



**Antarctic Treaty
Consultative Meeting XXXV**

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**Report on IAATO Operator use of
Antarctic Peninsula Landing Sites and
ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines, 2011-2012
Season**

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Information Paper submitted by IAATO

Introduction

IAATO remains committed to reporting to the CEP and ATCM information on IAATO operator landing site and ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines use. This information paper presents the data collected by IAATO from Post Visit Report Forms for the 2011-2012 season.

Additional information on IAATO operator activities can be found in ATCM XXXV IP39 *IAATO Overview of Antarctic Tourism: 2011/12 Season and Preliminary Estimates for 2012/13* and on the IAATO website (www.iaato.org).

Antarctic Peninsula traditional ship-borne tourism

Antarctic tourism continues to be primarily focused on traditional ship-borne tourism in the Antarctic Peninsula, which accounts for *circa* 95% of all landed activity.

Figure 1 provides a comparison of the factor increase in different aspects of this activity (number of passengers, ships, voyages, landings made and sites used). As all traditional ship-borne tourism to the Peninsula during the 2011-12 season was conducted by IAATO member operators, it is believed that this information is reflective of actual levels of this activity.

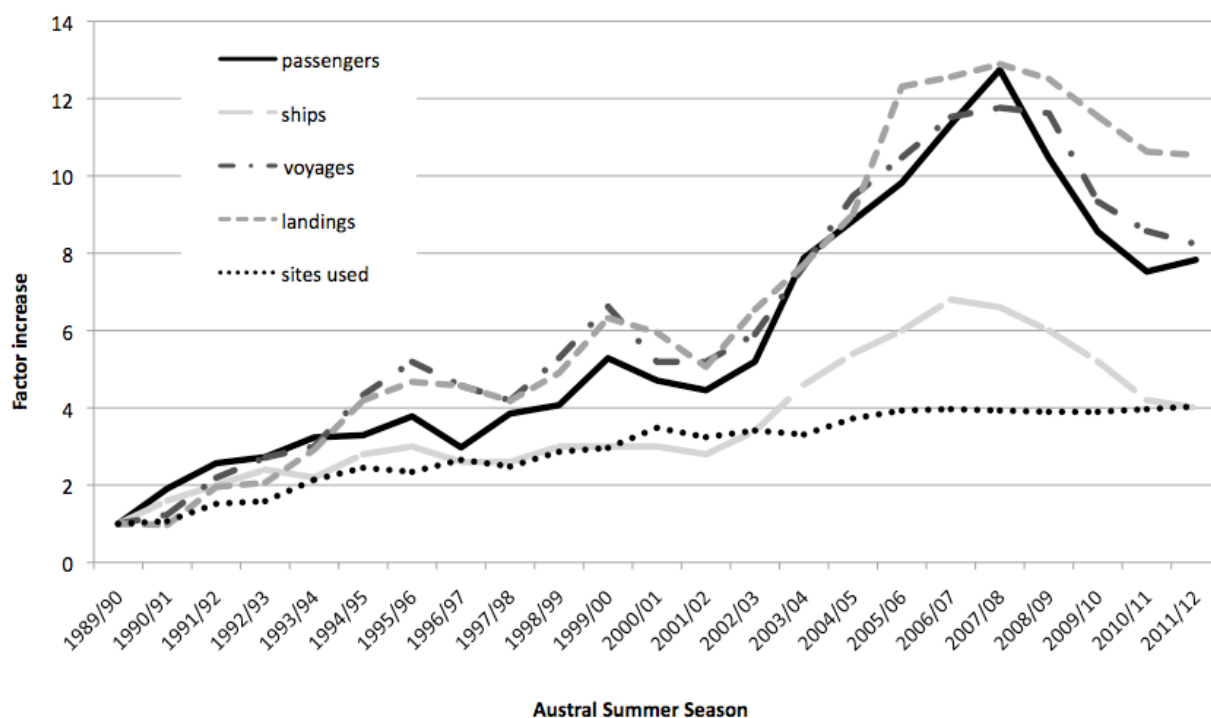


Figure 1: Factor Change in Traditional Landing Ship-borne Tourism (not including sailing or motor vessels carrying 12 or fewer passengers) in the Antarctic Peninsula 1989-2012

Comparing the 2011-12 season with the peak season of 2007-2008 the following trends are visible:

