IAATO Vessel Code of Conduct

Article 1: Guiding Principles

1. Adhere to all applicable international and national legal and policy requirements, including those of the Antarctic Treaty System (ATS) and National Competent Authorities (NCAs).

2. Support the mission of IAATO to advocate and promote the practice of safe and environmentally responsible private-sector travel to the Antarctic.

3. Treat all Visitors to the Antarctic (IAATO or other) with dignity and respect, while exercising the highest level of professional and ethical behaviour and working cooperatively to resolve differencess.

4. IAATO Members will work cooperatively to share experiences and lessons learned.

5. Provide a safe workplace while protecting the fragile Antarctic environment.

6. Augment voyages with strong educational programs which also emphasise Antarctic Ambassadors as being particularly important to enriching and enhancing the standing of Antarctic visitation.

Article 2:

Part 1: General Practices

1. The IAATO Vessel Code of Conduct does not supersede existing maritime safety practices or what may be included in an Operators IEE.

2. All MARPOL, SOLAS and STCW (as amended), and all safety related Antarctic Treaty System Decisions, Measures, Resolutions, and other rules and regulations must be followed.

    a. Where possible, non-SOLAS/MARPOL IAATO Vessels should also follow and practice MARPOL, SOLAS, and STCW.

3. All STCW, as amended and all training-related Antarctic Treaty System Decisions, Measures, Resolutions, and other rules and regulations must be followed.

4. All MARPOL and Antarctic Treaty System Decisions, Measures, Resolutions, and other rules, regulations and, and IAATO Waste Management Statements must be followed.

5. All stakeholders should safeguard the natural environment with a view to achieving sound, sustainable travel that meets the needs and aspirations of present and future generations.

6. IAATO Members should be respectful of other vessels and their operations occurring in the same area.

7. Keep vessel noise and activities from impacting other vessels and wildlife, even when a vessel is transiting. This may require extra thought and spatial awareness.

    a. This may mean changing or cancelling activity plans so not to disturb other vessels or wildlife (including marine mammals).

    b. When in areas with vessels and/or wildlife, careful consideration should be given before using outside public announcement systems.

    c. At any sign of disturbance to wildlife, the activity should cease. See IAATO Wildlife Protocols for more details of signs of disturbance.)

Part 2: Specific Practices

1. The IAATO Ship Scheduler Booking Procedures must be followed.

2. Watch officers should be aware of other vessels nearby and possible conflicts between vessel activities.

    a. When in doubt radio communication between vessels is essential.

3. When transiting a narrow channel (e.g Peltier or Errera, Lemaire Channels) a Securite call must be broadcast over Channel 16.

4. If a vessel is involved in activities (kayaking, SCUBA, submersibles, etc) in a narrow channel, upon hearing the Securite call, the vessel engaged in the activities should immediately respond over Channel 16 and notify the incoming vessel of any potential hazards/risks to navigation.

5. Be conscious of the ship wake when other vessels are around and offering activities. When sailing past a vessel engaged in activities, be sure to communicate your vessel's intentions, and inquire what activities are in progress.

    a. Avoid disturbances such as waking, buzzing, bumping, or crowding other vessels.

    b. This is particularly important when Zodiacs/small boats and kayakers are on the water, as not only could a ship wake make kayaking less enjoyable, it could potentially cause an emergency.

    c. It is particularly important to be aware of Submersible activities. Ship and/or small boat operations should avoid transiting near submersibles when they are deployed. See IAATO Submersible Operational Protocols.

6. Ships engaged in activities in narrow channels, should make sure other vessels have a safe corridor to transit.

7. Coordinate with vessels in the area who may be watching wildlife, or when watching wildlife, yourself.

    a. Call the bridge of the nearby vessel and describe the encounter, including how long you may stay in the area.

        i. Agree to a plan – will the other vessel join? Or how will the vessels avoid each other?

        ii. Should vessels work cooperatively to watch wildlife together, it is important IAATO Wildlife Watching Guidelines are followed.

