

IAATO Observer Checklist for Associate (B1) Member

Ship-based operations with Landings



Thank you for agreeing to participate as an IAATO Observer. The following checklist should be straightforward. When answering the questions, you can use yes, no, unsure but please include explanations. The checklist has been designed as a useful tool to ensure that obligations set forth by IAATO and the Antarctic Treaty System are met.

Please email your completed evaluation to IAATO within three weeks of participating in this program. For companies operating a full Antarctic season, it is best to complete this form as soon as possible so that the company being observed can make improvements while their Antarctic season is still in progress. If possible, please provide the company with a draft copy of this report prior to disembarking the vessel.

Please submit by email to: Swellmeier@iaato.org

Any additional documents or appendices can be sent to:

By Fax: +1-401-272-2152

By Post: IAATO
11 S. Angell St., Box 302
Providence, RI 02906

Please give at least one copy to a designated representative of the company to whom you are evaluating and email the other copy to IAATO. You might find it useful to discuss your comments with a company representative while still on the voyage in order to avoid possibilities of disagreement at a later time.

Voyage Date (embarkation and disembarkation): _____

Observers Name _____

Date of Report _____

Name of Vessel _____

Name of Tour Operator/Organizer _____

Voyage sub-chartered to (if applicable) _____

Name of Expedition Leader _____

Actual Itinerary Travelled

Please enclose the day-by-day itinerary. If the Post Visit Site Report was completed by the end of the voyage, it can be appended to this report instead of describing the actual itinerary (please check with the Expedition Leader).

1. Voyage Preparation and Documentation

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

Were you provided with the same preparatory materials as all the clients were? Did they arrive in a timely fashion so you could adequately prepare for your voyage?

Did the pre-departure material include a copy of the Antarctic Visitor Guidelines (ATCM Recommendation XVIII-1)?

Did the pre-departure material include a copy of the leaflet 'Don't Pack a Pest' describing IAATO's updated biosecurity procedures?

Did the pre-departure material explain that conditions can be severe and inhospitable and point out the necessity for suitable clothing?

Were clients advised that sophisticated medical care is unavailable in the Antarctic, and encouraged to take out medical and evacuation insurance prior to their trip? Did they have to provide a medical questionnaire prior to their voyage?

2. Antarctic Treaty and Domestic Legislation

A. Compliance with Domestic Legislation

Did the operator receive all permits from government authorities required under domestic legislation in time of departure? Please list the government department and subject of the reference of each permit or authorization granted.

These documents include:

- 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 (ASPA's) if appropriate
- Waste Management Permit if appropriate
- Other if appropriate

B. Compliance with Operator's Advance Notification and EIA

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

Were the relevant officers, expedition leader and staff familiar with the content and did the expedition staff generally adhere to these documents?

Did you note any deviations/discrepancies to the operator's EIA? If so, please describe.

C. Compliance with Management Plans

Did the operator observe all relevant management plans for Antarctic Specially Managed Areas (ASMA's) and Antarctic Specially Protected Areas (ASPA's), and were these available to relevant officers, expedition leader and staff onboard?

Were any ASPA's entered? If so, did the operator have the required permit(s)?

Were any ASMA's or historic sites visited? If so, were relevant management plans observed?

D. Compliance with ATCM Recommendation XVIII-1

Were all activities conducted in accordance with ATCM Recommendation XVIII-1 - Guidance for those Organising and Conducting Tourism and Non-governmental Activities in the Antarctic (adopted at the Antarctic Treaty Meeting, Kyoto, 1994)?

E. Compliance with Standard Procedures for Station Visits

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)?

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?

Did the vessel provide any support by transporting scientists, etc.? If so, describe the briefings provided to these individuals after embarkation.

3. Vessel Operation

A. General

Did the Captain or an appointed ice pilot have Antarctic experience suitable for the intended operation? Was there additional relevant Antarctic experience among the bridge officers?

Did the vessel, as far as reasonable and practical, comply with the Guidelines for Ships Operating in Polar Waters?

Did the vessel participate in the IAATO vessel tracking scheme and ensure hourly reporting?

Were current hydrographic charts for the area of operation available on the bridge at all times? Please indicate which charting authority charts were being used (e.g. UKHO, Chile HO etc.)

How did the vessel obtain ice information? Were weather, ice and routing information services provided and reviewed in a timely manner?

