

## Overview of Antarctic Tourism, 2000

(Agenda item 4) (Submitted by IAATO)

The International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO) is pleased to provide this summary of Antarctic tourism for the 1999-2000 season and a brief overview of Antarctic tourism trends. A detailed overview of Antarctic tourism and IAATO is available online at [iaato.org](http://iaato.org), including the statistics compiled annually by the Office of Polar Programs at the U.S. National Science Foundation.

### 1 Overview

In 1999-2000 it is estimated that 14,762 people traveled to the Antarctic on private sector expeditions. Tourist activities currently include small boat or zodiac cruising, shore landings, and to a lesser extent kayaking, mountain climbing, scuba diving, surfing, skiing, snowboarding, camping, parachuting and marathon running. A brief summary of the season, "IAATO Overview of Actual Antarctic Tourism, 1999-2000," is appended. (Appendix A). Of these Antarctic visitors, 139 participated in land-based expeditions, 221 traveled aboard commercial yachts and 14,402 traveled aboard commercially organized tour vessels.

### 2 Seaborne Tourism

2.1 14,402 people traveled to the Antarctic on 21 commercially organized tour vessels from November 1999 to March 2000, a 46% increase over the 1998-1999 season total of 9,857 ship-based visitors. This dramatic increase in tourist numbers is primarily due to the operations of three new large vessels during the 1999-2000 season, namely the Aegean I, the Ocean Explorer and the Rotterdam VI.

2.2 IAATO members operated all but four of the Antarctic tour vessels that sailed in 1999-2000. The four non-IAATO vessels were Aegean I, Ocean Explorer, Marco Polo and Rotterdam VI. In respect of these vessels, IAATO member Marine Expeditions assisted the Aegean I and the Ocean Explorer. The Marco Polo has been operating in Antarctica since 1993. The Rotterdam VI spent only 72 hours in the Peninsula region without landing tourists.

2.3 The vast majority of Antarctic voyages are to the Peninsula region during the five month Austral summer (November - March), departing from Ushuaia, Argentina, or, to a lesser extent, from Punta Arenas, Chile or Port Stanley. Of 153 ship and yacht voyages in 1999-2000, 148 voyages visited the Antarctic Peninsula Region; four visited the Ross Sea sector; and one voyage (on the Marco Polo) included both the Ross Sea sector and Antarctic Peninsula.

Region Visited	Activity	Number of Voyages	Number of Persons
Peninsula only	landings	147	13,852
Peninsula only	no landings	1	936
Peninsula and Ross Sea	landings	1	484
Ross Sea/Continental	landings	4	287
Land based	land based	13	139

### 2.4 Commercial Antarctic Tour Vessels, 1999-2000

Ship	Registry	Passenger	Operating in
------	----------	-----------	--------------

		<b>Capacity</b>	<b>Antarctica Since</b>
<i>Explorer</i>	Liberia	96	1970
<i>World Discoverer</i>	Liberia	138	1977
<i>Bremen (ex Frontier Spirit)</i>	Bahamas	164	1989
<i>Professor Molchanov</i>	Russia	52	1991
<i>Kapitan Khlebnikov</i>	Russia	108	1992
<i>Akademik Sergei Vavilov</i>	Russia	80	1992
<i>Akademik Ioffe</i>	Russia	117	1993
<i>Hanseatic</i>	Bahamas	180	1993
<i>Marco Polo *</i>	Bahamas	800	1993
<i>Clipper Adventurer **</i>	Bahamas	120	1994
<i>Akademik Shokalskiy</i>	Russia	16	1995
<i>Professor Multanovskiy</i>	Russia	52	1995
<i>Akademik Shuleykin</i>	Russia	48	1996
<i>Caledonian Star</i>	Bahamas	110	1998
<i>Lyubov Orlova</i>	Russia	120	1999
<i>Grigoriy Mikheev</i>	Russia	36	1999
<i>Akademik Boris Petrov</i>	Russia	52	1999
<i>Aegean 1***</i>	Greek	630	1999
<i>Ocean Explorer 1****</i>	Panama	850	1999
<i>Rotterdam VI *****</i>	Netherlands	1316	1999

\* *Marco Polo*: Not a Member of IAATO. Capacity limited by operator (Orient Lines) to 500-600 passengers

\*\* *Clipper Adventurer* is the ex *Alla Tarasova*

\*\*\* *Aegean 1* Not a Member of IAATO

\*\*\*\* *Ocean Explorer 1* Not a Member of IAATO

\*\*\*\*\* *Rotterdam VI* No landings Not a Member of IAATO

Vessels that were operated during the 1999-2000 season but are not returning for the 2000-01 season are: *Akademik Sergei Vavilov*, *Akademik Shuleykin*, *Boris Petrov*, *Aegean 1*, *Ocean Explorer 1*, *Rotterdam VI*.

