IAATO Observer Checklist

**for Landed Activities**

Thank you for agreeing to participate as an IAATO Observer. The checklist has been designed as a useful tool to facilitate confirmation of whether obligations set forth by IAATO and the Antarctic Treaty System are being met. Please refer to the “Observer Handbook” for additional guidance for completing this checklist.

Observation Timeline:

* Assignment of vessel and Observer
* Set up voyage where observation will be done
* Vessel / company should send all pre-trip documents to the observer as if they were a joining as a passenger
* Conduct the Observation with the crew and vessel. Plan for the observation to be done over the course of the voyage
* Plan to review your draft report with the operator prior to disembarkation
* Complete the form within 3 weeks of the observation, if you do have questions after the review, feel free to follow up with the operator
* Send or email the completed form to both IAATO and the observed company. This gives the company an opportunity to review the document and respond.

**Please submit by email to**: [**jhaase@iaato.org**](mailto:jhaase@iaato.org), cc’ing**:** [**akean@iaato.org**](http://akean@iaato.org)

**Voyage Dates (embarkation and disembarkation):**

**Observer’s Name**:

**Date of Report**:

**Name of Vessel**:

**Name of Tour Operator/Organizer**:

**Voyage sub-chartered to (if applicable)**:

**Name of Expedition Leader:**

**Actual Itinerary/Expedition Travelled:** Please attach the Post Visit Site Report that was completed within two weeks of the conclusion of the expedition.

# **Voyage Preparation and Documentation**

## Please select which documents you were provided as “Passenger” pre-trip material prior to your observation:

* General Guidelines for Visitors ATCM XLVI (2024) Resolution 2 General Guidelines for Visitors to the Antarctic *or* Visitor Guidelines (1994 - Recommendation XVIII-1) (FOM Section 07 - Overarching Guidelines)
* IAATO Don’t Pack a Pest (FOM Section 07 - Biosecurity Guidelines)
* Reducing Visitor Waste Guidelines (FOM Section 19)
* Expedition Cruising to Antarctica (FOM Section 19)
* Medical form (FOM Section 03 – ‘IAATO Sample Medical Questionnaire’)
* Clothing/equipment list

## Please list and explain any other documentation you were provided prior to the trip

## How did the above pre-departure material explain that conditions can be severe and inhospitable and point out the necessity for suitable clothing? (FOM Section 06 – IAATO Mandatory Briefing)

## Did the material for the clients advise that sophisticated medical care is unavailable in the Antarctic and were passengers encouraged to take out medical and evacuation insurance prior to their trip? (FOM Section 05 – ‘ATCM Resolution 4 Guidelines’)

## Was the home office or crew efficient to work with and forthcoming with documentation?

## Were you provided with the same preparatory materials as all the guests were? Did they arrive in a timely fashion so you could adequately check the preparation of the voyage?

## Please explain the type of voyage and activities you observed during your observation (traditional landings, ski trip, mountaineering, science, photographers, etc.)

# **Antarctic Treaty and Domestic Legislation** [(https://www.ats.aq/e/tourism.html)](https://www.ats.aq/e/tourism.html)

## **Compliance with Domestic Legislation**

### Please Select which permit / authorization documents the Operator has for the season / departure:

* Advance Notification
* Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), usually either at the Initial Environmental Evaluation (IEE) or PEE (Preliminary Environmental Evaluation) level
* Permit(s) to enter Antarctic Specially Protected Areas (ASPAs), if appropriate
* Waste Management Permit, if appropriate
* Other, if appropriate. Please explain below.

### Please list the country and government department for each permit or authorization granted.

## **Compliance with Operator’s Advance Notification and EIA**

(FOM Section 07 – Area & Site Specific Guidelines –General Useful Information – ‘ATCM Rec XVIII-1 Organizer Guidelines’)

### Were copies of the Advance Notification and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA or IEE) on board and found in an easily accessible location?

