

## Australian Antarctic exploration and research

### Exploration of the Australian Antarctic Territory

Australia's involvement in Antarctic exploration dates from the 1911–14 Australasian Antarctic Expedition (AAE) led by Douglas Mawson, the first Australian-led expedition. This was followed by the British Australia New Zealand Antarctic Research Expedition (BANZARE) of 1929–31.

Mawson claimed British sovereignty over Antarctic territories in 1930 and 1931. The consequent *Australian Antarctic Territory Acceptance Act 1933* came into effect from 24 August 1936, and established the area we now know as the Australian Antarctic Territory. The Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions (ANARE) established a sub-Antarctic station at Heard Island in 1947, and Macquarie Island in 1948. Mawson Station, on the Antarctic continent, was established in 1954.

### Antarctic research

Research by ANARE began in 1947 into areas such as Antarctic weather, upper atmosphere physics and glaciology. International cooperation on scientific research in Antarctica during the International Geophysical Year (IGY) of 1957 led to the 1959 Antarctic Treaty. The treaty provided for complete freedom of scientific research in Antarctica, for conservation of wildlife and the prohibition of military activity, nuclear testing and disposal of radioactive waste.

Today the Australian Antarctic Division carries out research into physical and life sciences in the atmospheric, terrestrial and marine domains, as well as human biology and medical research. It is also responsible for ongoing observational activities, including meteorology, seismic, magnetic and GPS networks, charting and mapping.

### The Australian Antarctic Division

The principal agency with responsibility for the Commonwealth Government's Antarctic initiatives – the Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) – began as a section within the Department of External Affairs in May 1948. Upgraded to a division within a month, it remained within External Affairs until 1968. Since then it has been located within departments responsible for science/environment functions. The AAD head office has been in Hobart since 1981. The AAD has worked in collaboration with a range of agencies including the Bureau of Mineral Resources, Geology and

Geophysics; the former Division of National Mapping; Bureau of Meteorology; CSIRO; Department of Air; and the Army.

## Records relating to Antarctic exploration and research

Records relating to Antarctic exploration and research include those of Antarctic agencies, such as the AAD, or agencies that have continued to have a role in Antarctic policy issues or in operational support to the AAD. Examples of some of the most significant records are listed below.

### BANZARE (CA 2995)

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Photographs</u>	1930	A2442
<u>Proclamations issued by Sir Douglas Mawson</u>	1930–31	B1759

### Australian Antarctic Division (CA 1873)

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Video tapes of early Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions (ANARE)</u>	1935–85	P2731
<u>Station reports and log books (includes photographs)</u>	1947–	P1556
<u>Antarctic voyage report (includes photographs)</u>	1947–	P1557
<u>Database content of 16mm film of early ANARE</u>	1947–80	P2729
<u>Original films of early Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions (ANARE)</u>	1947–81	P2677
<u>Inventories of Antarctic stations</u>	1949–82	P1691
<u>Correspondence files</u>	1951–63	P1469
<u>Correspondence files</u>	1963–72	B1370

## Records of other Australian government agencies

### Governor-General (CA 1)

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>General correspondence</u>	1912–27	A11804

### Postmaster-General's Department (CA 9)

Title or description of record	Date range	Series, item number
<u>Telegram accounts of the Mawson Antarctic Expedition</u>	1913–15	MP341/1, 1915/2307

## Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)

Title or description of record	Date range	Series, item number
<u>Radio Research Board – societies and institutions – Australian National Committee Antarctic Research (ANCAR)</u>	1958–63	A9873, 21
<u>Correspondence files</u>	1934–50	A461
<u>Miscellaneous records – BANZARE expeditions</u>	1950–71	AA1972/341
<u>International Geophysical Year – policy</u>	1957	A1209, 1957/4941

## Department of External Affairs (CA 18)

Title or description of record	Date range	Series, item number
<u>Australian Antarctic Expedition – Dr Douglas Mawson</u>	1911–14	A1, 1915/5159
<u>Correspondence files</u>	1927–42	A981
<u>Antarctic maps and plans</u>	1929–39	AA1964/7
<u>Antarctica – International Geophysical Year – general</u>	1955–57	A1838, 1495/1/9/1 part 1
<u>Executive Planning Committee – ANARE</u>	1958–59	A1838, 1271/9
<u>Conference on the Antarctic, Washington, 15 October 1959</u>	1959	A10728

## Department of Air, Central Office (CA 35)

Title or description of record	Date range	Series, item number
<u>Australian Antarctic Territory – exploration and exploitation of resources</u>	1946–48	A1196, 13/501/92 part 1
<u>Australian Antarctic Territory – exploration and exploitation of resources</u>	1948–52	A1196, 13/501/92 part 2
<u>Australian Antarctic Territory – exploration and exploitation of resources</u>	1952–55	A1196, 13/501/92 part 3
<u>Equipment for Antarctic Flight – supply and demand</u>	1955–56	A11301, 2001/1/EQ

## The Rt Hon Richard Gardiner Casey (CP 24)

Title or description of record	Date range	Series, item number
<u>Ministerial correspondence files</u>	1952–55	A10299
<u>Mawson, Sir Douglas (geologist, Antarctic explorer and academic)</u>	1953–75	M1129, MAWSON/D

## Charles Francis Laseron (CP 160)

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Photographs relating to Mawson Antarctic Expedition</u>	1911–14	M583
<u>Photographic plates of Mawson Antarctic Expedition</u>	1911–14	M584

## **For more information**

To locate additional records and photographs of Australia's activities in Antarctica, [search the collection](#) using keyword terms such as 'Antarctic', 'Antarctica', 'ANARE', and 'BANZARE'.