



FIVE DECADES OF COOPERATION AND COMMITMENT TO SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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Report of the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators 2010-11

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Under Article III (2) of the Antarctic Treaty

Introduction

The International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO) is pleased to report on its activities to ATCM XXXIV, under Article III (2) of the Antarctic Treaty.

In its 20th anniversary year, IAATO continues to focus activities in support of its mission statement to ensure:

- Effective day-to-day management of member activities in Antarctica;
- Educational outreach, including scientific collaboration; and
- Development and promotion of Antarctic tourism industry best practices.

A detailed description of IAATO, its mission statement, primary activities and recent developments can be found in the *2010-11 Fact Sheet*, and on the IAATO website: www.iaato.org.

IAATO Membership and Activities during 2010-11

IAATO is comprised of 108 Members, Associates and Affiliates. Member offices are located worldwide, representing 57% of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Party countries, and carrying nationals from nearly all Treaty Parties annually to Antarctica.

During the 2010-11 Antarctic tourism season, the overall number of visitors decreased 8.3% to 33,824 from the previous season (36,875 visitors in 2009-10). These numbers reflect only those traveling with IAATO member companies. Details on tourism statistics can be found in ATCM XXXIV IP106 *IAATO Overview of Antarctic Tourism: 2010-11 Season and Preliminary Estimates for 2011-12*. The Membership Directory and additional statistics on IAATO member activities can be found at www.iaato.org.

IAATO Annual Meeting and Participation at Other Meetings during 2010-11

IAATO Secretariat staff and member representatives participated in internal and external meetings, liaising with National Antarctic Programs, governmental, scientific, environmental and industry organizations.

- The IAATO 22nd Annual Meeting (May 9-12, 2011, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia) hosted over 80 participants. Treaty Party representatives from Australia and Chile attended, along with representatives from CCAMLR, COMNAP, IHO/HCA and other Antarctic stakeholders. Notable outcomes of the meeting included:
 - Agreement to move forward with the IAATO Enhanced Observer Scheme. For details, see ATCM XXXIV IP107 *Towards an IAATO Enhanced Observer Scheme*.
 - A sustained commitment to education efforts aimed at non-IAATO Antarctica-bound yachts. For details, see ATCM XXXIV IP014 *IAATO Yacht Outreach Campaign*.
 - A report on success achieved with the IAATO Field Staff Online Assessment. More than 70 expedition leaders (ELs) and assistant expedition leaders (AELs) working with IAATO member-companies have now taken the test, which is designed to supplement the training and knowledge of field staff on the contents of the *IAATO Field Operations Manual (FOM)*. Nearly all IAATO vessel operators have supported and participated in the test, and one

Member-company requires it as a condition of employment for ELs and AELs. For 2011-12, the assessment will be expanded beyond its current focus on vessel-based operations in the Peninsula to include the Ross Sea/East Antarctica region. A version for land tourism operators is being developed. The assessment can now be taken online by all field staff.

- An update by the IAATO Climate Change Working Group. For details, see ATCM XXXIV IP0103 *IAATO Climate Change Working Group: Report of Progress*.

IAATO members, representatives from the Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) and other Antarctic stakeholders participated in an informal round table discussion at AAD offices in Kingston, Tasmania May 12, 2011 on issues pertaining to Antarctic tourism. A summary report on the discussion is forthcoming and will be available to Treaty Parties.

- One IAATO representative attended COMNAP XXII in Buenos Aires, Argentina, including the Non-Native Species Workshop. Efforts by IAATO members to eliminate the introduction of non-native species were commended at the workshop, and additional preventative recommendations were made and passed on to IAATO operators. IAATO gave a presentation on its risk-assessment approach at IMO Polar Code deliberations, and expressed interest in participating in the development of an accident, incident and near-miss database to facilitate lessons-learned and improved safety. IAATO supports further cooperation and collaboration between its members and National Antarctic Programs.
- Four IAATO representatives attended the 10th International Hydrographic Organization / Hydrographic Commission on Antarctica (IHO/HCA) Meeting in Cambridge, UK. Options for IAATO vessels, as “ships of opportunity,” to contribute useful hydrographic information were discussed, including the rendering of mud maps and annotated charts; the use of simple data loggers; surveys and calibration of IAATO vessel sensors by hydrographic offices (HO); and the carrying of HO survey teams. An IAATO representative also agreed to provide comments on the current survey prioritization plan to HCA. IAATO will continue to recommend IAATO vessels as ships of opportunity for hydrographic data collection.
- IAATO sent a representative to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Design and Equipment (D&E) Subcommittee’s 54th and 55th meetings in London, as an advisor for Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA). Aware of the importance of the development of a mandatory Polar Code, IAATO participated in the working groups at both meetings, and will engage in the intersessional correspondence group currently underway. IAATO continues to work with an independent maritime safety consultant to develop an in-depth risk assessment study.
- An IAATO representative attended the Conservation of Antarctica Workshop in South Africa, May 2011, hosted by the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR). The workshop examined current and future challenges to the conservation of Antarctica, and ways in which these challenges can be addressed.
- IAATO was invited to participate in the Antarctic Tourism Conference, November 6, 2010 in Punta Arenas, Chile. Highlights of the conference were presentations by President Sébastien Piñera of Chile and President Rafael Correa of Ecuador. IAATO was pleased to provide a presentation on its role and mission in Antarctica.
- The IAATO 23rd Annual Meeting is scheduled for May 1-3, 2012 in Providence, Rhode Island, USA. Interested Treaty Parties that would like to attend or participate should contact IAATO at iaato@iaato.org.