### What was the level of familiarity amongst relevant officers, expedition leaders and staff with the content of the EIA or IEE? Please indicate who was responsible for which sections (e.g., environmental aspects of ship’s operation, education component for passengers, reporting, etc.).

### Did you note any deviations/discrepancies to the operator’s EIA or IEE and/or authorization? If so, please describe.

## **Compliance with Management Plans**

### Was there an intention to visit any ASMAs (e.g., Deception Island or Maxwell Bay) or historic sites visited (e.g., Port Lockroy, Damoy Hut, or Wordie House)? And if so which ones? (FOM Section 07 – Area & Site Specific Guidelines – Full Set of ASPA and ASMA Management Plans)

### Could the operator locate the relevant management plans or historic site documents (FOM Section 07 – Area & Site Specific Guidelines – General Useful Information – ‘ATCM List of Historic Sites & Monuments’) in the IAATO Field Operations Manual? How well were relevant management plans understood?

### Was there an intention to enter any Antarctic Specially Protected Areas (ASPAs)? If so, which ones and why? Did the operator have the required permit(s)? (FOM Section 07 – Area & Site Specific Guidelines – Full Set of ASPA and ASMA Management Plans)

### Could the crew explain what ASPAs are and where to find documentation in the IAATO Field Operations Manual? (FOM Section 07 – Area & Site Specific Guidelines – Full Set of ASPA and ASMA Management Plans)

## **Compliance with ATCM Recommendation XVIII-1**

## (FOM Section 07 – Area & Site Specific Guidelines – General Useful Information)

### The ATCM document - *Guidance for those Organising and Conducting Tourism and Non-governmental Activities in the Antarctic* (Recommendation XVIII-1 - adopted at the Antarctic Treaty Meeting, Kyoto, 1994) and ATCM XLVI (2024) Resolution 2 General Guidelines for Visitors to the Antarctic outlines obligations when organizing activities in Antarctica. According to your initial review of their permitting documents, were all activities conducted in accordance to this document?

## **Compliance with Standard Procedures for Station Visits**

(FOM Section 07 – Area & Site Specific Guidelines – Research Stations)

### Were Antarctic Research Stations visited?

### If so, were advance notification requirements for such visits taken into account (e.g., Palmer Station, McMurdo, Rothera or Signy Station)? (FOM Section 07 – Area & Site Specific Guidelines – Research Stations – ‘IAATO Standard Procedure for Station Visits’)

### Was the 72-hour advance notice adhered to for all other stations?

### If a previously scheduled visit to a research station was cancelled, was the station notified promptly?

### Did the visit ashore interfere with Antarctic scientific work? If so, please explain.

### Was the vessel providing any support by transporting scientists, etc.? If so, please detail.

# **Vessel Operation**

## **General**

### Please list the Captain or appointed ice pilot and their relevant Antarctic Experience. Was there additional relevant Antarctic experience among the bridge officers? (IAATO Bylaws – Article X Section C)

### Did the vessel participate in the IAATO vessel tracking scheme (RedPort) and report hourly? (FOM Section 08 – ‘IAATO Vessel Tracking Scheme’)

### What is the vessel’s Ice Class?

### Did the vessel, as far as reasonable and practical, comply with the Guidelines for Ships Operating in Polar Waters? (FOM Section 08 – ‘IMO Polar Code Text as adopted’)

### Polar Water Certificate #:

### Describe the navigational charts used onboard - Which charting authority charts were being used (e.g., UKHO, Chile HO, etc.), were they using paper or electronic?

### How did the vessel obtain ice information? Were weather, ice and routing information services provided and reviewed in a timely manner? (FOM Section 08 – ‘Weather and Ice Information List’)

### Did the vessel navigate in ice covered waters at any time? If so, please provide details such as ice concentration, duration, etc. (FOM Section 08 – ‘IAATO Guidelines for Select Vessel Operations in the Vicinity of Ice’)

### Was any data collected by the vessel and shared (i.e., weather box for WMO, OLEX, Ice reporting, etc.)?

### Were IAATO Wildlife Watching Guidelines observed? Please describe wildlife sighted and any, effect of the vessel’s presence on wildlife activity. (FOM Section 07 – Wildlife Guidelines)

### Was the ship’s command cooperative and helpful in all aspects of your job? Did you have access to the navigation bridge and engine room?

