

# Antarctic

Client: Australian Antarctic Division, Antarctica  
(<http://www.aad.gov.au/>)

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## Case Study



### Interview with Micky Loedeman Ground Support Supervisor - Aviation - Australian Antarctic Division Dept. of Environment, Water, Heritage & the Arts

**Sensear:** How long have you been working with the Australian Antarctic Division and what is your role?

**Micky:** I have been working for the AAD (on and off) for almost 14 years, initially on contract with Engineering Branch managing the on station infrastructure (construction and asset maintenance) more recently with the AAD's Aviation Section as one of the Aviation Ground Support Supervisors who are responsible for the onsite management of Wilkins Runway in Antarctica.

This position is also responsible for the running of a small facility (living quarters, mess/kitchen, mechanical workshop, power generation plant, emergency and ablutions facilities etc) some 70 kms from the main station of Casey staffed by 8 people (Plant Operators, Diesel Mechanic, Cook etc) which provides the infrastructure needed to construct and maintain a 4000m glacial ice runway.

**Sensear:** What is unique about the environments at the Australian Antarctic Division that require special hearing protection?

**Micky:** Although Wilkins Runway location is quite unique (some 700m above sea level, and approximately 2500 miles from Hobart, 3½ hour's drive from our main research station at Casey) our requirements for hearing protection are the same as for any airport in Australia or the world for that matter, in that working around large jet passenger aircraft is quite noisy and potentially damaging to your hearing.

As there is a requirement to have the aircraft's auxiliary power unit running the entire time the aircraft is on the ground at Wilkins (1-2 hours) we needed specialist hearing protection that would still enable us to be able to hear instructions over the radio as well as communicate

verbally with one another for the duration of cargo and passenger operations associated with the aircraft turnaround.

**Sensear:** What was it about Sensear that motivated your serious consideration?

**Micky:** The AAD is a very pro active safety orientated organisation and hearing protection is just one of a number of our most critical safety considerations in everything we do. So we looked at what the major aviation industry players were using and found that Sensear had an OHS compliant product we considered worth investigating and discovered that the ability to trial the Sensear units before investing in equipment that might potentially be unsuitable to our requirements was available and appealed to us.

**Sensear:** Why is Sensear right for you?

**Micky:** They have met all our requirements for hearing protection, comfort and communication and were priced within our budgetary constraints.

**Sensear:** Since introducing Sensear what have been the highlights with regard to over all hearing protection and communications effectiveness?

**Micky:** Highlights for us in using the Sensear units were an increase in number of people happy to wear them due to the increased comfort and ease of communication.



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