uk for external collaborators.

MAGIC also hosts the Antarctic Place-names Committee. Access to place-names through a web-map and information on how to propose new names to support your work are available at: apc.antarctica.ac.uk.



The Information, Communications and Technology (ICT) group provides the computing and communications infrastructure for BAS; their wiki site provides essential information for new starters.

ICT wiki: <https://ictdocs.nerc-bas.ac.uk>



Images: Top: Elephant seals on South Georgia.

Bottom: Diving operations in the waters around Rothera Research Station.

 For more information, please visit: bas.ac.uk

We welcome your feedback and comments on this document. These should be addressed to:

BAS Operations

British Antarctic Survey
High Cross, Madingley Road
Cambridge, CB3 0ET, UK

Email: micak@bas.ac.uk

For further information about BAS, please visit:

bas.ac.uk

Contact information

This page can be cut out and given to family or friends

Email

Email is the best and most reliable way to contact your friends and family working for the British Antarctic Survey (BAS).

All BAS staff will get a BAS email account. Your contact should be able to provide you with this once they arrive on station. Most people have their own personal email address and this will also work but we would encourage you to use their BAS email address. Please do not send large email files as this can clog up the network.

Non-BAS staff will not be given a BAS account, and will need to use a web-based personal email account.

Phone

Your friends and family will be able to call you at the station or vessel you are working on, this will be a Cambridge number and they will be charged at a local call rate.

Mail

Mail for the Antarctic stations (Rothera, Halley, Bird Island and Signy) is only delivered during the Antarctic summer; between November and April. King Edward Point (KEP) can have mail delivered throughout the year but in the Antarctic winter deliveries will be very sporadic.

Ship itineraries will let you know when the ship is due to leave port or call en route to the stations. Links to the latest itineraries can be found on the ship pages of the BAS website: bas.ac.uk/sda

BAS recommends that you direct all mail to the Antarctic through the Falkland Islands using the following address:

Name and Station/Vessel
British Antarctic Survey
Stanley
Falkland Islands
FIQQ 1ZZ
South Atlantic

Christmas mail

Islands – Christmas mail for King Edward Point, Signy and Bird Island will not arrive in time for Christmas. If you would like to have cards or gifts from friends and family with you on Christmas Day, you should carry these items with you in your luggage.

Rothera – any mail intended to reach Rothera before Christmas 2026 must arrive in the Falkland Islands by the end of November at the latest. To guarantee that gifts and cards are with you on Christmas Day, we recommend carrying them in your personal luggage when traveling.

Mail for wintering staff

Any mail intended to reach Bird Island before winter must arrive in the Falkland Islands by mid-March at the latest. For Rothera, items should be in the Falkland Islands by early May to ensure delivery before winter.

King Edward Point (KEP) receives vessel calls more frequently throughout the year, so there is no specific deadline for mail being sent to wintering staff at this station.

What NOT to send to Antarctica

- Polystyrene chips, plastic confetti (or glitter) or similar packaging
- Any perishable foods including fruit, vegetables, cheese, fish or meat
- Any living plant, animal or micro-organism
- Non-sterile soil or compost
- Non-native species/seeds/bulbs/cuttings
- Untreated wood where bark remains attached
- Aerosols, environmentally damaging substances, or anything that contains microplastics, i.e. as toiletries or craft supplies

Human Resources Support

At whatever hour in any situation of domestic crisis or other emergency, do not hesitate to contact any member of the Human Resources team.

This can be done both during and outside office hours by dialling British Antarctic Survey Reception on 01223 221400. A member of the HR team is on call 24/7, 365-days-a-year. Arrangements can be made for messages to be passed quickly over our communication systems with the stations and ship.



