

Care & Concern

Bringing your concerns to IAATO | A guide for current
or previous guests on IAATO expeditions

Foreword

It can be daunting, raising your head above the parapet to highlight concerns or report wrongdoing, a hundred thoughts run through your mind; “what if I’m wrong?”, “am I making a fuss out of nothing?” or “am I the right person to speak out?” – all very valid concerns, but ones we at IAATO hope to allay with this short document.

Put simply, we all have a responsibility to report perceived wrongdoing and, as a membership body dedicated to advocating and promoting the practice of safe and environmentally responsible private-sector travel to the Antarctic, IAATO is committed to supporting those who come forward with concerns regarding suspected violations of law or regulatory breaches by IAATO members.

This policy is intended to support current or previous guests on voyages run by IAATO operators, who believe they may have witnessed a violation of IAATO policy, or behaviours not in keeping with IAATO’s values.

You can raise your concern at any time about an incident that happened in the past, is still happening, or you reasonably believe is going to occur in the future. You must of course be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation of International Law governing Antarctic operations; or of IAATO policy.

Of course, you can also raise concerns with your tour operator directly. This is how most issues would be resolved in the first instance and you will find operators very open to receiving your feedback.

Whichever route you choose to take, we have a duty to maintain the highest standards when it comes to responsible tourism, and by reporting your concerns you are supporting that commitment.

Thank you.

IAATO

Please note, this document is not a whistleblower policy, and those directly employed by IAATO who wish to raise concerns should refer The IAATO Whistleblower Policy document.

Who should I tell?

If you are an Antarctic visitor and have witnessed behaviours or practices which you believe either constitute a violation of IAATO policy or are simply not in keeping with IAATO’s principles and ethos, please do not hesitate to contact the IAATO Secretariat by emailing careandconcern@iaato.org using the subject heading *Care and Concern*.

What Should I Expect?

Whoever you are, we will endeavour to promptly investigate your concerns. However, if you choose to bring your concerns to IAATO anonymously, we may not be able to take your concern further if you are unable to provide all the information we need to do so.

You can give your name to us and request confidentiality; we will investigate your concerns in a manner intended to protect your identity. You must say straight away if you do not want anyone else to know it was you who raised the concern.

It is important to note that reports made exclusively to the media are not protected.

What happens next?

If you report a suspected violation we will listen carefully to your concerns before making a decision about whether and what action should be taken. We may also ask you for further information or supporting evidence such as photos or video imagery, if available.

IAATO's Executive Director or the Executive Director's designee will manage the investigation into a report of a suspected violation of law or policy, and may request the assistance of legal counsel or other outside parties as he or she deems necessary. You won't have a say in how your concern is dealt with, but we can keep you informed about the action we have taken and, of course, are happy to answer any appropriate questions.

It is important to note that if we also have to keep the confidence of others involved in the allegation, we may not be able to go into detail with you about the investigation. The Executive Director or the Executive Director's designee will prepare a report of the findings of the investigation, and submit such report to the IAATO Executive Committee.

If you have any questions before making a report, please do not hesitate to contact IAATO for advice by emailing careandconcern@iaato.org.