### 3 Commercial Antarctic Yachts (non-IAATO members)

3.1 Based on information received by the IAATO Secretariat, a total of 221 passengers were reported to have traveled to Antarctica aboard 23 commercial yachts in the 1999-2000 season. This includes yachts reported at Arthur Harbor by the U.S. National Science Foundation, reports made directly to the IAATO Secretariat and information gathered by In.Fue.Tur. in Ushuaia and by information provided to IAATO by the BAS staff at Port Lockroy. Yacht activity information (which may be incomplete) is included in the statistical summaries and projections appended to this report. IAATO Member *S/Y Pelagic* is included in the section 2.3 above, rather than in the yacht totals. *S/Y Golden Fleece* is now an IAATO member but was not officially an IAATO member during the 1999-2000 operating season and therefore included in this yacht section. Antarctic yacht activity is also compiled annually by Robert Headland at Scott Polar Research Institute as part of the ongoing "Chronological List of Antarctic Expeditions and Related Historical Events".

3.2 Regular Commercial yachts with fare paying passengers include the *Pelagic* (IAATO Member, Pelagic Expeditions), *Golden Fleece* (IAATO Member, Golden Fleece Expeditions) *Damien II* (Sally and Jerome Poncet), *Croix St. Paul II* (Alex Foucard), *Iron Bark*, *Oosterschelde*, *Express Crusader*, *Arka*, *The Dove*, *Shantooti*, *Alderman*, *Sarah W. Vorwerk*, *Philos*, *Meander*, *Savannah*, *Tooluka*, and yachts organized through Croisieres Australes of France (*Baltazar*, *Kotick I*)

3.3 The IAATO Secretariat is in regular correspondence with some of the yacht operators and other interested parties regarding Antarctic yacht activity. Yacht operators Pelagic Expeditions (Full Member) and Golden Fleece Expeditions (new Provisional Member) are both active IAATO members.

#### 4. Land-based Tourism

4.1 Non-IAATO member Adventure Network International (ANI) operated out of Punta Arenas, Chile for the fifteenth consecutive season. There were a total of 139 land based tourists which included support for expeditions and ANI organized and operated expeditions as noted below. ANI also continues to provide EMER (Emergency Medical Evacuation Response) to IAATO member vessels throughout the period that the vessels are operating in the Peninsula region.

4.2 ANI operated one Hercules L381-G flights for a total of 17 trips and 201 flying hours, 2 Twin Otters for a total of 190 Flying Hours and One Turbine DC3-67 for a total of 65 flying hours.

4.2 Patriot Hills Camp opened 24 October 1999 and closed February 9, 2000. Dronning Maud Land trips operated from Patriot Hills during the 1999-2000 season.

4.3 ANI provided support for the following expeditions:

- Peter Tresseder and Tim Jarvis from Berkner Island to the South Pole. The original plan was to go all the way to McMurdo but the expedition was terminated at the Pole due to fuel contamination of the food.
- Laurence de La Ferriere. From South Pole to Dumount d'Urville. Solo and unsupported.
- ANI guided expedition from Hercules Inlet to the South Pole. Resupplied at 85° and 87° . Two guides and 7 clients.
- Singapore team of 4 from Hercules Inlet to the South Pole. One resupply at 85° .
- UK Women's expedition from Hercules Inlet to the South Pole. Resupply at 87° .

4.4 ANI organized/operated the following Expeditions	total number of people
Expeditions/as above (4.3)	26
Vinson Massif (Guided)	9

Vinson Massif (Self guided)	33
Emperor Penguins	20
South Pole fly in	31
Ski to the South Pole	7
Ski the last degree SP	6
Heart of Antarctica	1
Dronning Maud Land	6
Total	139

## 5. Overflights

5.1 During the 1999-2000 season Croydon Travel of Victoria, Australia, operated 9 "Antarctic Day Sight Seeing" flights from Australia: Melbourne (4), Sydney (3) and Adelaide (2) aboard Qantas Airlines Boeing 747-400 aircraft for the sixth consecutive season. A total 3,412 passengers participated on 9 flights from November 1999 to February 2000. In addition, the plane carried a total of 193 crew during the season. To date, Croydon has operated a total of 52 flights carrying nearly 17,000 tourists since commencement of Antarctic operations in the 1994-1995 season.

