Serco joins *Aurora Australis* voyage in preparation for the arrival of Australia’s new icebreaker

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Australia’s newest icebreaker will dock in its home port of Hobart, Tasmania next year. As part of the preparations for the RSV *Nuyina*’s arrival, Serco Defence Electrical Engineering Manager Daniel Webster recently joined an Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) expedition to Macquarie Island aboard the current icebreaker *Aurora Australis*.

Located approximately half way between Australia and Antarctica, Macquarie Island is a World Heritage listed sub-Antarctic island in the Southern Ocean. Since 1948 the AAD have operated a research station on the island, enabling scientists to conduct scientific research and long-term monitoring programs. In recent years research has been focussed on conservation and environmental management, with around 25 per cent of projects related to aspects of climate change.

The Macquarie Island research station is occupied year-round by scientists and support staff. The station receives all food, fuel, equipment and people transfers via resupply trips from the Australian mainland over the summer months. The *Aurora Australis* is the ship currently used by the AAD for these voyages.

In 2016, Serco was awarded the contract for the Design, Build, Operation and Maintenance of the new icebreaker for the AAD of the Department of the Environment. The RSV *Nuyina* will be a state-of-the-art ship offering scientists unprecedented and extended access to the Southern Ocean and Antarctica. Replacing the *Aurora Australis*, the 160-metre long, 24,000-tonne vessel will be larger, stronger and offer increased endurance and operational flexibility. The vessel is currently under construction in Romania. Serco Australia will operate and maintain the vessel from its home port of Hobart from 2020.

The AAD’s most recent trip to resupply Macquarie Island station was in March. In good weather it takes about three days by sea to reach Macquarie Island from Hobart. Serco Defence's Electrical Engineering Manager Daniel Webster had the opportunity to sail to Macquarie Island on the *Aurora Australis*. During the three-week voyage Daniel’s role was to observe AAD operations onboard the *Aurora*, taking note for when the RSV *Nuyina* begins to perform similar work for the AAD from next year.

“During my time on the vessel I was able to see how the AAD conduct resupply operations to Macquarie Island, refuelling and the interaction between the ship’s crew and the AAD,” Daniel said.

“This opportunity has helped me to gain a better understating of the operating and maintaining phases for the RSV *Nuyina*.”

Serco will be responsible for operating and maintaining the vessel after its arrival in Hobart in 2020. The project is expected to create hundreds of jobs in the region through the provision of crewing and support services such as repair and maintenance, docking, security, cleaning, providoring and stevedoring. Serco will be employing two crews of approximately 65 crew members. Recruitment for key positions has already commenced. Expressions of interest for both local industry support services and crew are open. For more information and to register visit www.serco.com/icebreaker.

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**Media contact:** Tim Evans, +61 409 389 358

General media enquiries: Serco media line, +61 (0) 2 9409 8700 or media@serco-ap.com
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