



South Georgia and the
South Sandwich Islands

Office of the Commissioner
Government House
Stanley
Falkland Islands

Email: admin@gov.gs
Tel: (500) 28280
Facsimile: (500) 28201

Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands Terms of Reference for Approved Observers on private vessels and authorised commercial non-IAATO vessels

GSGSSI Approved Observer carriage requirements

Under the GSGSSI Tourism Management Policy visiting vessels may be required to carry an approved observer under the following conditions:

1) Privately Owned Vessels

(vessels not carrying fee-paying passengers or receiving contributions and benefits in kind from any non fee-paying passengers, guests or unpaid crew, which are in excess of an individual's pro rata contribution towards consumables for a voyage.)

Privately owned vessels carrying 11-20 persons on board (including professional crew) may be permitted to land passengers at approved landing sites, but may only land at Specially Protected sites when accompanied by a GSGSSI approved observer to oversee landings.

Privately owned vessels carrying more than 20 persons on board (including professional crew) will only be permitted to land passengers at sites other than Grytviken if accompanied by a GSGSSI approved observer to oversee landings.

2) Commercial non-IAATO vessels

(vessels carrying fee paying passengers which are not members of the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators.)

Under exceptional circumstances, commercial non-IAATO vessels may be given permission to visit South Georgia, if the visit is of a unique nature in support of a specific project, which will not involve the vessel returning to South Georgia.

All such vessels will either be required to carry a GSGSSI approved observer for the duration of the visit or the visit will need to be overseen by one of the listed IAATO Yacht Services Providers or Operators, noting that this oversight must include observer coverage for the duration of the visit by a suitably experienced IAATO Expedition Leader.

Terms of Reference for GSGSSI approved observers

- GSGSSI will employ all observers at a fixed daily rate of pay from the point of embarkation to their disembarkation. All travel costs will be covered by GSGSSI and then recovered from the owner / operator of the vessel.
- Whilst the owner / operator of a visiting vessel may secure the services of an observer (subject to the criteria for eligibility and approval by GSGSSI), that individual must be approved and employed by GSGSSI.
- All other associated costs will be met by GSGSSI and then recovered from the vessel operator.
- Observers will be required to sign a contract with GSGSSI and will be covered by GSGSSI's employer's liability insurance.
- Observers must ensure that vessel owners (or staff) have studied all relevant briefing information carefully and adhere to their conditions of permit including the rigorous implementation of biosecurity measures. Pre arrival briefings will need to be given.
- Observers must oversee and help to advise on all landings so as to ensure that they are conducted in accordance with GSGSSI permit conditions, in particular respecting all wildlife protection and biosecurity measures.
- Any breaches of permit conditions must be reported to GSGSSI staff at the earliest opportunity.

The following persons are eligible to be considered as GSGSSI approved observers:

- Former IAATO Expedition Leaders with relevant experience
- Senior cruise ship or yacht expedition staff with relevant experience
- Individuals who can demonstrate to GSGSSI that they possess suitable experience for the oversight of visitor landings in accordance with GSGSSI visit permit conditions.

Persons who wish to be considered by GSGSSI for eligibility to be listed on the GSGSSI website as GSGSSI approved observers should contact GSGSSI (admin@gov.gs)