Did the vessel navigate in ice covered waters at any time? If so, please provide details such as ice concentration, duration etc.

Were IAATO Marine Wildlife Watching Guidelines observed? Please describe wildlife sighted and any effect of the vessel presence on wildlife activity.

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?

B. Safety and Contingency Planning

Which Search and Rescue (SAR) measures were put in place to ensure self-sufficient operations? In general, would you say that the principles of self-sufficiency and sound contingency planning were observed at all times?

Were there onboard drill schedules that 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?

Please describe the medical facilities and list the number and qualifications of all medical personnel onboard.

Were the relevant officers and the expedition leader familiar with IAATO's 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.

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

C. Oil Spill Prevention

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?

What spill response materials and equipment were readily available on board should an incident occur in the Treaty Area? Did spill response exercises take place, and at what frequency?

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?

D. Sewage and 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 list equipment used for sewage and waste management; and describe disposal methods and how these were recorded.

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)?

Were staff, crew and passengers advised about the importance of sewage and waste minimization, and was publicity given to appropriate management practices?

What types of hazardous substances were used on the ship? How were these stored and monitored? Was there a separate receptacle for battery disposal?

Were poultry products separated out from other food garbage?

Was there any exchange of ballast water in the Treaty Area? Did the vessel have an approved ballast water management plan?

4. IAATO Standards and Regulations

A. General Conduct

Did the operator support the basic mission of IAATO – which is to advocate, promote and practice safe and environmentally responsible private-sector travel to the Antarctic?

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

B. Expedition Leader and Staff

Was there at least one copy of the 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?

Did at least 75% of the staff have previous experience in Antarctica?

Had any of the staff taken the IAATO Online Field Staff Assessment? Please detail which staff members and their onboard role (e.g. Jane Bloggs, EL, Jo Bloggs, AEL)

Please enclose 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?

C. Passenger and Crew Briefings

Was the crew briefed on Recommendation XVIII-1 prior to the start of the season? Was the crew provided with copies of the Visitor 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 IAATO Safety and Conservation Briefing (PowerPoint presentation) given prior to landing passengers in Antarctica? If not, why not?

Was this a mandatory briefing and if so how was this carried forth?

Were copies of Recommendation XVIII-1 (Visitor Guidelines) distributed to passengers with this briefing?

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)

D. Coordination of Itineraries

Was the latest version of the IAATO Vessel, Landbased and EMER Contact Information available onboard? Were itineraries efficiently coordinated with other vessels at all times?

What means of communications were used to coordinate schedules (e.g. daily IAATO radio schedule, GMDSS, email etc)?

Were there any visits to a landing site by more than one vessel over 12 passengers at one time? If so, could this have been prevented?

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 visits?

E. Pre-landing Action

Did the itinerary adhere to Antarctic Treaty and IAATO Site Guidelines relative to the size of 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 did they observe a 'rest period' for wildlife (usually from 2200-0400 hrs)?

Did the itinerary adhere to restrictions and management plans in place for visiting Antarctic Specially Protected Areas (ASPA's) and Antarctic Specially Managed Areas (ASMA's)?

Did the expedition leader and/or staff inspect every landing site for the purpose of evaluating safety and environmental conditions prior to landing passengers?

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?

F. Management Approach

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?

In general, were visitor numbers ashore limited to ensure compliance 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

G. Biosecurity Measures

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 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)?

Was Virkon used as disinfecting solution, and if not, why not?

H. Activities Ashore

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?

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?

I. Safety Ashore

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

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.

Were all staff members equipped with VHF radios, and capable of contact at all times?

Did medical personnel participate in landings and/or was 'on call' during landings?

After each landing, did the staff ensure 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?

K. Landing Craft Operations

Were instructions given to passengers on how 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, and respectful of wildlife? Were IAATO Marine Wildlife Watching Guidelines observed at all times?

Did the drivers demonstrate a good working knowledge of the IAATO Guidelines for small boat activities in the vicinity of ice?

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?

L. Other Activities

Were there other types of activities conducted, such as helicopter flights, kayaking, scuba diving, mountaineering or camping? If so, please describe.

Were these activities described in the EIA and Advance Notification?

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

M. Sub-Antarctic Islands

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?

5. Other Observations and Recommendations

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

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