Environmental Monitoring

IAATO continues to provide ATCM and CEP with detailed information on member activities in Antarctica. For details see ATCM XXXIV IP106 *IAATO Overview of Antarctic Tourism: 2010-11 Season and Preliminary Estimates for 2011-12 Antarctic Season* and ATCM XXXIV IP105 *Report on IAATO Operator use of Antarctic Peninsula Landing Sites and ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines, 2009-10 & 2010-11 Seasons*.

IAATO continues to welcome opportunities for collaborative work with scientific institutions to address specific issues on environmental monitoring, such as the work with Oceanites, Antarctic Site Inventory and University of Maryland and University of Stellenbosch reported in ATCM XXXIII IP112 *Report of the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators* and ATCM XXXIII IP2 *Spatial Patterns of Tour Ship Traffic in the Antarctic Peninsula Region*.

Tourism Incidents 2010-11; Update on Tourism Incidents 2008-09 and 2009-10

Incidents during the 2010-11 season included:

- Arctic Trucks, a subcontractor to IAATO Member TAC, did not follow NGO guidelines for ASMA No. 5 Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station, South Pole. IAATO discussed the incident with NSF in February 2011, and the general issue of ensuring subcontractors are aware of their obligations has been raised within IAATO.
- Possible harmful disturbance of an elephant seal at Hannah Point. For details, see ATCM XXXIV IP104 *Proposed Amendment to Antarctic Treaty Site Guidelines for Hannah Point*.
- The *MV Clelia II* sustained a broken bridge window and electrical/communications malfunction when it was struck by a large wave in heavy seas in the Drake Passage December 7, 2010. The vessel returned safely to Ushuaia with no reported injuries to passengers and a minor injury sustained by one crew member.
- The *MV Polar Star* struck an un-surveyed rock while anchoring just north of Detaille Island on January 31, 2011. Following an underwater inspection at Arctowski Station, the flag state (Barbados) recommended that passengers be transferred to other vessels for the return to Ushuaia. This was accomplished on February 3, with all passengers returning to Ushuaia aboard other IAATO vessels, the *MV Marina Svetaeva*, *MV Expedition* and *MV Ushuaia*, on February 6. There were no reported injuries to passengers or crew, and the *MV Polar Star* also returned safely to Ushuaia.

Updates on previous season incidents:

- IAATO Marine Committee reviewed a draft report from Panama on the *MV Ushuaia* grounding in 2008 and the subsequent mitigation actions that were enacted by the operator, noting that the actions taken by the operator provided a good example of useful lessons learned.
- IAATO has requested and awaits a final flag-state report from the Bahamas regarding the grounding of the *MV Ocean Nova*, which occurred February 17, 2009.
- IAATO was informed by Malta that no flag-state report is warranted relative to the damaged propeller and shaft incurred when the *MV Clelia II* hit a rock at Petermann Island, December 6, 2009.

Scientific and Conservation Support

During the 2010-11 season, IAATO members cost-effectively transported more than 100 scientific, support and heritage conservation staff, as well as equipment and supplies used by these personnel, to and from stations, field sites and gateway ports.

In addition, IAATO members and their passengers contributed \$316,500 to scientific and conservation organizations active in Antarctica and the sub-Antarctic, such as Save the Albatross, South Georgia Heritage Trust, UK Antarctic Heritage Trust, Last Ocean, Mawson Huts Foundation, NZ Antarctic Heritage Trust, Oceanites and the World Wildlife Fund.

With Thanks – Cooperation with National Programs, Antarctic Treaty Parties and all Antarctic Stakeholders

IAATO appreciates the opportunity to work cooperatively with Antarctic Treaty Parties, COMNAP, SCAR, CCAMLR, IHO/HCA, ASOC and others toward the long-term protection of Antarctica.