- 2011-2012 has seen the first increase in the number of passengers taking part in traditional ship borne tourism to the Peninsula since 2007-08 season. This increase is slight and the numbers are still well below the 2007-08 peak.
- There has been a steady decline in IAATO ships operating in the area, from 33 in 2007-08 to only 20 in the 2011-12 season. This decline is due to ships being taken out of service and companies no longer operating in Antarctica.
- The number of voyages, and consequently the number of landings, has dropped by *circa* 4% and 1% respectively.
- The number of landing sites used has increased by two from last year. The change is believed to be a consequence of the more unusual ice conditions during the 2011-12 season. For a large part of the season, heavy ice conditions north of the Lemaire Channel and extending southwards prevented access until late season to this otherwise popular area. During this same period Antarctic Sound, Erebus and Terror Gulf, and Prince Gustav Channel were open relatively early, encouraging more ships to visit this larger, but traditionally less frequented, area.

Specific Landing Site Use

Appendix 1 Table 1 illustrates the 20 most-visited sites in terms of landings made for the 2011-12 season. As in previous years this represents *circa* seventy percent (70%) of the total number of landings made and indicates that there is a continued trend of landings concentrating at a few popular sites.

All but three of these most-visited sites – Mikkelsen Harbour, Port Charcot and Orne Island – are covered by site specific management plans, either through ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines or National Program management through their proximity to stations. Proposed Visitor Site Guidelines for Mikkelsen Harbour and Port Charcot will be presented at ATCM XXXV (see ATCM XXXV WP15 *Site Guidelines for D’Hainaut Island, Mikkelsen Harbour, Trinity Island* and ATCM XXXV WP16 *Site Guidelines for Port Charcot, Booth Island*). If adopted, this will leave only Orne Island without Treaty recognised site specific management practices. However, the site is covered by IAATO’s internal site guidelines (See ATCM XXVIII IP90 IAATO’s *Site Specific Guidelines in the Antarctic Peninsula*) and visits by IAATO member operators to these sites follow standard codes of conduct for visits to Antarctic landing sites including Recommendation XVIII-1 *Guidelines for Tourism* and Resolution XXXIV-3 *General Guidelines for Visitors to the Antarctic*.

Appendix 2 illustrates the total number of landings made per day at all sites within the Antarctic Peninsula. For 2011-12, the season was 158 days, down from 163 the previous season. The core period for visitation by ships was 120 days between Mid-November and Mid-March, with the first vessel landing on 28 October 2011 and the last vessel leaving on 2 April 2012. On the basis of the full season dates, only Goudier Island received an average of more than one visit per day and three sites, Goudier Island, Whalers Bay and Neko Harbour received an average of more than one visit per day during the core season.

Additional tourism statistics can be found on the IAATO website (www.iaato.org).

Use of ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines

An assessment of the use of the sites covered by the ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines was conducted through feedback directly from field staff and analysis of the Post Visit Report Forms.

Appendix 3 illustrates the total number of known landings made at sites covered by ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines, including a listing of the number of occasions the daily visitation limits were met.

Co-ordination among IAATO field staff remains very effective. Analysis of the Post Visit Report Forms noted that on two occasions during the 2011-12 season the number of visits per day exceeded the limits set by the guidelines. In one case this was due to an Expedition Leader making a special short landing with a small group of people to visit a yacht that was in the area, the second occasion was due to administrative oversight.

Conclusion

While the decline of tourism seems to be stabilising, the information extracted from Post Visit Report Forms shows that tourism levels are still depressed by approximately 30% from the peak season of 2007-08. This has reduced passenger numbers, voyages, ships operating and landings made.

Almost all the landing sites in the top twenty landing sites on the peninsula are regulated by ACTM Visitor Site Guidelines or through National Programme Management guidelines.