## **Safety and Contingency Planning**

### Which measures were put in place for self-sufficient operations? In general, would you say that the principles of self-sufficiency and sound contingency planning were observed at all times? (FOM Section 07 – Area & Site Specific Guidelines –General Useful Information – ‘ATCM Rec XVIII-1 Organizer Guidelines’, & FOM – Section 05 – ‘ATCM XXVII Measure 4 (2004) and ATCM XL Resolution 6 (2017)’)

### Were there onboard drill schedules which included regular damage control scenarios related to ice damage with control measures that considered the implications of cold weather environments?

### Was there a comprehensive briefing on safety issues, including the mandatory lifeboat/safety drill, conducted in a timely manner with all passengers in attendance and translated for non-English speaking passengers?

### Were passengers’ and crew’s attention drawn to the necessity for suitable clothing in conditions that can be severe and inhospitable? Were passengers strongly encouraged to observe the weekly crew abandon ship drill and fire drill?

### Were the relevant officers and the expedition leader familiar with IAATO’s Emergency Contingency Plan? (FOM Section 03)

### Please describe the medical facilities and qualifications of all medical personnel onboard as well as any external resources.

### Were the relevant officers and the expedition leader familiar with IAATO’s Emergency and Medical Evacuation Response Plan (EMER), and was there a copy on board? If not, please describe the Emergency Medical Evacuation Response that was in place. (FOM Section 05)

### Were passengers and crew advised to take precautionary measures to prevent accidents during particularly difficult weather conditions?

## **Oil Spill Prevention**

(FOM Section 05 – IAATO Emergency Contingency Plan)

### Please list location and capacity of fuel tanks, as well as fuel types and quantity used while the vessel operated in the Treaty Area. Was there any deck storage of fuel? Does this match what is listed in the EIA and/or authorization?

### What spill response materials and equipment (SOPEP Kit) were readily available on board? Show location of SOPEP Kit and check that the Kit contains what it says it should. Does this match the EIA?

### Please describe the processing of oily water. Was there a separator in use, and were oil transfers documented in an Oil Record Book? Were actions in line with the Operators Environmental Impact Assessment?

## **Sewage and Waste Management**

(FOM Section 08 - ‘IAATO Statement on Waste Management’)

### Did the vessel have an approved waste management plan?

### Did the vessel comply with MARPOL and Annexes III and IV of the Environmental Protocol with regards to sewage and waste disposal? Please describe disposal methods and how these were recorded. Is this in line with the EIA? (<https://www.ats.aq/e/eia.html>)

### Was there adequate storage space on board to retain all wastes and sewage while the vessel operated in the Treaty Area? If not, describe the methods and frequency of discharges.

### Did the vessel comply with IAATO recommended waste management practice to not dispose of waste below the Antarctic Convergence (Note: these exceed MARPOL regulations)? (<https://www.ats.aq/e/eia.html>)

### Were staff, crew and passengers advised about the importance of sewage and waste minimization, and was publicity given to appropriate management practices? (FOM Section 19 – 'IAATO Reducing Waste Guidelines for Guests')

### What types of hazardous substances were used on the ship? How were these stored and monitored? Was there a separate receptacle for battery disposal? Does this follow the EIA/IEE and/or authorization?

### Were poultry products separated out from other food garbage? If not, please detail the disposal method used for these products on board.