**British
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NATURAL ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH COUNCIL



BAS offices and research stations

NERC Arctic Research Station, Ny-Ålesund

BAS Cambridge



BAS Stanley Office

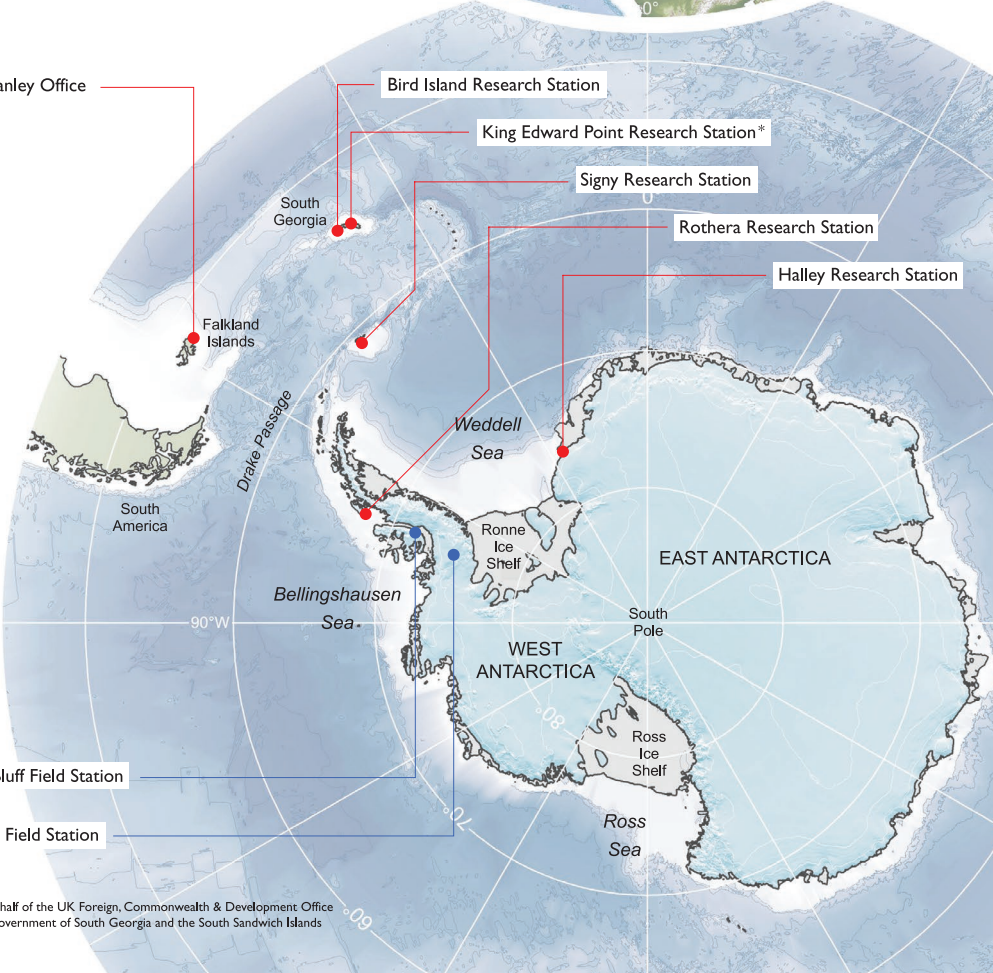
Bird Island Research Station

King Edward Point Research Station*

Signy Research Station

Rothera Research Station

Halley Research Station



Fossil Bluff Field Station

Sky-Blu Field Station

* Run on behalf of the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office and the Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands



British Antarctic Survey (BAS) delivers world-leading interdisciplinary research in the polar regions, advancing understanding of Earth systems and humanity's impact on them.

Based in Cambridge, Antarctica and the Arctic, BAS scientists and support staff collaborate on research into climate change, polar oceans, land and sea ice, ecosystems, the atmosphere and space weather. BAS provides essential operational support for the UK's presence in Antarctica.

Working with partners including the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, Ministry of Defence and the Department for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade, BAS combines science, logistics and innovation to address challenges and inform policy that impacts society around the world.

BAS is a world-leader in polar science and logistics and is partner of choice in many international collaborations for ambitious, large-scale polar projects.

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