

FIVE DECADES OF COOPERATION AND COMMITMENT TO SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



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IAATO Yacht Outreach Campaign

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Summary

This paper provides an update on efforts over the past year by IAATO to educate non-IAATO Antarctica-bound yachts, both private and commercial, as to the need for authorization from an Antarctic Treaty competent authority, adequate preparation for high latitude sailing, and awareness of the Environmental Protocol and ATCM guidelines to protect the environment.

Background

Following the presentations at ATCM XXXIII of WP025 *Report of an incident at Wordie House (HSM No. 62)*, WP052 *Data Collection and Reporting on Yachting Activity in Antarctica* and IP075 *Non-IAATO Tourism and Visitation in Antarctica*, IAATO Members agreed at the 21st Annual Meeting (Torino, 2010) to initiate an educational campaign for the non-IAATO yacht community. It was apparent that many non-IAATO yacht owners and/or skippers were unaware of the need for proper authorization or permitting to visit Antarctica and were not prepared for extreme weather conditions. Similarly, many were not cognizant of waste management requirements; the potential damage caused by invasive species, including pets; Antarctic Treaty Site Guidelines; and the status of Antarctic Specially Protected Areas (ASPAs) and historic sites.

The Components of the Yacht Outreach Campaign

The campaign was developed by the IAATO Yacht Working Group, in conjunction with the IAATO Secretariat. It should be noted that the working group was able to draw on IAATO yacht operators' considerable experience, with an average of 13.6 years as skippers in high latitude sailing. The campaign team was also able to incorporate the *IAATO Yachting Guidelines*, approved at IAATO 21, into the campaign literature. While not intended to be a complete list or to establish minimum standards, the guidelines were included in order to provide useful examples of industry best practices.

The components of the campaign, which was launched prior to the 2010-11 Antarctic season, included:

- New, informative pages on the IAATO website (<http://iaato.org/yachts/>), including links to *Antarctic Treaty Information for Visitors* and *Information on Protected Areas*; information on yacht preparation and responsibilities; the above noted guidelines; recommendations for protecting the Antarctic environment; guidelines for respecting Science and Antarctic Heritage; and a listing of IAATO Yacht Services Providers and Operators.

Importantly, the website includes links to ten Treaty Party websites, which provide authorization information and in some cases yacht-specific information. IAATO believes that private one-off yacht expeditions as well as commercial yacht charter operations that go through the authorization process with a Treaty Party learn from the experience and thereby strive to operate in a responsible fashion, particularly when the authorization process is detailed and incorporates safety and contingency planning.

- An informational poster to be displayed at relevant marinas, port authorities and yacht clubs in gateway ports. The laminated poster – *Sailing to Antarctica? Be prepared and help protect the Antarctic Environment* – measures 40 cm by 50 cm, and includes information in English, French and Spanish. The poster is available as Appendix 1 to this Information Paper.
- A pocket-size pamphlet, also including information in English, French and Spanish, intended for distribution at marinas and port authorities and by IAATO yacht members. The 16-page pamphlet includes contact information for Antarctic Treaty authorization, and can also be downloaded from <http://iaato.org/yachts/>. The pamphlet is available as Appendix 2 to this IP.

- An IAATO press release publicizing the campaign (http://iaato.org/press/IAATO_Yacht_Outreach_Release-August_2010.pdf). The release was subsequently picked up in relevant publications and media outlets, reaching thousands of yacht enthusiasts worldwide.

Response to Date

Based on anecdotal information from the IAATO yacht operators who distributed campaign materials, the response from non-IAATO yachts was largely positive. In a few cases, the educational materials were met with indifference or disdain, although this was not typical.

Taking the Campaign Forward

IAATO intends to continue the Yacht Outreach Campaign into the forthcoming 2011-12 Antarctic season. This will again include distribution of the posters and pamphlets in relevant port areas that serve as departure points for yachts heading south to Antarctica, as well as publicity to relevant yachting publications and websites.

For the continued campaign, IAATO will be exploring additional means to improve and expand the educational effort:

- Links to additional competent authorities websites that provide authorization information and yacht-specific information;
- The idea of an “Antarctic Yachting Workshop” to be conducted by IAATO yacht operators in Ushuaia during the 2011-12 Antarctic season. Not intended to be a comprehensive training course, the workshop will provide non-IAATO yacht owners and skippers with basic information, requirements, resources, etc. to assist with their planned journey to the Antarctic Peninsula.
- Continued coordination with competent authorities in order to facilitate distribution of the materials in relevant port areas, or to produce additional materials that can prove effective in persuading yachts to participate in the authorization process.

Conclusion

IAATO welcomes any feedback or advice from Treaty Parties on its Yacht Outreach Campaign, and appreciates the publicizing of yacht training courses, such as that described in ATCM XXXIV IP015 *Training Course for Yachts Intending to Visit Antarctica*.

IAATO also finds useful the recommendations put forward in ATCM XXXIV WP037 *Yacht Guidelines to Complement Safety Standards of Ship Traffic around Antarctica*, including the use of the checklist by competent authorities in assessing yachting expeditions in the future.