### Was there any exchange of ballast water in the Treaty Area? Did the vessel have an approved ballast water management plan? (FOM Section 08 – ‘ATCM Ballast Water Exchange Guidelines’)

# **IAATO Standards and Regulations**

## **General Conduct**

### Did the operator support the basic mission of IAATO – which is to advocate and promote the practice of safe and environmentally responsible private-sector travel to the Antarctic? (<https://iaato.org/about-iaato/our-mission>/)

### Was the expedition well organized and carried out, with no obvious violations of applicable requirements? Were the activities generally conducted with a high degree of professionalism?

## **Expedition Leader and Staff**

### Was there at least one copy of the electronic IAATO Field Operations Manual (FOM) on board and found in an easily accessible location? Was it useful and used? If not, why not?

### Were the expedition leader and staff generally familiar with the content of the FOM? When do they find they reference it most often? Or for what documents?

### Did at least 80% of the staff have relevant experience and 50% of whom have previous experience in Antarctica? (Bylaws – Article X Section B)

### Had any of the staff, crew and officers taken the relevant IAATO Online Assessment? Please detail which staff,crew and officers and their onboard role (e.g., Jane Blogs, EL, Jo Bloggs, AEL). (FOM Section 2)

### Please list names of staff members, areas of specialty and years of polar (Arctic and Antarctic) or other relevant experience.

### If the expedition leaders changed, was there a handover procedure?

### Were you introduced to passengers, and invited to staff briefings?

## **Passenger and Crew Briefings**

### Was the crew briefed on Recommendation XVIII-1 and/or ATCM XLVI (2024) 2 General Guidelines for Visitors to the prior to the start of the season? Was the crew provided with copies of the Visitor Guidelines? (FOM Section 07 – Overarching Guidelines)

### If new crew members embarked for this particular voyage, were they briefed accordingly by the expedition staff or officers? If so, how?

### Was the most up-to-date IAATO Safety and Conservation Briefing (PowerPoint presentation) given prior to landing passengers in Antarctica? If not, why not? (FOM Section 06 Online Only)

### Please provide safety and conservation briefing used onboard.

### Was this a mandatory briefing and if so, how was this carried out?

### Were copies of Guidelines for Visitors to the Antarctic (ATCM Resolution 3 (2011)) available onboard for crew and guest reference? (FOM Section 07 – Overarching Guidelines)

### Are wildlife guidelines, such as IAATO posters, easily available for crew and guest reference? (FOM Section 07 – Wildlife Guidelines & FOM – Section 19 -Guideline Posters)

### Were copies of the guidelines provided to non-English speaking passengers in one of the following additional languages: Spanish, French, Italian, Dutch, German, Russian, Mandarin Chinese, Japanese?

## **Coordination of Itineraries**

(FOM Section 08 – ‘Vessel Code of Conduct’)

### Was the latest version of the IAATO Vessel, Land-based and EMER Contact Information available onboard?

### Were itineraries efficiently coordinated with other vessels at all times? How was this done (e.g., Email, Live Ship Scheduler)? (FOM Section 08 - 'Live Ship Scheduler Guide’)

### What does the crew usually use to communicate with other vessels?

### Were there any visits to a landing site by more than one vessel over 12 passengers at one time? If so, please describe the situation.

### Were the time slots set for landings in the IAATO Ship Scheduler observed?

### Were the expedition leader and staff familiar with the IAATO Wilderness Etiquette? Was there a buffer time of 30-60 minutes allowed between vessel visits?

## **Pre-landing Action**

(FOM Section 07 – Area & Site Specific Guidelines)

### Did the itinerary adhere to Antarctic Treaty and IAATO Site Guidelines relative to the size of the ship and the landing sites permitted?

### Did the itinerary adhere to Antarctic Treaty and IAATO Site Guidelines relative to the limits on the number of landings which can take place each day, and if applicable, did they observe a ‘rest period’ for wildlife as outlined in the site guidelines (usually from 2200-0400 hrs)?

### Did the expedition leader and/or staff inspect every landing site for the purpose of evaluating safety and environmental conditions prior to landing passengers (including HPAI considerations)?