8. Vessels should work co-operatively to ensure that they give a 'buffer' time of a recommended 30 – 60 minutes between visits at landing sites.

    a. If another vessel arrives early to a site, whether anchoring or not, make sure the bridge officer and/or EL communicate, and arrange a plan.

9. Where appropriate, spread activities across all possible 'experience' platforms (e.g. ship cruising, small boat cruising, kayaking, landings etc.) to decrease use of the most visited landing sites.

10. Visitor activities should be designed and programmed in such a way as to protect the wilderness and natural heritage of ecosystems and biodiversity, to preserve protected wildlife, and provide educational experiences.

11. IAATO activities must be conducted with respect for archaeological and cultural heritage.

12. Helicopter Operations should be run in accordance with the ATCM Resolutions, the Electronic Antarctic Flight Information Manual (AFIM), the Wildlife Awareness Manual (WAM), and IAATO Helicopter Etiquette.

    a. Helicopter Operators commit to not being seen or heard.

    b. Coordination and Communication between vessels and/or stations around helicopter operations is essential.

        i. Do not start helicopter operations until appropriate protocols have been followed and confirmation of contact has been made.

        ii. Do not deviate from communicated plan.

    c. Helicopter Operators will be cognizant of the Ship Scheduler, and not start operations within 5nm of where a known booking is taking place.

        i. All transiting vessels in close proximity (within 5nm) should be notified of planned air operations, bearing in mind that air operations are not permitted within 5nm of a vessel conducting operations at a booked site.

    d. All helicopter transponders must be turned on for T-CAS recognition.

        i. All IAATO Operator helicopters should be registered with and participate in the COMNAP Asset Tracking System (CATS).

13. Both Ships and Yachts should assure they have a working AIS and Channel 16 at all times. Remember to enter transit information into the AIS each time.

14. The IAATO vessel tracking system, RedPort, must be used by all SOLAS vessels.

15. Respect radio communications: many ships use same available UHF/VHF channels. If possible, come to an agreement between vessels, changing channels for the conflicted time to avoid miscommunication.

16. IAATO Members are not the only visitors to the Antarctic. Whilst IAATO Members book through the IAATO ship scheduler to avoid conflicts, there are those outside of IAATO who do not have access to the ship scheduler. While IAATO vessels make every effort to use the ship scheduler efficiently there could be extenuating circumstances which cause other vessels to be at an anchorage.

17. All IAATO SOLAS vessels or yachts with lengths greater than 50m and/or over 300GT should utilize the ship scheduler platform for coordination of activities.

Article 3: Communication

1. **Communication is key:** There should always be mutual respect, good communication and consideration between all working in the Antarctic environment. Effective communication by expedition staff, officers, and rest of crew, both internally and between different vessels is essential for safety and environmental considerations.

2. Vessels should communicate about ice and weather conditions, unexpected currents and/ or winds. This sharing of information will increase safety.

3. Vessels should immediately communicate about high mortality events, and crevasses to the fleet as well as the Secretariat.

4. When in doubt call on the radio.

5. Should you come across a visitor who is not following Antarctic Treaty System or IAATO guidelines, please follow the appropriate procedures for reporting the interaction.

6. Communication between a larger vessel and a yacht is best achieved through a friendly dialogue between the EL or navigator on the bridge on the ship and the skipper of the yacht, beginning on Channel 16 VHF.

Article 4: Conduct specific to ships and yachts

1. In accordance with worldwide practice, if a yacht is already at an anchorage that conflicts with the ship anchorage, the yacht is in no way obliged to move to accommodate the ship.

2. When anchoring, sailing yachts often run lines ashore. When navigating small boats near an anchored yacht, care should be taken to avoid anchor lines.

3. Remember if a yacht has to move to accommodate a ship, this is done voluntarily.

   a. Ship officers should also be aware that if an arrangement has been made with a yacht for it to move to give way to the ship, this might take some time as when yachts anchor they normally do a complete system shut down, unlike a ship, and so may need more time to prepare to move.