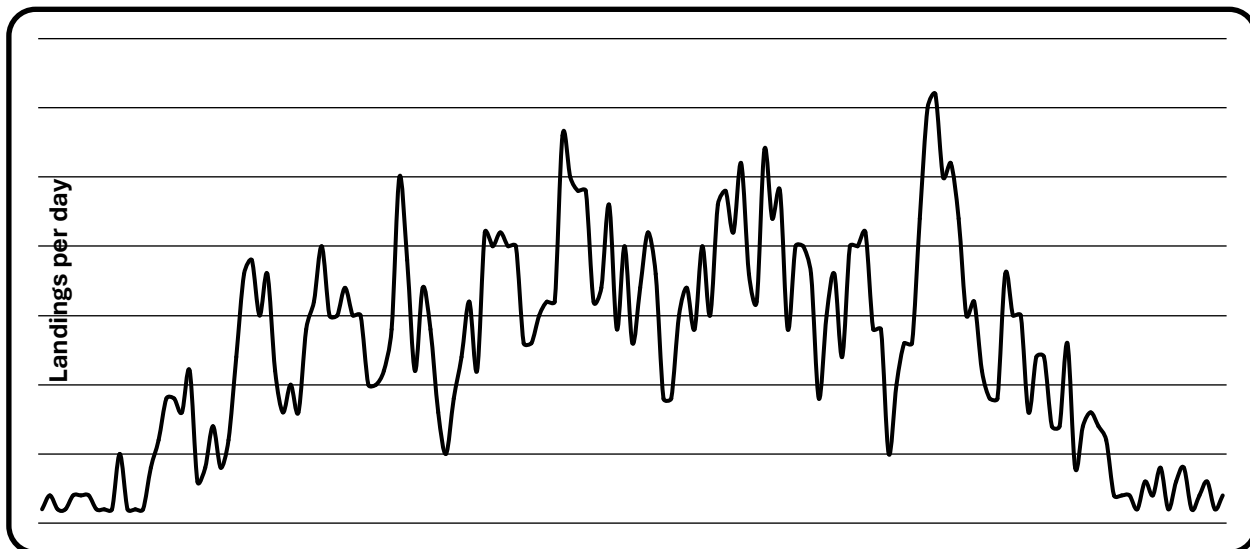
IAATO will continue to provide information annually to the CEP and ATCM on its members' activities. In addition, IAATO Members remain interested in gaining a better understanding of the use of ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines by non-IAATO visitors.

Appendix 1: Top Twenty Most Visited Sites

Table 1: Top Twenty Most Visited Sites during the 2011-2012 Season

Rank	Landing Site	Number of Landed Visits	Number of Landed Tourists	Site Guidelines / National Programme Management
1	Goudier Island	165	15,052	ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines
2	Whalers Bay	130	11,368	ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines
3	Neko Harbor	126	13,681	ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines
4	Cuverville Island	109	10,344	ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines
5	Jougla Point	101	7,766	ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines
6	Brown	98	8845	National Programme Management
7	Half Moon Island	96	9,990	ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines
8	Damoy Point/Dorian Bay	62	4,051	ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines
9	Aitcho - Barrientos Island	59	5,846	ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines
10	Brown Bluff	52	5,357	ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines
11	Danco Island	52	4,700	ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines
12	Telefon Bay	47	3,622	ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines
13	Paulet Island	45	5,414	ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines
14	Petermann Island	35	3,074	ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines
15	Mikkelsen Harbor	29	2,394	
16	Orne Harbor	28	2,143	
17	Hannah Point	27	2,716	ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines
18	Waterboat Point/Gonzalez Videla Station	27	1,805	National Programme Management
19	Frei Station	23	1,159	National Programme Management
20	Port Charcot	20	1229	

Appendix 2: Total number of IAATO operator landings made per day, at all sites within the Antarctic 2011-2012



A. Total number of IAATO operator landings made per day at all sites within the Antarctic 2011-2012 season

Appendix 3: Recorded Site Use at Sites covered by ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines.*A: Recorded Site Use at ATCM Visitor Site Guidelines Sites 2011-2012.*

Landing Site	Total Number of Landings	Number of days where maximum visit limitation was met.
Goudier Island	165	18
Whalers Bay	130	
Neko Harbor	126	5
Cuerverville Island	109	1
Jougla Point	101	1
Half Moon Island	96	2
Damoy Point/Dorian Bay	62	11 (1 over)
Aitcho - Barrientos Island	59	9
Brown Bluff	52	
Danco Island	52	
Telefon Bay	47	
Paulet Island	45	7
Petermann Island	35	1
Hannah Point	27	27 (1 over)
Port Charcot	20	
Baily Head	19	
Pléneau Island	17	
Yankee Harbor	13	
Devil Island	12	
Walker Bay (by Hannah Point)	11	
Argentine Islands/Wordie Hut	9	
Penguin Island	8	1
Torgersen Island	8	
Ardley Island	4	
Cape Royds	4	
Snow Hill - Nordenskjolds Hut	3	
Turret Point	3	
Horseshoe Island	2	
Shingle Cove	2	
Cape Denison (Mawsons Huts)	1	