



October 2020

IAATO's Response To COVID-19

As we near what traditionally is the start of the Antarctic season, IAATO's thoughts are with those nations currently dealing with the new challenges created by the ongoing pandemic.

IAATO and the Antarctic Gateway Governments are continuing their dialogue regarding possibilities for operations for the upcoming season. Information and updates are regularly shared with our members.

In the last month a number of members have made the challenging decision to curtail or cancel their 2020/21 operations, and notifying their guests accordingly.

IAATO's focus remains on supporting our members' decision-making to safeguard all seaborne and deep-field visitors, field staff, crew, Antarctic wildlife and the environment. To this end, our COVID-19 Advisory Group continues to closely monitor global developments, communicating with Antarctic Gateway countries and other polar stakeholders as governments work on a way forward.

Ends -

Issued by the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators

For further enquiries, contact:

Hayley Collings | Communications & Engagement Manager
+44 (0)7885542104
hcollings@iaato.org

Notes for Editors:

- Stock images are available.
 - In addition to its own bylaws and requirements for membership, IAATO requires its members to abide by the Antarctic Treaty System and other international regulations.

About IAATO

IAATO is a member organization founded in 1991 to advocate and promote the practice of safe and environmentally responsible private-sector travel to the Antarctic. IAATO members work together to develop, adopt and implement operational standards that mitigate potential



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ANTARCTICA TOUR OPERATORS

50 South County Commons Way, Unit E-5B
South Kingstown, RI 02879 USA

+ 1 401 841 9700 OFFICE
+ 1 401 841 9704 FAX

iaato@iaato.org
www.iaato.org

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environmental impacts. These standards have proved to be successful and include, but are not limited to;

- Antarctic site-specific guidelines and site selection criteria;
- passenger to staff ratios and limiting numbers of passengers ashore;
- boot washing guidelines and the prevention of the transmission of non-native organisms;
- wilderness etiquette; ship scheduling and vessel communication procedures;
- emergency medical evacuation procedures and emergency contingency plans; reporting procedures;
- marine wildlife watching guidelines; station visitation policies.

IAATO has been carefully monitoring, analyzing and reporting Antarctic tourism trends since 1991 as part of its commitment to the effective self-management of guest activities. Every year at IAATO's annual meeting, members have open and candid discussions on safety, environmental protection and self-regulation. Decision-making is supported by recommendations developed by IAATO's many dedicated committees and working groups throughout the year. The meetings conclude annually with the voting in of new policies on best practice which support the association's mission.