5.2 The aircraft operates at a minimum altitude of 10,000 ft or 2,000 ft above the highest ground within 100 nautical miles. The flights operate mainly to the north Victoria Land coast, Oates, George V and Adelie Land regions. The pilots avoid any known penguin colonies by a horizontal separation of 1 mile and provide a full in flight lecture and education program utilizing three Antarctic lecturers/staff members and videos.

5.3 Croydon Travel expects to operate 6 flights in the 2000-01 season to the same areas detailed above from Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide.

5.4 Flights to the Antarctic Peninsula region operate from Chile but information on these has been difficult to obtain. According to IAATO sources overflights of the Antarctic Peninsula from Punta Arenas, Chile operate often from November to March, by a company called Avant. These flights are offered as an optional excursion to cruise ship passengers and independent travelers calling at Punta Arenas. It is reported that at least 22 flights (of 27 originally scheduled) took place between November 1999 and March 2000, each carrying 40-60 passengers and staff including an Antarctic lecturer. The flights are reported to have been operated with a Boeing 737 aircraft approved by the Dirección General de Aeronáutica (Chilean Aeronautical Office).

In addition, Chilean Airlines DAP are thought to operate flights to the Antarctic Peninsula as well.

## 6 Preliminary Estimate of Planned Activities for the 2000-01 Season

6.1 According to estimates provided to IAATO by tour operators, 13,193 tourists may visit Antarctica on commercially organized tour vessels, including 200 on land-based expeditions and 200 on commercial yachts. The figure of 13,193 would represent an 11% decrease from the previous season. (14,762 in 1999-2000) (Appendix B).

6.2 There will be two vessels returning to Antarctica during the 2000-01 season after several years' absence. Quark Expeditions will again operate

the Icebreaker *Kapitan Dranitsyn* in the Peninsula area. The *Kapitan Dranitsyn* has sailed in the Peninsula Area and Weddell Sea during prior years (1993-1995). Plantours and Partner will operate the *Vista Mar* which has also operated in past years in the Peninsula region (1993-97 periodically).

6.3 Marine Expeditions will operate the *Mariya Yermolova* for the 2000-01 season in the Peninsula region. The vessel *Sir Hubert Wilkins* will be operated by Ocean Frontiers (non-IAATO member) to George V/Commonwealth Bay and Oates Land.

## 7. Antarctic Tourism Trends

7.1 For the past 11 years, Nadene Kennedy from the U.S. National Science Foundation has compiled and distributed detailed information on Antarctic tourist activities. IAATO collaborates with NSF to ensure that all Antarctic tourism is represented, not just that of U.S. organizers. Appendices include the following tables and charts compiled by NSF and IAATO to reflect the 1999-2000 season. This data is an invaluable resource, showing tourism activity at individual landing sites over time.

- Appendix C Antarctic Tourist Trends
- Appendix D Antarctic Tourists Ship and Land Based 1992-2000
- Appendix E Peninsula Sites Ranking in the Top 5 Most Visited Sites For 3 or More of the Last Eleven Seasons
- Appendix F Comparison of Nationalities (1994/95 -1999/00)
- Appendix G 1999-2000 Summary of Peninsula Sites Visited by Tour Ships
- Appendix H Eleven Season (1989-00) Overview of Sites Visited in the Antarctic Peninsula
- Appendix I 1999-2000 Summary of Continental Sites Visited by Tour Ships
- Appendix J Overview of Sites Visited - Continental Side of Antarctica (1992/93 -1999/2000)
- Appendix K Nationalities of all Tourists 99-00
- Appendix L Summary of Seaborne and Land Based Antarctic Tourism by Departure 1999-2000
- Appendix M Top Eight Continental Sites

7.2 IAATO has successfully predicted the fluctuating trend in Antarctic Tourism over the last five years. The IAATO Secretariat currently predicts that Antarctic Tourism will continue to grow if, as expected, large ships include Antarctica in itineraries such as "Round the World," "Round South America"etc. The significant increase in numbers reflects the numbers carried by large vessels but not necessarily the number of tourists that might land in Antarctica or how long the tourists would landed for. The following chart is a "best guess" estimate based on trends and on information that has been provided to the IAATO Secretariat. These estimates are inevitably subject to economic factors that are multifarious and unpredictable.

