



# Tasmanian Polar Network

**Media release  
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## **Network says polar plan needs to start now**

The Tasmanian Polar Network has again highlighted the need for full resourcing of Antarctic science and support if Australia is to maintain its leadership among Antarctic Treaty nations.

Welcoming the release of a 20-year strategy for the Antarctic by the Federal Environment Minister, the Hon Greg Hunt, in Hobart today, Network Chair, Mr John Brennan said the document prepared by Dr Tony Press presents a clear vision for Australia's presence in the Antarctic for the next two decades.

The Network brings together business and organisations based in Tasmania that provide the support and logistics for Australian Antarctic research and supply, while working with other nations including France, China and Korea. This support makes a valued economic contribution to the Tasmanian economy.

Mr Brennan said now is the time to grow that contribution with investment in international relationships and collaboration, by funding more science and research and education opportunities, and upgrading logistics capacity and infrastructure in Tasmania and the Antarctic.

"The sector has reached a critical crossroad. We have succeeded in attracting the attention of other nations as a serious gateway to east Antarctica.

"We need to be a draw card for leading scientists and practitioners and to do this we need a fully enrolled science community which is adequately funded.

"It takes time to reap rewards from what is invested. Dr Press' 20-year Plan sets out a vision and from that it is evident that without a continued push and working together we could risk the future of the sector," Mr Brennan said.

He said the recent commitments from the federal government for a new icebreaker and extended Hobart runway are welcome but more is needed.

The Plan: <http://20yearplan.antarctica.gov.au/final-report> Ministers' statement: <http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/hunt/2014/mr20141010.html>

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