

IAATO Social Media Guidelines

for Field Staff 2024-25

Introduction

Social media should be thought of as a conversation. It facilitates communication, connection, and the sharing of information among individuals and groups, serving as a platform for people to express themselves, build communities, and access a vast range of content.

The benefits of sharing work-related information online include networking, visibility, and the opportunity to educate polar enthusiasts about Antarctica and how it is protected. However, it's crucial to be mindful of the risks, such as the impact on your professional reputation, the reputation of your employer and the wider industry – including IAATO – if inappropriate content (or even content perceived as inappropriate) is shared.

Striking a balance between showcasing the important role you play in delivering safe and environmentally responsible operations, and limiting the potential for misinterpretation, is key.

General Social Media Guidance for Field Staff

Know What is Expected of You

You are a spokesperson for the industry. We all are. The impact on your reputation, your employer's, IAATO's and the wider industry must always be a consideration whenever distributing information, whether its video, images, or text – even through personal accounts.

Before posting anything, check if your employer has a social media policy in place and familiarise yourself with it.

Equally, double-check the seasonal information in the Field Operations Manual. Practices that may have been acceptable at one time may no longer be considered appropriate due to new information. Don't fall foul of these changes by accidentally engaging in now-prohibited behaviour.

If you're unsure whether a post is appropriate, please check with your employer, Expedition Leader or IAATO, who will be happy to advise you.

Share with Care!

Camera lenses used or the perspective from which an image is taken can create the impression wildlife, icebergs etc are closer than they are – sometimes suggesting guidelines have been breached.

Before posting, ask yourself: Does my post reflect our safe and environmentally responsible ethos to the wider public? Can my post be misunderstood (or even willfully misinterpreted) by someone who is not familiar with our operations or working environment? Does my image or video need detailed context to be received in the way I intend it? If my image or video was shared without explanatory text could that give a different impression of events?

Respect Confidentiality

Information held internally on your employer's or IAATO's websites (e.g., Field Operations), or any other confidential information, must not be shared.

Respect the privacy of colleagues and guests. Avoid sharing private information or discussing internal matters on public platforms.

Separate Personal and Professional

Clearly distinguish personal opinions from those representing your company. Include a disclaimer if necessary to clarify that your views are personal and not reflective of your organisation or industry but realise what you say could still impact them.

Cite Sources and Accurate Information

Share content responsibly by citing credible sources and ensuring the accuracy of the information you share. Misinformation can harm your credibility and that of the industry.



Correcting Misinformation

Misinformation should be corrected, clearly and logically, when required. Do not be defensive or argue. If unsure about how to respond to negative comments or posts, please check with your employer or IAATO. Sometimes it is best to ignore a comment to avoid giving it attention or credibility by acknowledging it with a response.

Double-check hashtags

Some hashtags can end up being co-opted and soon become synonymous with specific entities. Before selecting your hashtags, check how they are being used already to avoid any embarrassing or inappropriate associations. Also check that your hashtags do not create inappropriate spellings when words are combined.

Professionalism Always

Always conduct yourself professionally, even in personal interactions. Avoid engaging in heated or controversial debates, especially if they involve sensitive topics related to the company or industry.