Historical statistics and Five Year Forecast of Seaborne Antarctic Tourism 2000-2005

Year	#Operators	#Ships	#Voyages	# Passengers	# Passengers	# Passengers
------	------------	--------	----------	--------------	--------------	--------------

				Multiple Landings	No Landings	2 or less landings
1992-93	10	12	59	6704		
1993-94	9	11	65	7957		
1994-95	9	14	93	8098		
1995-96	10	15	113	9212		
1996-97	11	13	104	7322		
1997-98	12	13 (plus yachts)	92 (plus yachts)	9473		
1998-99	15	15 (plus yachts)	116	9857		
1999-00	17	21 (plus yachts)	154	11,880	936	1807
<b>Forecast</b>						
2000-01	20 (plus yachts)	19 (plus yachts)	142	12,993	0	0
2001-02	24	24 (plus yachts)	158	14,500	3000	?
2002-03	24	26 (plus yachts)	166	15,500	3000	?
2003-04	25	27 (plus yachts)	170	15,500	3500	?
2004-05	25	27 (plus yachts)	170	16,000	3500	?

7.3 Since 1993 large cruise liners have periodically visited the Antarctic Peninsula. The M/V Marco Polo has visited nearly every season.

7.4 During 2001-2002 there are two planned visits by the *M/V Ryndam*, at least one with the *M/V Crystal Harmony* and in addition Seaborne Cruises may send one or more ships. All the above mentioned vessels carry a large number of passengers.

7.5 IAATO will continue to monitor developments in the tourism industry. Antarctic tourism will probably remain a relatively specialized and expensive niche destination offered mainly by a small number of experienced small ship tour operators, whose focus will continue to be on educational voyages to areas of exceptional natural history and wilderness value. There is a current trend towards the diversification of activities from these tourist vessels such as scuba diving, mountain climbing and kayaking. In addition large ships are likely to operate voyages in the region but with few or no landings in Antarctica, placing more emphasis on the scenic beauty aspects.

#### 8. IAATO Statement on Larger Cruise Vessels

The IAATO Bylaws, as adopted in 1991, include a pledge by members not to carry more than 400 passengers per trip. The 400-passenger limit was determined, in part, by the fact that the seven founding members of IAATO included Paquet/Ocean cruise Lines which operated the 400-passenger *Ocean Princess* at the time. The question of larger vessels has been under

active discussion by members since 1991. Lengthy discussions have taken place during the 1999 and 2000 general meetings but so far no changes have been made to the IAATO Bylaws to increase the number of passengers or size of vessel.

8.1 Despite pressures from some Antarctic Treaty Parties asking IAATO to be all inclusive, IAATO feels very strongly that the decision to change the Bylaws or create new categories of membership is not something the organization needs to rush into. IAATO has currently taken the precautionary approach and has chosen to research the practicality of including all types of Antarctic tourism activities and of creating new membership categories.

8.2 The following paragraph was noted in IAATO Overview of Antarctic Tourism Activities (ATCM XXIII IP98) and continues to reflect IAATO's current philosophy. "The significance of the size of the vessel as it relates to potential impact, contingency planning and emergency response is complex, and factors such as choice of landing site, number of landings, type of fuel carried may be of equal or greater importance than the size of the vessel. These are not issues that are easily resolved. In particular, IAATO members are concerned that potential cumulative environmental impacts and emergency response requirements of very large vessels could adversely impact on the principles of safe and environmentally responsible travel to Antarctica."

8.3 In practice and as long as the information is available to the IAATO Secretariat all tour operators — whether or not associated with IAATO — are included in emergency contact information, exchange of information and other activities of the IAATO Secretariat. Non-members, prospective members and other interested parties are encouraged to participate in the annual general meeting of IAATO, where IAATO Bylaws and operating procedures, obligations of the Antarctic Treaty System and other matters are discussed and policies developed.

**Appendices:**

- A. IAATO Overview of Actual Antarctic Tourism, 1999-00
- B. IAATO Preliminary Estimate of Antarctic Tourism, 2000-01
- C. Antarctic Tourist Trends D Antarctic Tourists Ship and Land Based 1992-2000
- E. Peninsula Sites Ranking in the Top 5 Most Visited Sites For 3 or More of the Last Eleven Seasons
- F. Comparison of Nationalities (1994/95 -1999/00)
- G. 1999-2000 Summary of Peninsula Sites Visited by Tour Ships H Eleven Season (1989-00) Overview of Sites Visited in the Antarctic Peninsula
- I. 1999-2000 Summary of Continental Sites Visited by Tour Ships
- J. Top Eight Continental Sites
- K. Nationalities of all Tourists 99-00
- L. Summary of Seaborne and Land Based Antarctic Tourism by Departure 1999-2000

[Membership Directory](#) • [Members Only](#) • [About IAATO](#) • [Guidelines](#) • [Operational Procedures](#)  
[Publications & Papers](#) • [Gallery](#) • [Press Releases](#) • [Site Map](#) • [Contact Us](#) • [Home](#)