### Was a briefing or announcement made prior to landing to advise on the peculiarities of the site being visited, the expected conditions, possible boundaries, behavior around wildlife, and any other relevant safety and environmental issues? Were passengers advised of the necessity for suitable clothing in conditions that can be severe and inhospitable?

## **Management Approach**

(FOM Section 07 – Area & Site Specific Guidelines)

### Were Antarctic Treaty and IAATO Site Guidelines consulted and followed when planning the landings? Did all the expedition staff responsible for activities ashore demonstrate a good working knowledge of the ATCM Site Guidelines?

### At all sites did the expedition leader and staff make use of the method of ‘zoning’, including Closed Areas, Guided Walking Areas and Free Roaming Areas?

### Were any new sites visited and if so, what criteria were used to evaluate the site? (FOM Section 07 – Area & Site Specific Guidelines – General Useful Information - IAATO Assessment Criteria for New Visitor Sites’ & ‘IAATO Visitor Site Selection Criteria’)

### In general, were visitor numbers ashore limited to comply with management plans, environmental conditions and safety practices if necessary? Was there a particularly effective way to manage passengers ashore organized by the staff? If so, please describe.

## **Biosecurity Measures**

FOM Section 07 – Biosecurity Operational Procedures – ‘IAATO Boot, Clothing and Equipment Decontamination Guidelines’, ‘IAATO Don’t Pack a Pest’, & ‘Biosecurity Disinfection’)

### Were IAATO’s Boot and Clothing Decontamination Guidelines adhered to at all times? Was there a briefing and a clothing check organized so that all precautions were taken to avoid the translocation of seeds and other organisms to and within Antarctica?

### Did passengers clean their backpacks, camera bags, tripods and clothing (particularly Velcro attachments and pockets) to avoid the possible translocation of seeds, and possible diseases?

### Was there a thorough cleaning of all gear - full boot and clothing decontamination incl. vacuuming - done between distinct regions (e.g., South Georgia and Antarctica)?

### Please describe the boot washing station.

### What type of disinfectant was used (Virkon S or otherwise)?

### What was the method of disposal for disinfectant (Vikon S or other)?

### If an Air / Cruise Expedition - how was biosecurity carried out between mainland airport and Antarctic airport and between the Antarctic Airport and the Vessel?

## **Activities Ashore**

(FOM Section 07 – Activity Operational Procedures)

### Did the site visits generally comply with Antarctic Treaty and IAATO Site Guidelines?

### Did passengers, staff and crew comply with Recommendation XXVIII-1, Guidance for Visitors to the Antarctic/ATCM XLVI (2024) Resolution 2 General Guidelines for Visitors to the Antarctic? (FOM Section 07 – Overarching Guidelines)

### Was there a minimum 20:1 passenger to staff ratio maintained on shore?

### Were there more than 100 visitors ashore at any one time (exclusive of expedition guides and leaders)? If so, please describe in detail.

### Did the expedition staff on shore give the visitors an appropriate briefing, setting clear boundaries and reminding them of required distances from wildlife, scientific monitoring control sites and equipment, and protected areas? Did they also point out specific environmental features such as sensitive vegetation?

### Did the staff provide educational information? If so, please describe.

## **Safety Ashore**

(FOM Section 6 – IAATO Mandatory Briefing)

### During the briefings ashore, was attention also paid to safety aspects and possible hazards?

### How were passengers “controlled” or monitored ashore?

### In general, would you say that passengers were well supervised by staff at all times?

### Was there emergency equipment available in the Zodiacs or other landing craft, as well as ashore? If so, please include a list. (FOM Section 8 – Shore Stranding Equipment)

### Were all staff members equipped with VHF radios and capable of contact at all times? Were any other forms of communications taken shore regularly?

### Did medical personnel participate in landings and/or ‘on call’ during landings?

### After each landing, how did the staff confirm that all passengers had returned to the ship or land-based facility? How were passengers accounted for?

### In general, would you say that the principles of self-sufficiency and sound contingency planning were observed at all times?

