

Etiquette Between Ships & Yachts 2018

These recommended protocols were prompted by discussions at the IAATO 22nd Annual Meeting in Hobart, Tasmania (May 2011)

These recommendations address the protocol between yacht operators and ship operators with regard to anchoring conflicts, communications and landings while in the Antarctic and on South Georgia.

Background

The concentration of both ships and yachts sometimes results in pressure points at certain sites during high season. This notice serves to remind and suggest to both operators of ships and of yachts a few points of etiquette between these two general categories of vessels.

Important definitions and distinctions

Yachts have **12 or less** guests onboard.

Ships have **13 or more** guests onboard.

Three types of yachts may be encountered in the Antarctic:

- 1. IAATO Yachts:** These can be found in the Vessel Directory. They are aware of Treaty and IAATO guidelines and procedures.
- 2. Non IAATO Yachts with Authorisation:** While not members of IAATO, these yachts have received authorisation from a Competent Authority. These yachts may or may not be aware of the IAATO ship scheduler, but should be aware of Antarctic Treaty guidelines.
- 3. Non IAATO, Unauthorised yachts:** These yachts are neither members of IAATO, nor have they received authorisation from a competent authority to sail to Antarctica. These yachts may or may not be aware of Treaty or IAATO guidelines and procedures.

On the yacht side, it is generally accepted within IAATO that:

- Yachts normally anchor each night and there are a limited number of safe anchorages.
- When planning an expedition, yachts will seek successive safe anchorages. Therefore yachts may arrive at an anchorage while a ship landing is in progress and there may not be another safe anchorage for many more hours of sailing.
- Yachts may stay in an anchorage for multiple nights and often run lines ashore for safety due to poor holdings.
- Yachts are vulnerable to weather and need to be in certain anchorages for safety and protection from weather.
- Yachts have an innate desire not to mix with ship operations if at all possible.
- Most Yachts do not participate in the IAATO ship scheduler to 'book' landing sites and thus may already be at anchor or onshore at a landing site when a ship arrives.
- If there is any conflict with ships at landing sites, it is in everyone's best interest for the yacht contingent to wait on board until the ship's party has left the site before landing people ashore.

The above may not always happen with non-IAATO yachts that are not aware of this voluntary protocol.

On the ship side, it is generally accepted within IAATO that:

- Ships are schedule bound.
- Some ships have more difficulty maneuvering in tight spaces.
- Ships operate via the IAATO ship scheduler specifically in order to coordinate landings efficiently with other ships.

Recommendations:

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 since anchorages.

Communication is best achieved through a friendly dialogue between the EL on the ship and the skipper of the yacht, on Channel 16 VHF (which all yachts and ships should be monitoring). Remember as if a yacht has to move to accommodate a ship, this is done voluntarily as a good will gesture and politeness is a very effective persuader.

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.

Both ships and yachts should keep in mind how their Operations will affect another vessel, this is particularly important when tenders are running in bays and around the other vessels. Avoid disturbances such as waking, buzzing, bumping, or crowding other vessels.

Above All:

There should always be a mutual respect, good communication and consideration between all seafarers working in the Antarctic environment.

Communication is key and all key personnel onboard ships and yachts should be aware of the ship- yacht etiquette document, as well as appropriate and polite communication practices.