

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**  
**Legislation Committee**  
Answers to questions on notice  
**Environment portfolio**

**Question No:** 109  
**Hearing:** Additional Estimates  
**Outcome:** Agency  
**Programme:** Australian Antarctic Division (AAD)  
**Topic:** Australia's communications set-up and technology in the Antarctic  
**Hansard Page:** 65  
**Question Date:** 08 February 2016  
**Question Type:** Spoken

**Senator Urquhart asked:**

**Senator URQUHART:** Great. How does Australia's communications set-up and technology compare to that used by other countries' stations in the Antarctic?

**Dr Wooding:** I think we are very much in the forefront. We have very good satellite communication that has been provided through Telstra for many years and is very effective. We pretty much have coverage 24/7, other than when there are faults like the one you have mentioned. Obviously, bandwidth is not massive. We are exploring ways to try and expand the bandwidth.

**Senator URQUHART:** What is the bandwidth?

**Dr Wooding:** It is in the megabytes. We do not have broadband or anything remotely like it, because it varies from station to station. I can give you the answer to that on notice if you wish, but it varies from station to station. We are working to expand the bandwidth. We are hoping to actually be able to achieve something there in the next year or so.

**Answer:**

The current bandwidth at each of the Australian Antarctic Division' (AAD)s stations is as follows:

- Casey 1.28 megabytes per second (mbps)
- Davis 1.28 mbps
- Mawson 0.512 mbps
- Macquarie Island 0.512 mbps.

As was foreshadowed during the estimates hearing, the AAD is currently working on expanding the bandwidth available, and is anticipating that the following improved levels of service will become available within the next few months:

- Casey 2.88 megabytes per second (mbps)
- Davis 2.44 mbps
- Mawson 1.024 mbps
- Macquarie Island 1.28 mbps.