## **Landing Craft Operations**

### How were passengers instructed to use Zodiacs or other landing craft safely?

### Were all passengers required to wear a Personal Flotation Device (PFD) when in the landing crafts?

### Were drivers qualified (how was qualification determined by the operator?), and respectful of wildlife? Were IAATO Wildlife Watching Guidelines observed at all times? (FOM Section 07 – Wildlife Guidelines)

### Did the drivers demonstrate a good working knowledge of the IAATO Guidelines for Selected Vessel Operations in the Vicinity of Ice? (FOM Section 08)

### Did you notice any malfunctions of boats and/or engines? If so please describe.

### Was there a Zodiac Operations Manual available (or a comparable manual for landing craft)?

### In general, would you say that landing craft operations were organized safely and efficiently at all times? (FOM Section 07 – Area & Site Specific Guidelines –General Useful Information – ‘ATCM Rec XVIII-1 Organizer Guidelines’)

## **Helicopter Operations**

(FOM Section 10 – Aircraft Operations)

### Did the Operator offer helicopter activities as part of their program?

### Did the Operator follow the IAATO Vessel Helicopter Guidelines? (FOM Section 10)

### Where and what kind of helicopter Operations took place?

### Were flight operations efficiently coordinated with other air operations and vessels in the area?

### Did the Air Operator/Provider participate in CATS (COMNAP Asset Tracking System)?

### In addition to the normal flight safety instructions, were clients given any additional Antarctic specific instructions?

### If flying in proximity to wildlife, did the aircrew follow ATCM Resolution 2 (2004) Guidelines for the Operation of Aircraft near Concentrations of Wildlife? (FOM Section 10)

### Was the Antarctic Flight Information Manual (AFIM) and Wildlife Awareness Manual (WAM) readily available and used (by the operator, or their sub-contractors)?

### In general, were operations organized safely and efficiently at all times?

### Did you notice any malfunctions of aircraft and/or engines at any time? If so please describe.

## **Other Activities**

**(**FOM Section 07 – Activity Guidelines)

### Were there other types of activities other than the traditional landing activities conducted? For example, kayaking, scuba diving, mountaineering or camping or others? If so, please describe.

### Was the appropriate safety equipment available for those special activities? Please describe.

### Were these activities in line with what is described in the EIA and Advance Notification?

### Were these organized safely and efficiently at all times? Please give a short description.

## **Sub-Antarctic Islands**

(FOM Section 13 and 14)

### Please enclose a list of all sites visited in the Sub- Antarctic Islands if relevant. Were permits, visitor guidelines and management plans adhered to?

### If so, were these activities described in the EIA and Advance Notification? Were these organized safely and efficiently at all times?

# **Other Observations and Recommendations**

Please elaborate on any other comments or recommendations regarding the operations being observed.

# **Summary of Items Noted and Operator Response**

For the Observer:

Use the table below to summarize items noted in sections 1-5 where there were discrepancies with ATCM or IAATO policies/documents as well as issues noted regarding the ability to complete the observation, by populating a table for each item.

For the Operator:

Please review the below summary created by the observer and provide a response for each item noted by the observer. The response may be further clarification regarding the item or next steps that the Operator is taking to address the item.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Item 1 | | |
| Section: | Sub-Section: | Question: |
| Detail of the Item Noted by the Observer: |  | |
| Operator Response: |  | |
| Date of Operator Response: | | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Item 2 | | |
| Section: | Sub-Section: | Question: |
| Detail of the Item Noted by the Observer: |  | |
| Operator Response: |  | |
| Date of Operator Response: | | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Item 3 | | |
| Section: | SubSection: | Question: |
| Detail of the Item Noted by the Observer: |  | |
| Operator Response: |  | |
| Date of Operator Response: | | |

(If there are more than three items identified, copy and paste “Item 3”, as needed and update the numbering)

General Summary Comments from the Observer:

Thank you for your time and attention and we hope you had an enjoyable trip.