

Meet Cliffy McAuliffe

What do you do?

I'm the Station Supply Officer for Casey Station in Antarctica. In a nutshell I run and manage the warehouse, called the "Green Store" - because it's a big green building! We keep all of our food, day-to-day supplies and trades equipment in there. I'm also responsible for all goods travelling from Casey Station to Australia or Casey Station to another station in Antarctica. I make sure they are prepared, manifested and correctly packaged, and that they make their way onto the ship/plane. I also make sure that the station and its people have everything they need; from toothbrushes, the kitchen shopping order or helping the trades team look for a certain part in our warehouse.

How did you get into that job?

My journey to Antarctica started while I was in the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). I got the opportunity to come to Casey Station to prepare and pack cargo for RAAF's Heavy Airlift capability, the C17A Globemaster. My job with the RAAF required a small team to live and work on station for a couple of weeks while we prepared the cargo to travel back to Australia. This opportunity allowed me to gain a glimpse into station life and also meant that I got to work directly with the Station Supply Officers who were on station. Once home, I could not shake the feeling that I wanted to go back to Antarctica. I got in contact with the Station Supply Officers I worked with and asked as many questions as I could, then applied for the role.



What do you love about your job?

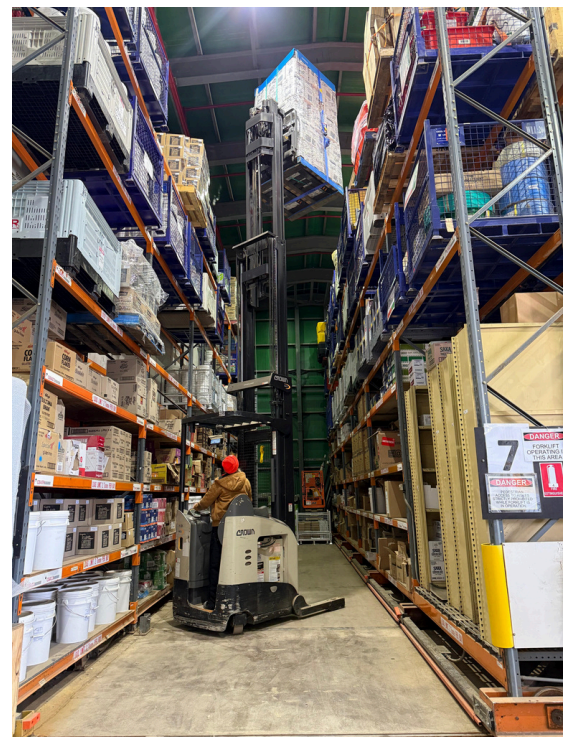
My favourite part about my job is working with everyone on station and that no two days are ever the same. Because the Green Store is where everyone keeps things, I get to spend my days assisting and chatting with every work group. One day, I might be helping the mechanics get a part out of their section, the next, I might be organising food for the kitchen delivery. Another day, I might be talking to a scientist about moving samples they have collected back to Australia and how we are going to successfully make sure they arrive.



How does your job help people/the community/the world?

My job is central to the community on station. We are the Bunnings, the grocery store, and the special parts store for the whole station. Having a good system and knowledge of where items are assists the whole station in getting the job done quickly and efficiently.

I also play an important role when the station prepares for the yearly resupply. The RSV Nuyina arrives with all of our food and stocks for the year, and without an accurate stocktake of all items in the Green Store, there is a risk that the station could run out of something vital for its operation.



A Station Supply Officer also ensures the continuation of science projects at Casey Station. We are directly responsible for the packaging and movement of samples taken on the continent for transport back to Australia. This year our team was responsible for the movement of 47 boxes of ice cores from the Million Year Ice Core Project, which seeks to understand the climate dating back a million years through the analysis of ice cores collected at Australia's deep field station – Dome C. If these are not processed and handled correctly the ice cores have the potential to melt or be damaged during transport, resulting in the project losing an entire season of important data. Additionally, we also make sure that all the scientific teams are able to move their scientific equipment and instruments between Australia and Antarctica safely, which can be a big job when they have large amount of kit.



What are two things you're not good at?

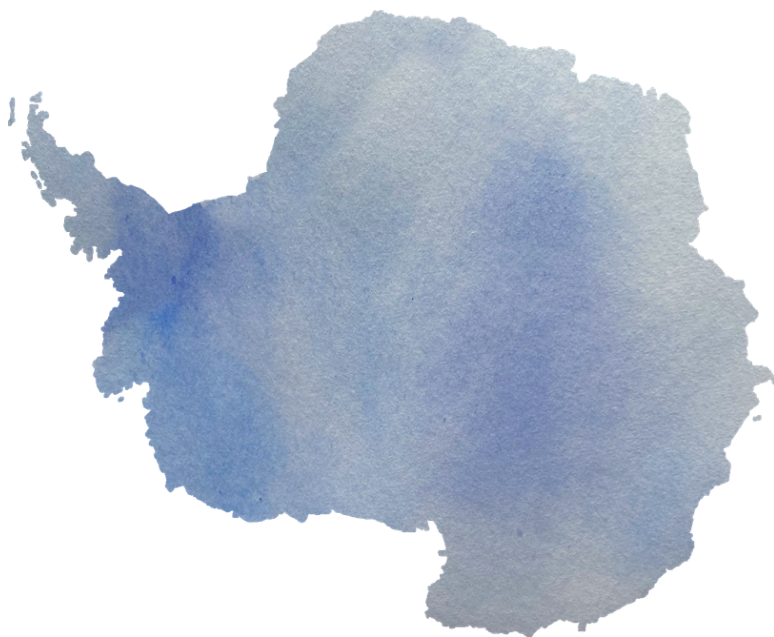
One thing I am not good at is sitting still. I am a very busy person and I like to always be doing things, but sometimes that comes at a cost of not taking the right amount of time to rest. The second one is computers – I am a very hands-on person and have not really had to use computers often in previous jobs. While I am getting better, it definitely takes me a little bit longer to get my head around things like excel and other computer-based programs.

What are two things you are good at?

I am very good at listening and understanding people. I love getting to learn about others' stories and I dedicate a lot of time to getting to know the people around me. I am also good at working hard. For me there is no greater satisfaction than getting hands-on and getting the job done! It's even better when you work in a small team and can have a laugh and slog it out together. It's especially good in the context of Antarctica where you get to work hard, enjoy the view and get the job done to leave the station and the continent in a better place than when you found it.

What makes you happy (outside of work)?

Outside of work I love hanging out with my mates and having experiences. Back in Australia I would normally go to the beach or go free diving, but down here I like heading out to some of the field huts around our station operating area and just spending time with my mates, playing cards, eating good food and enjoying the views. When on station I like heading to the gym or taking a walk down to watch the icebergs float around. I also like to keep learning and doing things with my hands, so I crochet or keep trying to teach myself the hand pan.



Where do you want your career to take you?

I have recently had a career change to come down to Antarctica, leaving behind a long career in the Air Force. For me, the future is currently not clear, but I have some time to think about. I know one thing is for sure, that I want to come back to Antarctica as many times as I can and experience the different Australian stations! Whether that be in the current job I am in as a Station Supply Officer or coming back as an Aviation Ground Support Officer. Or maybe when I hone my leadership skills a bit more I'd like to apply to be a Station Leader within the program.

